

ROTARY YOUTH DRIVER AWARENESS PROGRAM (RYDA) ROAD SAFETY EDUCATION SUBMISSION TO LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ENQUIRY

My name is Marion Cooper , a member of the Rotary Club of Sandy Bay and Tasmanian Chair of the Rotary Youth Driver Awareness (RYDA) Program

The Program is funded by The Department of State Growth and Road Safety. I manage the program for the whole of Tasmania.

I write this submission on behalf of Rotary, Tasmania

Overview of RYDA program:

RYDA stands for Rotary Youth Driver Awareness. It is an initiative of Rotary District 9680 which covers the area from Sydney Harbour north to the Central Coast in N.S.W. The program is designed to help educate young people about road safety as they approach the period in their life when they start driving a car.

How long has RYDA been operating?

The program was established in N.S.W. in 2000 and has seen substantial growth since then. The first program in Tasmania was run in 2006 in the South and North and extended to the North West Coast in 2007. The program was extended to Smithton and Queenstown in 2009, and to King Island in 2011. The program is now offered to all grade 10 secondary school students in Tasmania and is supported by the State Education Department as part of the school curriculum.

Program development:

The program was developed in consultation with the N.S.W. RTA and Government Departments of Education and Training, Health and the N.S.W. Police. A non-profit organisation Road Safety Education Ltd. (RSE) was formed to develop and supply program content, program supplies and material, support and advertising for RYDA. RSE charge the organising groups a levy for each student that attends a RYDA program. This levy is currently \$6.50 per student.

Program content:

RYDA is a one-day course presented to students in mostly off-campus facilities. Students attend six 30-minute sessions. These sessions are:

Mind Matters – the story of a fatal crash

Speed and stopping – practical demonstration of stopping distance at various speeds

The I in Drive – attitude

Crash Investigator – road crash survivor

Road Choices - Police

Drive Tasmania SOS - hazard and distraction awareness

How does it work?

Rotary Clubs facilitate the venues, organise professional presenters and coordinate schools to attend the program. Program segments are presented to students in an inter-active manner in various formats depending on the topic. Professionals are used to present the program, e.g. Police officers, Drug & Alcohol support workers, brain injury support workers, rehabilitation workers and driving instructors. Up until COVID, RACT supported the program in all locations, however that support has been withdrawn in the past year. Rotary is lobbying RACT to continue support into the future.

Aim of the program:

The program targets “awareness” and “attitudinal change” and seeks to encourage year 10 students, who are on the verge of driving or at least are actively thinking about it, to take a more responsible attitude to motoring. The program co-ordinates the efforts of local road safety experts, driving instructors, the Police, road accident survivors, drug & alcohol educators and motor industry personnel in such a way that students are made aware of the privilege and responsibilities of owning and driving a motor vehicle.

Costs:

It costs approximately \$100,000 per year to stage the program. The main component of this is venue hire, levy, catering, presenter costs. Rotarians volunteer over 300 days per year to assist with staging RYDA. Rotary does not have the financial resources to present the program without the assistance of the State Government.

Venues:

The program is currently run each year in the following locations:

Huonville (PCYC)

Hobart (The Royal Hobart Showgrounds)

Launceston (Symmons Plains)

N.W. Coast (Camp Clayton)

Smithton

Queenstown

King Island (every second year)

Administration Structure:

There is a Rotary State Manager and a RYDA committee in each of the three regions, i. e. South, North and North-West. These committees organise venues, schools, presenters and volunteers for each session. All accounts are handled by the Rotary District Finance Manager.

The Rotary State Chair liaises with Representatives of State Growth and Road Safety regarding the program, funding and any concerns/challenges experienced.

Attendees:

Since inception over 50,000 students have participated in the program from most secondary schools across the state.

Numbers for the past six years:

2015/16 – 4,921 students from 75 schools

2016/17 – 4,363 students from 71 schools

2017/18 – 4,329 students from 65 schools

2018/19 – 4,050 students from 69 schools

2019/20 – 3,323 students from 55 schools (COVID affected)

2020/21 – 4,002 students from 60 schools

Recommendation:

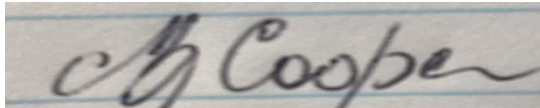
Funding is secured for 4 years, and we recommend this program continues in the current format.

Stakeholders

State Growth Road Safety Division
Education Department
Tasmania Police
Road Trauma Support
Brain Injury Association Tasmania
Drug & Alcohol Support Groups
Tasmanian Ambulance Service
Driving instructors

Incentive:

The 5-hour reduction in required qualifying hours for L platers for RYDA participants is a great incentive and should be advertised widely. There has been an increased interest in the program following this inducement.

A photograph of a handwritten signature in blue ink on lined paper. The signature reads "M Cooper".

Rotarian Marion Cooper OAM

