

**Submission  
No 7**

## **SUPPORT FOR RURAL AND REGIONAL LEARNER DRIVERS**

**Organisation:** Yass Valley Council

**Date Received:** 29 April 2021

## Submission for the Stay safe Committee.

### Support for Rural and Regional learners

#### Introduction:

Learner drivers present a blank canvas opportunity, to introduce safer driving thinking and choices that does not reinforce existing community attitudes. One example of community behaviour change is the 'No Hat No Play' sun safe playground program. Over the years, hats and play have become synonymous, because the program started with a blank canvas and persisted over the years. Similarly, if we want drivers to choose safer behaviours, then introducing the safe behaviours at the learner stage and reinforcing this over the 120 hours of the learning period will build generation One making safer choices and build year on year after that.

The Committee will inquire into and report on opportunities to better support rural and regional learner drivers, with reference to:

#### a) **challenges faced by learner drivers in rural and regional areas to get the required training and experience to obtain a licence**

- access to trained instructors is reduced leaving parents to take on the role of the main instructor
- if parents have 'bad' driving behaviours they are most likely to transfer them to the Learner
- Parents do not always make the best teachers.
- Access to non-paddock basher relics is really important.
- Good quality cars that are suitable as first cars is not that easy for families to find and access in rural areas. This needs to be followed with a supply chain of recent model affordable used cars available in rural areas for test-driving, prior to purchase.
- Introduce a traffic light system for ownership of cars for under 25's. This could be achieved by combining affordability scale and following the ANCAP rating system but simplified to
  - Green for affordable and good safety rating
  - Yellow for not as affordable but also acceptable safety rating
  - Red for not suitable on price and safety
- Also some kind of accessible scheme to fund the purchase of suitable cars perhaps using co-contributions. Maybe low fixed interest rates on the cars for the life of the loan.
  - Green cars have the lowest interest rate
  - Yellow middle interest rate
  - Red no financial advantage

## b) options for rural and regional learners to access driver training opportunities

- Introduce Drivers Ed Camp (suggest 3 nights) for rural kids at accommodated at rural centres like Borambola – Wagga Wagga
- <https://www.sport.nsw.gov.au/sportandrecreation/facilities/borambola>
- Rural kids are used to travelling to rural centres for immersive experiences. Especially if there is a % government sponsorship for these camps, and crowd funding allowed.
- It could be school based and combine several schools with suitably experienced instructors available for more intensive instruction sessions for students.
- Parents could attend for day sessions.
- Instruction hours to be counted towards the total hours with maybe a similar benefit to driving instructors
- Safer driver course could be delivered to attendees at these camps plus more demonstration of the consequences of poor driver behaviour.
- Addressing the general community attitudes of the major driver behaviour problems of speeding, fatigue, drink/drug driving. By viewing the demonstrated consequences and promoting the message that it's not worth the risk. Embedding in practise positive behaviours that promote safety.
- Other inclusion could be
  - Testimony of a crash survivor,
  - The crash test cars.
  - Demonstration of stopping distances at speed limit/ just over on sealed roads and unsealed roads.
  - Include the heavy vehicle blind spot information
  - Demonstrations of effects of drink and drug driving.
  - Demonstrations of the consequences of in car distractions

## c) support for rural and regional learner drivers in other jurisdictions

## d) the use of driver simulators and other technology to assist rural and regional learners

- **Not supported:** - the use of driver simulators for young rural drivers
  - Access and quality of simulators. The simulator I have seen is adequate for changing the perception that anyone can drive easily. But not suitable for any real training as rural drivers need to be flexible and adaptable, and not to believe that a set cartoon like setting will be anything like real driving.
  - Need for much higher developed skills for rural drivers must have problem solving as you drive. This is a potential area for program development and delivery.
  - The ability to focus and manage hazards as they arise,

**e) changes to driver training and testing in New South Wales since Staysafe's 2017 report into driver education, training and road safety, and**

**f) any other related matters.**

- Start addressing the stereotypes of older more established drivers that not adhering to the rules is Ok because no-one will catch you
- Find ways to use technology to support Police in their rural enforcement program, not population based.
- Promote joint policing operation for cross border issues at 'Hoon Hotspots' to shut them down

**Submission made by**

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