2009

Parliament of Tasmania

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL SELECT COMMITTEE

ROAD SAFETY

INTERIM REPORT

MEMBERS
Hon Ivan Dean MLC
Hon Ruth Forrest MLC
Hon Paul Harriss MLC
Hon Don Wing MLC (Chair)

Secretary: Mr Nathan Fewkes

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Having been appointed by the Legislative Council on 26 August 2008 the Committee advertised in the three Tasmanian daily newspapers during September 2008 inviting submissions and witnesses to provide evidence.

The first witnesses were heard at a Hearing in Hobart on 14 October 2008. Thereafter a round of further public Hearings were held in Hobart, Launceston and Devonport during October 2008 and in March, May June and August 2009, with 82 witnesses presenting oral evidence.

The Committee also travelled to Geelong, Melbourne, Adelaide, Sydney and Canberra between 27 January and 4 February 2009 and met with 47 government and non-government stakeholders.

In addition to the ensuing voluminous transcripts of evidence, the Committee has received 76 written submissions and a large quantity of other detailed information which it has sought specifically.

In common with all other parliamentary committees, this Committee will be dissolved upon Parliament being dissolved prior to the State election scheduled for 20 March 2010. As there will be insufficient time prior to the anticipated dissolution of Parliament for this Committee to consider and evaluate all submissions, evidence and material received, it has been decided to present an interim report dealing with a limited number of important matters.

The Committee believes that the Tasmanian community will identify well with the recommendations made in this report. Its Members are convinced that these comprise some of the key issues which have the capacity to significantly reduce the calamitous road toll.

As such, the Committee commends its views and recommendations, as set out in this Interim Report, to all parties for their consideration and adoption as policy.

Other, equally important, recommendations will be made in the Committee's Final Report following the 2010 State Election.

It is envisaged that the Committee will be reappointed soon after the State election and that it should be possible to present a Final Report shortly after that.

Hon Don Wing MLC **December 2009**
CHAIR

Findings

The Committee finds that:

Finding 1

The current quality of the road surfaces in Tasmania, particularly the national highway network, has deteriorated, especially following heavy winter rainfall, to the point that a review of the current maximum speed limits on these roads should be undertaken.

Finding 2

Existing penalties appear not to be a sufficient disincentive to repeat drink-driving offenders.

Finding 3

The detection of drink-driving offenders requires a more specifically targeted approach by police, rather than the current emphasis on high volume random testing.

Finding 4

Whilst there has been a recent increase in the visible presence of police on Tasmanian roads, as this is considered a major deterrent to unlawful driving activity it needs to be further increased.

Finding 5

Provisional and novice drivers are at higher risk of serious injury or death than other road users.

Finding 6

The lack of a compulsory educational road safety and driver awareness program is a glaring omission in the novice driver reforms and in Tasmania's Road Safety Strategy.

Recommendations

The Committee recommends that:

Recommendation 1

The State Government seek independent advice from either the Australian Road Research Board (ARRB) Group, the Monash University Accident Research Centre (MUARC), or both organisations, to determine what the maximum speed limit should be on the whole, or any sections of, the national highway network in Tasmania.

Recommendation 2

Existing penalties for repeat drink-driving offenders be substantially increased.

Recommendation 3

For the purposes of detecting drink-driving offences police place more emphasis on targeting individuals known to be likely offenders and those near locations or public events where alcohol is likely to be consumed.

Recommendation 4

Additional funding and resources be made available to Tasmania Police to ensure there is an increased visible presence of police on Tasmanian roads.

Recommendation 5

Road safety and driver awareness be included in the curriculum in all Tasmanian schools beginning at the primary school level.

Recommendation 6

All learner drivers be required to participate in a regulated driver education and training course, either through the education system or an approved education and training provider.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Legislative Council appointed the Committee on 26 August 2008 to inquire into road safety in accordance with the following Terms of Reference:

(1) The main causes and effects of road traffic crashes and off road motor cycle crashes in Tasmania.

(2) The short and long term care of crash casualties and the adequacy of the current data collection.

(3) The adequacy and effectiveness of current road safety measures in Tasmania.

(4) Road safety measures, adopted, proposed or recommended interstate and in some overseas countries which have relevance to circumstances in Tasmania.

(5) The methods and means whereby road traffic crashes in Tasmania may be reduced.

(6) Appropriate measures to control the use of motor cycles off road for the purpose of reducing casualties; and

(7) Any matters incidental thereto.

The Council appointed Mr *Dean*, Ms *Forrest*, Mr *Harriss*, and Mr *Wing* (Chair) to serve on the Committee.

1

SPEED LIMITS ON TASMANIAN HIGHWAYS

In Tasmania, the maximum speed limit on most non-urban roads is 100kph. There are, however, designated sections of highways where the speed limit is set at 110kph. These include most sections of the Midland and Bass Highways.

Some witnesses favoured reducing the 110kph speed limit wherever occurring to 100kph. A majority of witnesses who gave evidence on this subject, however, did not support a reduction of the 110kph speed limit.

One such witness was Sgt Michael Davis (Tasmania Police Northern District Accident Investigation Section). He said a reduction to 110kph is not necessary, and added:

> "In my view, 110kph is adequate for a highway. I read in the paper where the speed was considered to be dropped to 100kph but my view is that if you are driving from Burnie to Hobart at 100kph you get frustrated drivers. At 110kph it is a safe speed that you can move along at. My view is I do not think anything would be achieved by dropping it to 100kph on a highway that should be safe."[1]

The question must then be asked, is it safe to travel at 110kph on the whole or any parts of either the Midland Highway or the Bass Highway? Mr Jim Langford of the Monash University Accident Research Centre (MUARC) had grave reservations, which he expressed to the Committee as follows:

> "I think by most international standards there would be a minute proportion of the Midlands Highway and the Bass Highway that would qualify as 110kph."[2]

Each of these two statements deserves respect. Whilst they appear to be clearly in conflict, the Committee notes that there has been a significant deterioration in the condition of much of the Midland Highway during 2009 due to the unusually heavy rainfall during the winter period.[3] This was subsequent to Sgt Davis' evidence given to the Committee on 7 May 2009.

It is quite apparent that this unusually high and prolonged winter rainfall accelerated the already unsatisfactory condition of the surface of many parts of the Midland Highway, in particular.

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[1] Davis, transcript of evidence, 7 May 2009, p. 20
[2] Mitsopoulos-Rubens *et al*, transcript of discussion, 28 January 2009, pp. 22-23
[3] Webb, Emma, 'Highway Potholes Cause Concern', *Examiner*, 15 September 2009, p. 16; Andrews, Alison, 'Rain Blamed for Road Repair Delays', *Examiner*, 22 September 2009, p. 36

This was no doubt one of the factors which caused the Hon. Greg Hall MLC to move in the Legislative Council on the 27th October 2009 a motion in the following terms:

> "That this House notes the unacceptable condition of our National Highway the Midland Highway and calls for bipartisan support for the progressive construction of a four lane Midland Highway to be primarily funded by the Commonwealth Government."[4]

That motion was passed after receiving strong support from Members of the Council. During the debate sustained and detailed criticism was made by Members of the substandard condition of the Midland Highway. It was obvious that the Members' criticism reflected not only their assessments but also community views.

The Midland Highway, from Granton to Launceston, is one of five highways in Tasmania that form part of the national highways network. The other four are the Bass Highway from Launceston to Burnie, the East Tamar Highway from Launceston to Bell Bay, the Brooker Highway from Hobart to Granton, and the Tasman Highway from Hobart to Hobart Airport.

The Committee has been provided with technical reports relating to the condition of corridor highways in Tasmania forming part of the AusLink (national highway) network. An Australian Road Research Board (ARRB) Group road survey vehicle collects relevant information and summary reports relating to these highways are prepared for the Australian Government as part of an agreement with the State for determining maintenance funding. Maintenance performance is measured against two benchmarks: the riding quality indicator (RQI) and the preventative maintenance indicator (PMI). Each is rated from good to very poor (on separate scales of measurement) calculated using data collected from the survey vehicle.[5] Further detail is contained in appendix 1.

Information provided by DIER to the Committee shows that at September 2009:

- 162.92km of the Midland Highway, or 86.2% of its length, was rated as having a "good" RQI.

- 123.13km of the Midland Highway, or 65.25% of its length, was rated as having a "good" PMI.

- 187.74km of the Bass Highway (from Launceston to Burnie only), or 79.3% of its length, was rated as having a "good" RQI.

- 204.03km of the Bass Highway (from Launceston to Burnie only), or 86.2% of its length, was rated as having a "good" PMI.[6]

[4] Legislative Council Votes and Proceedings, No. 83, 27 October 2009
[5] Information provided by DIER (22 October 2009)
[6] Information provided by DIER (22 October 2009)

The Committee, however, is of the view that regular travellers on these roads would doubt that these findings accurately or meaningfully represent the current actual surface condition.

The Committee was also referred to the Australian Road Assessment Program (AusRAP),[7] which rates Australian roads for safety standards against two criteria: first, crash history and traffic flows and second, design standards. In terms of design standards, the East Tamar Highway, Midland Highway and the Bass Highway between Launceston and Devonport received three star ratings (out of five). The Brooker Highway in Hobart and most of the Bass Highway between Burnie and Devonport have received four star ratings.[8] AusRAP, according to its website, has not been able to produce a risk map for Tasmania based on crash history and traffic flow as the "Tasmanian road authority did not supply the necessary traffic and crash data".[9] The Committee finds this surprising.

One option to improve the current situation is for the Midland Highway to be upgraded progressively over a number of years to a divided four-lane dual carriageway between Hobart and Launceston.[10] The Department of Energy, Infrastructure and Resources (DIER) informed the Committee that dividing the length of the Midland Highway would be a decision taken on the basis of traffic volumes, which are presently not at a level to justify such an upgrade.[11] However, in the Committee's view, current traffic volumes and financial considerations should not dominate discussions on this subject. Rather, discussions should be based more on the potential to save lives and to reduce the number of serious injuries if the Midland Highway were to be a divided four-lane highway.

Existing conditions of Tasmanian highways add weight to the desirability of a review being conducted as to the most appropriate maximum speed limit to apply to vehicles travelling on the Midland and the Bass Highways.

The Committee has been referred to evidence suggesting that reducing speed limits on highways would save lives. In July 2003, the speed limit on 1,100km of roads in South Australia was reduced from 110kph to 100kph. The Centre for Automotive Safety Research (CASR) compared the crash experience for the two years preceding this time with the following two years. The report found:

> "On the road sections where the speed limit was reduced from 110kph to 100kph, casualty crashes were observed to drop by 32 per cent. On all the 110kph roads that were not changed, casualty crashes were observed to drop by 12 per cent. If there were no other factors (and we

[7] RACT, submission, p. 10; Taskunas and Bridges, transcript of evidence, p. 61
[8] AusRAP, 'Star Ratings', at <http://www.ausrap.org/ausrap/starratings.htm> [accessed October 2009]
[9] AusRAP, 'Risk Maps', at <http://www.ausrap.org/ausrap/riskmaps.htm> [accessed October 2009]
[10] Valentine, submission, p. 1; Valentine, transcript of evidence, 24 March 2009, pp. 21-22
[11] McIlfatrick *et al*, transcript of evidence, 26 March 2009, p. 18; see also Midson, transcript of evidence, 27 March 2009, p. 32

> are not aware of any), a 20 per cent reduction can be assumed to be the best estimate of the effect on crashes of the lowering of the speed limit."[12]

It was acknowledged that there could be a margin of error in the result, although the report also stated:

> "Nevertheless, being able to imagine reasons for errors in our estimate does not mean they in fact occurred. Our confidence in the reality of the reduction is increased because its mechanism is very obvious: lower speed limits lead to lower travelling speeds, lower travelling speeds make loss of control less likely, give drivers longer to react, and reduce the accelerations sustained if there is an impact, and thus crashes will be fewer and less severe."[13]

Dr Soames Job, Director of the NSW Roads and Traffic Authority Centre for Road Safety, said data shows that "with consistently lower speeds road safety improves."[14]

It was the view of a number of witnesses that the general public would not yet be prepared to accept speed limit reductions.[15] Nevertheless, DIER assured the Committee that trials in the Kingborough and Tasman municipalities, where limits have been reduced to 90kph on sealed rural roads and 80kph on unsealed rural roads, have had community support. [16] It is noted, however, that community reaction to a reduction from 110kph to 100kph on highways has not been tested.

The Committee is aware that DIER is considering imposing an internal policy that would require its employees not to drive above 100kph on any highway and not above 90kph on any rural road.[17]

Whilst the Committee does not have the expertise to determine what the maximum speed limit should be on any section of the Midland and Bass Highways, Members have personally observed the deterioration of the surface of large sections of these Highways, which may render them unsuitable for vehicles to travel safely at 110kph.

Having regard to the conflicting evidence on this subject and the personal observations made by Members of the Committee, the Committee considers it would be both appropriate and desirable for the State Government to seek independent expert advice as to what the maximum speed limit should be on the whole, or any sections of, the national highway network in Tasmania.

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[12] Long, A D *et al, Reduction of Speed Limit from 110kph to 100kph on Certain Roads in South Australia: A Preliminary Evaluation* (CASR, Adelaide, 2006), research report 24, p. 10
[13] Long, A D *et al, Reduction of Speed Limit from 110kph to 100kph on Certain Roads in South Australia: A Preliminary Evaluation* (CASR, Adelaide, 2006), research report 24, p. 9
[14] Job and Elliott, transcript of discussion, 2 February 2009, p. 12
[15] Healy *et al*, transcript of discussion, 27 January 2009, p. 36
[16] McIlfatrick *et al*, transcript of evidence, 26 March 2009, p. 23
[17] McIlfatrick *et al*, transcript of evidence, 26 March 2009, p. 57

This expert advice could be sought from the Monash University Accident Research Centre (MUARC) or the Australian Road Research Board (ARRB) to which the Tasmanian Government already contributes funding, or from both organisations.

Finding 1

The current quality of the road surfaces in Tasmania, particularly the national highway network, has deteriorated, especially following heavy winter rainfall, to the point that a review of the current maximum speed limits on these roads should be undertaken.

Recommendation 1

The State Government seek independent advice from either the Australian Road Research Board (ARRB) Group, the Monash University Accident Research Centre (MUARC), or both organisations, to determine what the maximum speed limit should be on the whole, or any sections of, the national highway network in Tasmania.

2

ALCOHOL AND DRINK DRIVING

Drink driving continues to be a major contributor to road crashes[18] notwithstanding concerted efforts by governments, police and road safety authorities to curb this dangerous practice. Research confirms a correlation between a driver's blood alcohol concentration (BAC) at certain levels and relative crash risk showing generally that as the driver's BAC level increases, the driver's crash risk also increases.[19]

Most witnesses who gave evidence to the Committee were asked whether or not they considered the 0.05 limit should be reduced to zero or to a limit less than 0.05.

A clear majority of witnesses did not support lowering the present limit.

Most witnesses believed that lowering the limit would be unlikely to have any significant impact on reducing road crashes and that the community would not, at this stage, be prepared to accept any reduction as being necessary or desirable.

The weight of the evidence pointed to the fact that drivers with blood alcohol levels in excess of 0.05 were more likely to be involved in crashes and that the risk of this would increase proportionately with the increase in the BAC level.

The following is a sample of evidence received from witnesses who did not favour reducing the 0.05 BAC limit. Mr Barry McDonald said:

> "I do not know that we should reduce it any further. If you started reducing it would eliminate the reasonable person going home from work, stopping at the pub and behaving… responsibly by just having an end-of-day beer with his mates."[20]

The Committee asked Mr Paul Hogan (Chair, Road Safety Task Force) whether the BAC threshold of 0.05 in Tasmania is appropriate. Mr Hogan responded:

> "I do not profess to be an expert in that field, but I think it is. We all know you can be under 0.05 and start to feel as though you have had a couple of drinks even without being over, so one of our things that we talk about with drink driving is that you do not have to feel drunk to be over 0.05."[21]

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[18] Information provided by DIER, 17 September 2009

[19] McLean, A J *et al*, 'Alcohol and Crashes: Identification of Relevant Factors in this Association', Department of Transport Office of Road Safety, CR 11 1980

[20] McDonald, transcript of evidence, 15 October 2008, pp. 11-12

[21] Hogan and Sydes, transcript of evidence, 22 October 2008, p. 61

The Committee and Mr Hogan discussed factors such as body size, metabolism, and varying definitions of a standard drink leading people to underestimate their BAC level.[22] The Committee asked if one of the ways of avoiding this problem would be zero tolerance. He said:

> "I know that, but I am saying I think that is too draconian. I do not know that you need to go that far. If there was proper education about what represents a standard drink and you had consistency in what is a standard drink provided to you at the restaurants and hotels, the problems could be overcome." [23]

Mr Andrew O'Brien (Tasmanian Ambulance Service) said:

> "In western society I do not think it would be well tolerated. It does not even allow anyone to have one drink… so you could end up having a drink at lunchtime and driving home at 4 o'clock and at 0.01 feeling absolutely perfect but you are not and you are in strife. I do not think society would accept it at that level. Perhaps even lower than 0.05 but I do not know enough of the science to know how much impact it has."[24]

On the question of whether or not the BAC limit should be reduced to zero, Mr Barry Oliver (Advanced Driver Techniques) said that reducing the BAC limit to zero would go too far:

> "I think it is too draconian. I do not know that it is necessarily going to capture the people who are going to do it anyway. We have to bear in mind that, in my view, there is an element in the community who are going to continue to drink and drive irrespective."[25]

Prof Max Cameron (MUARC) told the Committee:

> "Very few countries have anything lower than 0.05. Some of the Scandinavian countries do and even Australia is low by international standards. Most states in the US are at about 0.08 or 0.10. Think carefully about the motive because all you are really doing is making illegal a group of people who are not really a road safety problem at this stage. All the research shows that the risk associated with BAC goes up at about 0.05, except for young drivers, and that justifies the low level used in most Australian States."[26]

Mr Steve Richardson was one of the few witnesses who supported lowering the BAC limit, submitting to the Committee a proposition of introducing a zero blood alcohol content for all drivers in Tasmania.[27] He explained further that

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[22] Hogan and Sydes, transcript of evidence, 22 October 2008, pp. 61-62

[23] Hogan and Sydes, transcript of evidence, 22 October 2008, p. 63. Mr Hogan also noted: "We have to be very careful that we are not quoted here outside of our portfolio, outside of our charter, because if we do that, that is not representative of the Road Safety Task Force. Some of the views that I am putting to you are consistent with my experience of being on the Road Safety Task Force but it would not be fair to say this is the policy of the taskforce."

[24] O'Brien and Morgan, transcript of evidence, 6 May 2009, pp. 83-84

[25] Oliver, transcript of evidence, 22 October 2008, p. 82

[26] Mitsopoulos-Rubens *et al*, transcript of discussion, 28 January 2009, pp. 37-38

[27] Richardson, submission; see also Richardson, transcript of evidence, 15 October 2008, p. 20

the level of impairment and rates of metabolism could be difficult for drivers to estimate:

> "The capacity for the brain to cope with any amount of alcohol varies from day to day. It varies from individual to individual. The amount of alcohol that a person takes into their system will also vary from day to day to get to that limit. It is not a measurable risk. The driver is unable to say, 'I've had two beers this afternoon; they were light beers, so I should be right to drive home'."[28]

Notwithstanding the very considerable efforts made by the police to detect those who drive with excessive blood alcohol levels there are some drivers who continue to break the law in this respect.

The main measures employed by police to detect those who drink to excess and drive are:

(a) Placing high visibility breath testing sites at random locations and at random times of day, conducting high volumes of tests with the aim of having a long-term deterrent effect across all motorists;

(b) Intelligence-based operations targeting locations such as public events or drinking establishments at times when, in all probability, some motorists are expected to attempt to drive following the consumption of alcohol; or

(c) Officers on patrol intercepting individual vehicles using their experience to know where and when drink-drivers will be on the road.[29]

The Police Association of Tasmania cited figures contained in the Tasmania Police Corporate Performance Report 2007-08. This report shows that 213,000 drivers were tested and 679 drink driving offences detected through random breath tests (method "a") whereas 466,000 drivers (method "b" or "c") were tested and 4,186 drink driving offences detected through general patrols.[30]

Mr Randolph Weirenga (President, Police Association of Tasmania) said:

> "The old police officer on patrol, knowing where drink drivers are and what time they are around is a far better method of catching drink drivers."[31]

It is clear that where drivers or groups of drivers are targeted under methods "b" and "c", the rate of detection is increased, suggesting there should be more emphasis on these methods of testing. Figures show that whilst the

[28] Richardson, transcript of evidence, 15 October 2008, p. 21
[29] Healy *et al*, transcript of discussion, 27 January 2009, p. 9; Wierenga, transcript of evidence, 7 May 2009, p. 3
[30] Wierenga, transcript of evidence, 7 May 2009, p. 3; information provided by Police Association of Tasmania (21 October 2009)
[31] Wierenga, transcript of evidence, 7 May 2009, p. 3.

number of breath tests conducted in Tasmania has increased, the number of offenders charged with exceeding the prescribed limit has not correspondingly increased.

Drink Driving Random Breath Tests (RBTs)[32]			
	Number Conducted	Numbers Charged	Per Cent Charged
2003-04	438,326	3943	0.90
2004-05	478,672	4046	0.85
2005-06	608,471	4132	0.68
2006-07	702,362	4426	0.63
2007-08	679,632	4865	0.72

One explanation for this trend, the Committee was informed, is that whilst the enforcement of drink-driving laws has ensured most drivers do not drive above the legal limit, at the same time a remaining cohort of offenders repeatedly persist with their actions. This group, the Committee was told, has become a problem that existing mechanisms of law enforcement do not have the capacity to solve.[33]

Due to the increased risk drink drivers create the Committee is of the view that existing penalties for repeat offenders should be substantially increased.

Certainly penalties play a role in the important campaign to reduce the incidence of drink driving, but it is considered that an even more important factor in this respect is increasing the risk of detection. Drivers would be less likely to drive with a BAC in excess of 0.05 if the risk of detection were greater.

The Committee has compared penalties applicable to these types of offences in five of the Australian States. These are shown below. Relevant legislation in Queensland is formulated in a manner that does not contain a standard scale of penalties for drink-driving offences.

Victoria[34]		
Exceed BAC:	**0.05-0.07:**	$350, 6 months disqualification or 10 points
	0.07-0.15:	$350-$491 6 to 14 months disqualification
	>0.15	Up to $2,290, 15 to 48 months disqualification. Such cases are heard by the magistrates court

[32] Department of Police and Emergency Management, 'Annual Report 2007-08', October 2008, p. 39
[33] Mitsopoulos-Rubens *et al*, transcript of discussion, 28 January 2009, p. 38
[34] 'Automatic Indexation of Fees and Penalties' and 'Drink Driving', at <http://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au> [accessed October 2009]

New South Wales[35]		
Exceed BAC:	**0.05-0.08:**	Maximum court-imposed $1,100 fine for first offence, $2,200 second offence, or disqualification
	0.08-0.15:	Maximum court-imposed $2,200 fine, 9 months gaol and disqualification for first offence, second offence $3,300/12 months gaol/disqualification
	>0.15:	Maximum court-imposed fine $3,300, 18 months gaol and disqualification for first offence, second offence $5,500/2 years gaol/disqualification

Western Australia[36]				
Exceed BAC:	**0.05-0.06:**	$100	**0.11-0.12:**	$600+4 months
	0.06-0.07:	$100	**0.12-0.13:**	$600+5 months
	0.07-0.08:	$100	**0.13-0.14:**	$700+5 months
	0.08-0.09:	$400+3 months suspension	**0.14-0.15:**	$700+6 months
	0.09-0.1:	$500+3 months	Exceed BAC penalties increase in steep increments for second and subsequent offences.	
	0.1-0.11:	$500+4 months		

South Australia[37]	
Exceed BAC	**0.05-0.08**: $438+4 points In cases involving higher BAC levels, the matter is heard by a court.

Tasmania[38]		
Exceed BAC:	**0.05-0.1**	$240-$1,200, 3-12 months disqualification
	0.1-0.15	$480-$2,400, 6-18 months disqualification
	>0.15	$600-$3,600, 12-36 months disqualification

It is considered that in most cases the period of suspension has a greater impact on motorists than the monetary penalty.

The Committee notes that emerging evidence suggests the prevalence and impact of drug-affected drivers constitutes an increasing problem and the Committee will deal with this matter in its final report.

Finding 2

Existing penalties appear not to be a sufficient disincentive to repeat drink-driving offenders.

Finding 3

The detection of drink-driving offenders requires a more specifically targeted approach by police, rather than the current emphasis on high volume random testing.

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[35] 'Drug and Alcohol Offences', at <http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au> [accessed October 2009]
[36] 'DriveSafe: A Handbook for Western Australian Road Users', appendix 3, at <http://www.transport.wa.gov.au/mediaFiles/lic_drive_safe_book_09.pdf>
[37] 'Road Safety: Road Safety Offences', at <http://www.dtei.sa.gov.au> [accessed October 2009]
[38] Road Safety (Alcohol and Drugs) Act 1970 (Tas.) s.17

At this stage the Committee makes the following recommendations:

Recommendation 2

Existing penalties for repeat drink-driving offenders be substantially increased.

Recommendation 3

For the purposes of detecting drink-driving offences police place more emphasis on targeting individuals known to be likely offenders and those near locations or public events where alcohol is likely to be consumed.

3

VISIBLE POLICE PRESENCE ON THE ROADS

Quite a body of evidence and submissions were received by the Committee highlighting the importance of having a greater visible presence of police vehicles on our roads.

The Committee agrees that a greater visible presence of police vehicles on Tasmanian roads would certainly act as a deterrent to motorists driving at excessive speeds and in contravention of other road rules. In turn, this could lead to a reduction in road crashes.

Mr Paul Bullock (Secretary, Tasmanian Motorcycle Council) said that in his view, there is a direct link between the number of fatal crashes and the presence of police:

> "There have been two years over the Easter period in Tasmania where when they had police out there, there were no fatalities. When there were not enough police rostered on the road this year [2008] there were fatalities. … You just have to look at 2007 when the police were out there all weekend there were no fatalities. When the police were not out there, there were fatalities. Bring the police back and there are no more fatalities. There are two stark cases where police on the roads reduce fatalities."[39]

In his submission, former MP Mr Tony Benneworth stated that when travelling in Victoria and New South Wales, he had seen four to five police vehicles per day on the roads, which he described as being in "stark contrast" to his experience in Tasmania.[40]

Mr Roger Valentine submitted that regular, visible presence of police on the roads would "greatly improve behaviour of many drivers".[41] In evidence, Mr Valentine said:

> "I was Chairman of the Police Promotions Appeals Board for a number of years, as a result of which I often get information. I have information that there was a reduction of funds for traffic control and that was why the number of visible police cars on the Midland road [Highway] was reduced dramatically."[42]

Mr Randolph Wieranga (President, Police Association of Tasmania) said that there "is no greater deterrent than having a police car following you up the Midland Highway. You are not game to commit offences."[43]

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[39] Bullock, transcript of evidence, 21 October 2008, p. 15
[40] Benneworth, submission
[41] Valentine, submission, p. 2
[42] Valentine, transcript of evidence, 24 March 2009, p. 27
[43] Wierenga, transcript of evidence, 7 May 2009, p. 8

Hon Bryan Green MP (Chair, TRSC) said:

> "I hear often on talkback radio people suggesting that the police ought to be more visible. But the decisions that have been made with respect to covert and overt operations seem to me to be based on best practice advice."[44]

The Committee, however, regards the above comment to be contrary to the weight of evidence presented in relation to this issue.

The Committee agrees with witnesses who gave evidence on this subject that for some time now the extent of the visible presence of police on Tasmanian roads has been inadequate. This applies especially to the Midland Highway.

The Acting Commissioner of Police said that Tasmania Police has a separate section for traffic police numbering 86.[45] He pointed out that, in addition to this number, other police officers were used from time to time on traffic-related matters, in addition to the dedicated traffic section. He said:

> "Every police car is a traffic control car. There is no distinction between a traffic car and a normal police car that a general uniform officer would utilise. So every police officer is expected to and does intercept people for traffic offences."[46]

He also said that Tasmania Police aims to deter offenders through a combination of overt and covert approaches and at locations where high levels of traffic movement could be expected, such as major public events. However, when questioned the Acting Commissioner did not concede that present resourcing for traffic policing is inadequate and said that increased resources would not necessarily be a panacea to road safety.

Whilst not disputing what the Acting Commissioner said, there is no doubt that increasing the number of police officers on traffic duty would have a positive impact on driver behaviour.

In expressing these views, the Committee wishes to acknowledge that in recent months there has been evidence of increased numbers of police vehicles, including motorcycles, visible on Tasmanian roads. This is commendable but there is still room for improvement.

With greater visible presence of police on the roads during holiday periods, together with other road safety initiatives, there is a corresponding general improvement in driver behaviour.

Whilst it is generally thought that there is additional traffic on roads during holiday periods, evidence was provided by MUARC researchers that traffic

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[44] Green and Nicholls, transcript of evidence, 17 June 2009, p. 6
[45] Hine *et al*, transcript of evidence, 6 May 2009, p. 7
[46] Hine *et al*, transcript of evidence, 6 May 2009, p. 8

volumes are lower at these times and that the risk of crashes occurring is probably less than for Friday and Saturday nights during non-holiday periods.[47]

Finding 4

Whilst there has been a recent increase in the visible presence of police on Tasmanian roads, as this is considered a major deterrent to unlawful driving activity it needs to be further increased.

Recommendation 4

Additional funding and resources be made available to Tasmania Police to ensure there is an increased visible presence of police on Tasmanian roads.

[47] Mitsopoulos-Rubens *et al*, transcript of discussion, 28 January 2009, p. 27

4

NOVICE DRIVER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

One of the strongest and most consistent themes throughout the evidence and submissions received by the Committee was the compelling need for a compulsory driver education and training course to be undertaken by all learner drivers.

The Committee endorses these views and is at a loss to understand why such courses were not introduced in Tasmania many years ago.

Many of the witnesses holding this view were current or former driving instructors or members of the motorsport fraternity whose own experiences confirmed the value of driver training.

In addition to first-hand observations, the Committee's attention was drawn to the fact that participant feedback and repeat business from commercial and institutional customers demonstrated the effectiveness and level of success these courses had.[48] Further, these witnesses were confident that driver education results in course participants being less likely to be involved in crashes. Concern and frustration was expressed that driver education and training has been an overlooked and under-recognised aspect of road safety strategic policy in Tasmania due to the State's transport bureaucracy opposing measures in this area. Mr James Nicholson (Australian Institute of Advanced Motorists (Tas)) told the Committee:

> "The parents of the young drivers who come through our courses come back to me with the same message – why isn't this compulsory? The answer is the bureaucrats do not think it works."[49]

He also said:

> "Once you are taught to do something properly you will do it that way forever and if you are taught to do it badly you will do it that way forever because no-one ever checks you again after your licence."[50]

Course instructors who gave evidence observed that at the same time as sections of the bureaucracy oppose compulsory driver education and training for the general public, some State government departments have been sponsoring their staff to attend driver training courses.[51] Such courses include the Australian Institute of Advanced Motorists, John Bowe Driving Pty Ltd, Tasmanian Skills Institute Arrive Alive, Keys2Drive and Advanced Driving

[48] Information provided by MotorSafe Tasmania (4 November 2008)
[49] Nicholson, transcript of evidence, 14 October 2008, p. 67
[50] Nicholson, transcript of evidence, 14 October 2008, p. 80
[51] Butcher, transcript of evidence, 24 March 2009, p. 2; Cameron, transcript of evidence, 24 March 2009, pp. 53-54

Techniques. Other general programs include Rotary Youth Driver Awareness (RYDA) and the NRMA Youth and Road Trauma Forum (NSW).[52]

Eighteen-year-old Ms Lauren Scott told the Committee she found her attendance at a driver training course as a novice driver to be valuable.[53] She said:

> "I found it very helpful. What I learnt in that one day of an eight-hour course has absolutely impacted on my driving since. I have become just so much more aware of potential hazards on the road. I think the course would definitely benefit young drivers most of all, but everyone should be able to get a benefit from it."[54]

Mr Nick Cameron said:

> "Personally I would like to see us get into the high schools just before people are about to start driving and maybe do a simplified approach with some basic information, but also some simple practical exercises."[55]

He also said:

> "The continuing comment I get from participants is, 'Why isn't this compulsory? I have learnt so much, why isn't this compulsory'."[56]

Mr Mark Butcher (Director, Driver Skills Australia) submitted that driver training would lead to a reduction of road crashes:

> "As the holder of a pilot's licence since I was 16, I am a firm believer that if you provide comprehensive training by qualified trainers in a constructive learning environment you can achieve a high degree of skill matched with a safe attitude. … I believe that by providing professional driver training in a constructive and safe learning environment combined with the current learner driver system would lead to a reduction in motor vehicle crashes."[57]

The need to require novice drivers to compulsorily attend a driver training course, as explained to this Committee, rested upon two main concerns.

First, that on-road learning under the supervision of a parent, relative or friend produces novice drivers with variable skill levels. Dr Robert Walker (Australian Medical Association (Tas.)) said:

> "The problem we have with kids is that they adopt the parental attitudes of driving, the attitudes of their brothers and sisters and the neighbour

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[52] See <http://www.ryda.org.au/index.html>; <http://www.keys2drivepilot.com.au/>; and <http://www.mynrma.com.au/cps/rde/xchg/mynrma/hs.xsl/trauma_forum.htm>
[53] Scott, submission
[54] Scott, transcript of evidence, 6 May 2009, p. 66
[55] Cameron, transcript of evidence, 24 March 2009, p. 56
[56] Cameron, transcript of evidence, 24 March 2009, p. 64
[57] Driver Skills Australia, submission, pp. 2-3

> next door and all those sorts of things and so they are not necessarily getting good exposure to sound experience."[58]

Additionally, the Committee was told that when novice drivers were taught mostly by unqualified supervisors, there is a risk that incorrect and erroneous information will be passed on.[59]

The Committee was also told that the current licence testing process does not adequately identify a candidate's skill deficiencies, in particular relying upon subjective testing and assessment methods that candidates can meet through merely knowing how to pass the test rather than knowing how to drive properly. Mr Robin Eccles (President, Australian Driver Trainers Association Inc (Tas.)) said:

> "What driving instructors are having to do now is that we are teaching people to pass the test because that is what we get paid for. We are a commercial proposition; people pay us to get them licensed and we are actually teaching people the wrong thing to pass the test."[60]

Mr Eccles also said that testing officers have "about a week's training", are peer assessed, and "they never get assessed on their knowledge of road law." [61]

Witnesses argued that a compulsory training course would ensure all novice drivers would meet an acceptable standard.[62] Whilst DIER has produced a resource book entitled 'Road Risk Reduction', which is available to Year 9 and 10 students and teachers for classroom-based activities, this program is optional.[63]

Driver training courses aim to reduce novice driver risk and facilitate safer driving. Such courses generally include a theoretical component providing advice on the operation of a motor vehicle and information to improve young driver attitudes. The exact purpose, structure and content of specific courses can vary. Some courses do involve a practical element, others are classroom-based, some courses are targeted at novice drivers only, and others are for drivers of all ages. Appendix 2 contains more detailed information of a selection of courses and programs.

To acquire a learner's licence in the ACT applicants must have completed the 'Road Ready Learner Licence Course'.[64] The Committee met with Mr Simon

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[58] Walker and Steven, transcript of evidence, 26 March 2009, p. 95

[59] Eccles, transcript of evidence, 14 October 2008, p. 33; Walker and Steven, transcript of evidence, 26 March 2009, p. 95

[60] Eccles, transcript of evidence, 14 October 2008, p. 34

[61] Eccles, transcript of evidence, 14 October 2008, pp. 40-41

[62] B. Oliver, transcript of evidence, 22 October 2008, p. 73; Bentley, transcript of evidence, 21 October 2008, p. 73; Eccles, transcript of evidence, 14 October 2008, p. 34

[63] RACT, submission, p. 12; Taskunas and Bridges, transcript of evidence, 14 October 2008, p. 53. A copy of the 'Road Risk Reduction' book and DVD were provided to the Committee (Information provided by DIER, 17 March 2009)

[64] ACT Territory and Municipal Services, *ACT Road Rules Handbook* (ACT Government, Canberra, 2009), p. 5 (d122)

Abbott and Mr Rick Freeth, Directors of Freebott, a company that delivers the Road Ready course in the ACT – as well as the optional Road Ready Plus course.

The Road Ready course has three components:

- "A classroom program that includes a range of interactive activities designed to help make young people aware of issues relating to safer road use before they begin to learn to drive;

- Encouragement for parents or carers to make time available for extra driving practice for learner drivers;

- Support for provisional licence holders with information, and encouragement to participate in a workshop around the experiences of driving in the first six months of having a licence."[65]

If facilitated through schools, there is generally no cost to the participant; otherwise the cost is $155.[66] Road Ready Plus is an extension of the Road Ready course undertaken after six months of solo driving.[67] Mr Abbott explained to the Committee:

> "The next time that they come to us is for an optional course, which we call the 'P off' course, but the correct name is the Road Ready Plus course. … Once they have had six months' driving experience they come back in and have a facilitated discussion group looking at how their experiences have been so far and sharing with their peers how it has been going for them. The carrot for that is that if they complete that three-hour course they will no longer have to display their P-plates and they will be issued an additional allowance of four demerit points."[68]

Mr Freeth said:

> "I think one of the most encouraging things that we hear from participants is, 'I didn't know that I didn't know that stuff'. I think that is the area that we would like to tackle, the unintentional risk which is still a factor. There are the 10 percenters that you will never change so they are going to have to be dealt with in other ways. There is a huge percentage of people who, with better information or greater awareness of the situation, will change their behaviour."[69]

Other witnesses, mostly departmental officers and academics, advised the Committee that although there is a body of opinion in favour of driver training, there is no hard evidence to show driver training is effective and risked

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[65] See <http://www.roadready.act.gov.au/popups/about.htm> [accessed August 2009]
[66] Freeth and Abbott, transcript of discussion, 4 February 2009, p. 2
[67] ACT Government, 'Road Ready: Learning Through Practice', [undated] (pamphlet) (d119)
[68] Freeth and Abbott, transcript of discussion, 4 February 2009, p. 2
[69] Freeth and Abbott, transcript of discussion, 4 February 2009, pp. 25-26

creating a false level of competence among novice drivers.[70] Ms Penny Nicholls (General Manager, Land Transport Safety, DIER) said:

> "Defensive or advanced driver training has not been proven to reduce casualty crash risk. Research shows that driver attitude is more important to reducing crash risk than gaining additional driving skills and it is better from our perspective to implement research-based measures for young drivers that are proven to be effective."[71]

This comment fails to recognise that components of many of these driver education and training courses focus significantly on driver attitude, hazard perception and risk reduction, and do not necessarily include practical driving instruction. It is not surprising that there is a lack of research evidence available to show that driver education and training courses reduce crashes because such courses are not required to be undertaken as a compulsory component of the licensing regime, except in the ACT.

Finding 5

Provisional and novice drivers are at higher risk of serious injury or death than other road users.

Finding 6

The lack of a compulsory educational road safety and driver awareness program is a glaring omission in the novice driver reforms and in Tasmania's Road Safety Strategy.

The Committee concurs with the views favouring driver training and education and recommends:

Recommendation 5

Road safety and driver awareness be included in the curriculum in all Tasmanian schools beginning at the primary school level.

Recommendation 6

All learner drivers be required to participate in a regulated driver education and training course, either through the education system or an approved education and training provider.

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[70] Green and Nicholls, transcript of evidence, 17 June 2009, pp. 14-15; Cairney *et al*, transcript of discussion, 28 January 2009, p. 16; Healy *et al*, transcript of discussion, 27 January 2009, p. 10; Job and Elliott, transcript of discussion, 2 February 2009, p. 5

[71] Green and Nicholls, transcript of evidence, 17 June 2009, pp. 14-15

APPENDIX 1: MEASURING THE CONDITION OF NATIONAL HIGHWAYS

As mentioned in the body of the report, five highways in Tasmania form part of the national highways network. These are the Midland Highway from Granton to Launceston, the Bass Highway from Launceston to Burnie, the East Tamar Highway from Launceston to Bell Bay, the Brooker Highway from Hobart to Granton, and the Tasman Highway from Hobart to Hobart Airport.

National highways – as distinct from State highways – utilise Commonwealth funding for road maintenance projects pursuant to the *AusLink (National Land Transport) Act 2005*.[72] Precise arrangements for Tasmania's funding is determined in accordance with a bilateral agreement between the State and Commonwealth.[73] Clause 49 of this agreement stipulates that Commonwealth funding for national highways (as named above) within Tasmania is subject, *inter alia*, to the provision of data to the Commonwealth pertaining to the condition and usage of such highways.[74] In order to fulfil this requirement, annual surveys are conducted to ascertain the condition of national highways. This information is collected through using a survey vehicle provided by the ARRB Group, a Melbourne-based organisation specialising in road research and technology. DIER then prepares and presents the crude data into a tabular format in spreadsheets (known as maintenance performance reports), which are submitted to the Australian Government.[75] DIER has provided copies of these reports to the Committee for 2007, 2008, and 2009, which were completed during September each year.

The measurements of data to be collected and the method for calculating and formulating results associated with maintenance performance reports is contained in a document known as the AusLink 'Notes on Administration'. According to that document, the maintenance performance reports measure two aspects of the road condition to determine fitness for purpose: riding quality (riding quality indicator – RQI) and preventative maintenance (preventative maintenance indicator – PMI).[76] Each is rated from good to very poor, on separate scales and measurement formula, calculated using data collected from the survey vehicle.

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[72] *AusLink (National Land Transport) Act 2005* (Cth) s.10 (a)

[73] 'Implementation of the AusLink National Land Transport Plan: Bilateral Agreement Between the Commonwealth of Australia and the State of Tasmania', 2004-2009

[74] 'Implementation of the AusLink National Land Transport Plan: Bilateral Agreement Between the Commonwealth of Australia and the State of Tasmania', 2004-2009

[75] Information provided by DIER (22 October 2009)

[76] AusLink Investment Program: National Projects, 'Notes on Administration', March 2006, appendix F, pp. 69-70

The RQI measures "the riding quality of the road considering its traffic volume, percentage of heavy vehicles and speed environment" to indicate "the adequacy of the road's riding quality to meet its transport objectives based on the road's roughness."[77] The acceptable level of roughness is a value factor set according to the level of ordinary traffic volume, heavy traffic volume and the speed limit. This is calculated through various complex formulae. The riding quality is rated from "good" to "very poor" depending on whether the road's roughness meets or exceeds the acceptable roughness factor or is at a level below or exceedingly below this point.

September 2009 RQI results are shown below.

AusLink Reporting – Maintenance Performance Report[78]

Riding Quality Indicator (km/%)
This is a measure of "the riding quality of the road considering its traffic volume, percentage of heavy vehicles and speed environment."

Link	Good	Mediocre	Poor	Very Poor	No Data
Hobart to Launceston	162.92/86.2	22.30/11.8	0.00/0.0	0.00/0.0	3.69/2.0
Launceston to Burnie	187.74/79.3	4.94/2.1	0.00/0.0	2.39/1.0	41.68/17.6
Launceston to Bell Bay	46.21/77.8	8.62/14.5	0.00/0.0	2.49/4.2	2.10/3.5
Hobart to Granton	30.19/85.8	1.46/4.1	0.50/1.4	0.00/0.0	3.04/8.6
Hobart to Airport	26.97/72.2	3.06/8.2	0.00/0.0	0.00/0.0	7.31/19.6

"Good": actual roughness less International Roughness Index (IRI_{good}). IRI 'Good' is a value factor set according to traffic volumes, with a weighting added for the percentage of heavy vehicles, and the speed limit, weighted where the limit is 110kph.
"Mediocre": actual roughness between IRI_{good} and 1.3 times IRI_{good}
"Poor": actual roughness between 1.3 times IRI_{good} and 1.6 times IRI_{good}
"Very Poor" actual roughness greater than 1.6 times IRI_{good}

The PMI indicator measures "the age of the pavement's surface compared to the target optimum surfacing age for the section of road as determined by road agency specialists" to indicate "the extent preventative, or proactive, maintenance of road pavements is being adequately undertaken."[79] The acceptable age of a road's surface – the target age (TA) – is either 12 years or 17 years in the case of Tasmanian highways. Preventative maintenance is rated from "good" to "very poor" depending on whether the road surface's age meets or exceeds the TA or is at a level below or exceedingly below the TA.

[77] AusLink Investment Program: National Projects, 'Notes on Administration', March 2006, appendix F, pp. 71
[78] Information provided by DIER (22 October 2009); AusLink Investment Program: National Projects, 'Notes on Administration', March 2006, appendix F
[79] AusLink Investment Program: National Projects, 'Notes on Administration', March 2006, appendix F, pp. 70

September 2009 PMI results are shown below.

Preventative Maintenance Indicator (km/%)
This is a measure of "the age of the pavement's surface compared to the target optimum surfacing age for the section of road as determined by road agency specialists."

Link	Good	Mediocre	Poor	Very Poor	No Data
Hobart to Launceston	123.13/65.2	38.76/20.5	14.01/7.4	13.01/6.9	0.00/0.0
Launceston to Burnie	204.03/86.2	15.20/6.4	13.42/5.7	4.10/1.7	0.00/0.0
Launceston to Bell Bay	48.72/82.0	7.08/11.9	1.45/2.4	2.17/3.7	0.00/0.0
Hobart to Granton	14.92/42.4	7.27/20.7	11.14/31.7	1.86/5.3	0.00/0.0
Hobart to Airport	25.77/69.0	6.99/18.7	4.59/12.3	0.00/0.0	0.00/0.0

"Good": actual less than target age (TA) (either 12 years or 17 years)
"Mediocre": actual between TA and 1.3 times TA
"Poor": actual between 1.3 times TA and 1.6 times TA; and
"Very Poor" actual greater than 1.6 times TA

APPENDIX 2: DRIVER EDUCATION AND TRAINING COURSES

This appendix contains some examples of the types of driver education and training courses and programs that are available in Australia. Extracts of information have been replicated directly from summaries of the courses that each organisation has made publicly available (with the exception of a section relating to Advanced Driving Techniques).

Rotary Youth Driver Awareness (RYDA)

"The Program

RYDA focuses on attitude and awareness with the aim of helping young adults become better people on the road. The program highlights the privilege and responsibilities of owning and driving a motor vehicle and also illustrates their rights and responsibilities as passengers and pedestrians.

It is a one-day event held at a non-school site which co-ordinates the efforts of local road safety experts, driving instructors, the Police, recovering survivors of road crashes, drug & alcohol educators and financial services personnel.

What is Ryda?

The RYDA Program is a road safety education program aimed at reducing death and injury amongst young people on Australian roads. The Program targets 16 to 17 year olds who are at the stage of their lives where they start to drive or ride in a vehicle driven by their peers.

RYDA is a community-based initiative of Rotary Clubs, partnering those organisations in our community that have a responsibility for, or interest in, road safety for youth. It has been developed in consultation with relevant Government Departments and is designed to complement and supplement the school curriculum and government road safety messages.

Program Day

Students are divided into 6 groups with approximately 25 people in each group and move through the 6-session program. Each session lasts for approximately 30 minutes.

Cost

Every effort is made to keep costs to a minimum, including securing financial support from sponsors and donations from Rotary. The main costs are venue hire and professional presenter fees. These cost vary from venue to venue …

Each venue lists the time of year they operate. This will vary and is dependent on availability of the venue and presenters. … ."[80]

Keys2Drive

"About keys2drive: keys to a safer future

Learner drivers' risk of being harmed in a crash increases, on average, 20 to 30 times immediately they gain their provisional driver's licence. But before that, while on their L[earner licence]s, they are in the safest category of road users; L-platers are harmed less than any other group. In under an hour – about the time it takes to sit and pass a provisional licence test – learner drivers move from being statistically the safest drivers on the road to the most at risk.

A new learning experience

Newly licensed drivers are vulnerable for two main reasons:

1. While learning they are supported, guided and protected from harm by their supervisors and instructors. In the process, they are often protected from a full sense of their own responsibility.

2. After they are licensed, new drivers face a range of situations they have never experienced. Alone with little training in how to adapt to new difficulties.

Our challenge is to provide a learning experience that is more real, more directly meaningful to each new driver, more attuned to the reality of licensed driving.

The challenge is also to provide a more thorough learning experience. keys2drive encourages learning that is:

- Longer – providing more hours behind the wheel;

- Wider – experiencing a greater variety of driving challenges, in all conditions;

- Deeper – gaining a greater understanding of the psychological, emotional and mental challenges involved, and the true responsibility that each driver holds.

[80] Source: <http://www.ryda.org.au/html/the-program.html>

A new generation of safer drivers

keys2drive empowers young Australians to be safe in cars. keys2drive does not replace existing driver training. Nor does it focus on physical driving skills. Instead, keys2drive complements other learning programs.

We do this by advising new drivers how best to approach the learning process. And research tells us that the best way for young drivers to learn is to take control of their own learning.

keys2drive offers encouragement and support toward this aim, and advice on how to do it safely. … .

Working together: mid-term goals for long-term safety

New drivers, supervisors, and driving instructors are working together toward the goal of zero harm in the first six months of P-plate driving. It is a goal designed to build a foundation for a life of safe driving.

Achieving this goal together rests upon three central initiatives:

1. The free driving lesson – keys2drive provides one free lesson, introducing our innovative approach, for every learner driver in Australia.

2. Accredited driving instructors – keys2drive is a professional development and accreditation program for the driving instruction industry. More and more instructors will gain access to these techniques.

3. Online support – The keys2drive website is a rich central portal of information, advice, activities and games. It's designed to guide beginning drivers, their supervisors and driving instructors through the learning experience.

Each part will be closely evaluated for effectiveness and improved over the coming years. And each part supports the other in an integrated and accountable program, guided by the keys2drive philosophy and streamlined toward a common aim: a safer driving future for all."[81]

NRMA Youth and Road Trauma Forum

"For the past four years Westmead Hospital and NRMA Motoring & Services have held Youth and Road Trauma Forums which are open to students in years 10 to 12 in all government and non government high schools in NSW and the ACT.

[81] Source: <http://www.keys2drivepilot.com.au/about_keys2drive.aspx>

The Forums, held at the Acer Arena, Olympic Park, Homebush Bay began in 2006 with more than 4000 students from 31 high schools. In 2007 more than 10,000 students from 100 schools attended, in 2008 there were more than 12,000 students from 110 schools and in 2009 more than 11,000 students from 114 high schools.

They are held because our youth are being severely injured and killed due to potentially preventable road crashes. Westmead Hospital Trauma Nurses and NRMA are committed to decreasing these numbers.

Students hear from surgeons, emergency services personnel and crash victims about the harsh reality of car crashes. 17 to 25 year olds make up about 12 per cent of the population but are involved in about 50 per cent of speed related crashes, which often result in hospitalisation.

The Forum also includes a realistic reconstructed car crash involving victims, police, ambulance and fire personnel. The graphic scene silences and shocks students.

…

The forum gives students who are most at risk, a realistic look at the trauma caused by road crashes and provides them information and strategies in an attempt to reduce serious injuries and deaths. The forum's contents and structure aims to treat young people as adults, allowing them freedom to choose from a range of interactive exhibits.

Evaluations of both students and teachers have rated the events very positively. There has also been significant interest and support from the media.

The Youth and Road Trauma Forums are

- Open to all government and non-government high schools in Sydney and surrounding areas;

- Each school attends for one day only;

- Held at Acer Arena (formerly known as the Superdome) Homebush Bay, Sydney …

The day includes an exciting combination of demonstrations, crash dynamics and rescue, vehicle stopping distances and active exhibits.

There are displays relating to youth trauma and safety from:

- Westmead Hospital's Emergency Department
- NRMA's Mobile Member Centre, Road and vehicle safety experts, Safer Driving School
- Brain Injury Unit
- Organ and Tissue Donation

- Drug and Alcohol Service
- The NSW Police
- Fire Brigade
- Ambulance Service
- CareFlight
- SES
- St John Ambulance
- Red Cross
- Driving Simulators
- Volvo Truck Roll-over Simulator
- Subaru
- Trent Driving and Wheelchair Sports Association"[82]

Tasmanian Skills Institute Course (also known as Arrive Alive)

"Defensive Driving Techniques

Ask yourself some simple questions:

- Could you handle a panic stop in wet conditions without causing wheel lock up?
- Could you swerve and brake to avoid a potential accident and maintain control?
- Do you understand how your car would react in an emergency?
- Do you have confidence in your ability to safely handle a car in an emergency?

Unless you can answer all questions with a confident and honest yes, there is a real possibility that your next 'near miss' will be an accident that could have been avoided.

This one-day course covers:

- Hazard perception
- Projectiles
- Seating position
- Emergency manoeuvres
- Defensive driving tips
- Following distances
- Tyres (pressure, condition and wear)
- Steering technique
- Observation skills
- Judgment skills
- Threshold braking

[82] Source: <http://www.mynrma.com.au/cps/rde/xchg/mynrma/hs.xsl/trauma_forum.htm>

Cost
$395 per person

Outcome
Certificate of Attendance."[83]

John Bowe Driving Pty Ltd

"Drive-to-Arrive Defensive Driving: Course Overview

This is our primary and most popular course and is the important first step in people becoming safer and more defensive drivers. It is a one-day course (8.30am registration, 9am start – finish 4.30pm) and participants use their own vehicle. It is conducted in the safe and controlled surroundings of our driver training facilities across Australia.

Key points covered include:

- Gain an awareness of the impact of speed on your reaction and stopping distances;
- Understand maintaining safe distances between yourself and other drivers;
- Identify the 'cause' and 'responsibility' of crashes and how to avoid them;
- Learn about basic vehicle maintenance to ensure your vehicle is always safe;
- Understand the crucial factor played by tyres; safety, economy & wear rates;
- Learn about the importance of having the correct seating position and its influence on comfort, safety, control, concentration and reducing fatigue;
- Develop an awareness of how both driver & vehicle react in emergency situations;
- Discuss optimum methods to deal with various intersection scenarios;
- Dispel the myths of how to deal with skids in all vehicle types;
- Understand why skids occur and learn about the correct methods to prevent them;

[83] Source: <http://www.skillsinstitute.tas.edu.au/short-courses/statewide/Defensive_Driving.pdf>

- Become more responsible for your attitude towards dealing with our roads safely.

There are no pass or fail tests during the course. This contributes to it being non-threatening and enjoyable. Each participant receives a certificate at the completion of the day along with the important life skills of how to stay safe on our roads.

Most importantly, participants in the John Bowe Driving Drive-to-Arrive course will learn about the simple attitude changes which will make everyone a safer driver in any conditions."[84]

Advanced Driving Techniques

"The primary function… is to conduct structured one-day defensive driver training courses to meet the occupational health and safety requirements for the corporate and government sectors as well as providing an opportunity for private motorists to have a better understanding of the need for safe driving practices.

There are two main objectives with the course:

1. For drivers to have a better understanding of their limitations and to take appropriate action to address any identified shortcomings; [and]

2. For drivers to have a better understanding of the limitations of their vehicles.

The course is limited to a maximum of twelve participants with two instructors. Courses are conducted at Symmons Plains Raceway in the north [of Tasmania] and Baskerville Raceway in the south [of Tasmania].

The minimum requirement is a provisional licence.

Maximum speed is 80kph.

The course consists of approximately three hours of theory sessions and four-and-a-half hours devoted to practical exercises and demonstrations."[85]

[84] Source: <http://www.johnbowedriving.com/pages/dts/dts.aspx>
[85] Oliver, Barry, 'Submission to the Legislative Council Select Committee Road Safety', October 2008 (document d30), p. 1