

## **FACT SHEET**

### ***Vehicle and Traffic Amendment (Novice Driver Licensing) Bill 2008***

The purpose of this Bill is to introduce legislation for a range of safety-based reforms to Tasmania's novice driver licensing system. The reforms are aimed at significantly reducing the number of serious injuries and fatalities on Tasmania's roads, particularly those involving novice drivers and riders.

Reforms to the novice driver licensing system are a key initiative under the first three-year Action Plan supporting the Tasmanian Road Safety Strategy 2007-2016.

The reforms introduced by this Bill are driven by best practice research and developed in response to Tasmanian novice crash statistics. The reforms apply to novice car drivers and novice motorcycle riders. A novice is a person that has never held a full licence in respect of a particular licence class.

The reforms introduce a fully graduated licensing system for Tasmania. The minimum learner period for novice drivers will be extended from 6 to 12 months and divided into a minimum 3- month L1 stage and a minimum 9-month L2 stage. A new practical driving test will be introduced at the end of the L1 stage and an enhanced practical driving test will be introduced at the end of the L2 stage. It is during the L2 stage that learners will be required to accumulate 50 supervised driving hours. There are a number of volunteer supervisory driving programs established through the Community Road Safety Partnership Program to assist learner drivers to achieve these hours and the Government's Road Safety Strategy also provides for seed funding to community organisations to establish more programs of this nature.

The provisional period for novice drivers and riders will be a minimum 12-month P1 stage and a P2 stage that is between one and two years depending on age.

In addition, a person wanting to hold both a car and motorcycle licence will be required to complete the provisional stages in relation to each licence class.

The reforms also introduce tougher penalties for learners and provisionals that disobey the law.

The reforms will:

- introduce regression to the previous licensing level for multiple licence loss;
- extend the re-start provisions to require a person in the P1 stage to re-start that stage if convicted of speeding 10 km/h or more above the legal limit, illegally using a mobile phone, failing to wear a seatbelt, or failing to ride a learner approved motorcycle (restart provisions already exist for first-year provisionals who are disqualified or suspended, for example for drink driving);

- introduce a traffic infringement notice (TIN) penalty for car learners driving without a supervising driver;
- introduce a TIN penalty for learners failing to display L-plates; and
- increase the TIN penalty for provisionals failing to display P-plates.

There will be no change to the licensing fees for novice riders, though once the reforms are fully implemented the additional cost to novice drivers progressing through the fully graduated novice licensing system will be \$88.90 (total cost \$238.35).

However, the reforms also introduce a refund of provisional licence fees for novice drivers and riders that progress through the provisional stages without incurring a driving related offence. This represents a reward of \$51.90 for non-concession holders.

The reforms will be implemented in two stages. The Bill and supporting regulations will introduce the first stage (P1 and P2 stages, tougher penalties and driving reward) which will coincide with the introduction of the new Motor Registry System planned for mid-June of this

year. The second stage (reforms to the learner period) will be implemented through regulations in

April 2009.

The reforms represent significant progress towards achieving Tasmania Together targets and will continue to strengthen Tasmania's graduated licensing system by building on improvements the Government has already made to increase the safety of novice drivers and riders. They will help prepare novice drivers and riders to make responsible road safety choices that will improve the safety of all road users and ultimately contribute to the reduction of serious injuries and fatalities on Tasmania's roads.