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To: [RST](#)
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Mr Tim Mills
Inquiry Secretary
Parliament House, HOBART 7000

Hello

I'd like to make the following comments to the INQUIRY INTO ROAD SAFETY IN TASMANIA.

Perhaps the major contributing factors to the high road toll are life necessity and driver attitude.

Getting a drivers licence is almost essential for anyone working, so the attention is not so much on learning driving skills as getting easy transport for travel to earn a living. Training for the licence is perhaps compromised by this need, making the aim of learning to get licensed with the least amount of effort. There doesn't seem to be much focus on the act of driving once one has a licence, so drivers are often ill prepared to react safely to situations beyond their experience.

It also seems a sense of entitlement comes with the drivers licence territory. For those of eligible age, getting a drivers licence is a right of passage which opens up a whole new world to explore. Something seen as "mine by right" doesn't exert pressure to put serious effort into learning the appropriate skills. Again there doesn't seem to be much focus on the act of driving once a licence is obtained, as the learning is seen as something done and dusted.

A further observation is that road safety messages tend to take a back seat to what the driver wants to do. It doesn't appear that increasing messages about speed, use of mobile phones, drink/drug driving etc can crack this barrier while self-interest is at the fore.

Perhaps it would help the cause if part of the learner stage addressed the issue of driver attitude in an effort to change the view of driving to that of a privilege rather than a right. Also adding a focus on driving as a dangerous activity that requires skill and concentration may help to curb dangerous practices. Perhaps including a day where learner drivers attend an advanced driving facility and get to experience the skid pan, emergency braking in wet and dry conditions, and defensive driving skills would help break this mindset.

Finally maybe some thoughts from recreational pilot training may add a new dimension to developing an attitude of respect for the driving privilege and its dangers. Pilots in general have a very clear sense they operate in a dangerous environment and are focused on developing and maintaining their skills so they can safely enjoy their ride. Their training hammers home the fact that skills need to be diligently learned and actively maintained for them to remain safe in the air.

The skill sets they learn not only include managing the operation of their aircraft but also how to maintain safe operation while effectively managing radio calls, identifying suitable landing areas in case of emergency and navigation. Perhaps introducing a segment on situational awareness and phone and equipment (eg radio, heater, etc) use while maintaining control of the vehicle into the driver training syllabus may be more effective than simply banning the use of phones and repeating the usual warnings about the "fatal five" ad nauseam.

Regards
Stewart Mulligan

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