

YOUR **P****L**ATES



ACT
Government

Justice and Community Safety

DISCUSSION PAPER

REVIEWING THE PROCESS FROM L PLATES TO NO PLATES

Justice and Community Safety Directorate

April – May 2018



INVITATION TO COMMENT

Young, less experienced drivers are more vulnerable to being involved in a serious road crash. In the ACT, 15 young drivers were killed on our roads between 2006 and 2017.

There is also an over-representation of these drivers in serious injury crashes, with many of those sustaining life changing injuries.

The ACT's Graduated Licensing Scheme involves a staged approach to driver licensing with restrictions and sanctions that are reduced as experience is gained. Evidence supports this approach in addressing major crash factors such as age, inexperience and risk taking.

This discussion paper examines the ACT's current licensing and explains the reasoning for the proposed additional rules to keep young drivers safe.

I understand that the introduction of some of these new components may affect the independence of young drivers, their families and friends. It is important that we keep in mind that these initiatives are about saving lives and reducing the far longer lasting impacts of car crashes. Improving safety is a responsibility we must share together.

I am committed to reform in line with national best practice. Most other Australian jurisdictions have introduced components from the Transport and Infrastructure Council endorsed Australian Graduated Licensing Scheme Policy Framework. The framework was designed to encourage and guide improvements to graduated licensing schemes in all states and territories. Evaluations in other states and territories demonstrate that these rules are saving lives. It's now our turn.

I encourage all members of the community to make submissions to the ACT Government in order to participate in the process of introducing a strengthened graduated licensing scheme for the ACT.

The government will consider any input in the development of a final model for a robust learner and provisional system that improves road safety, and reduces the road toll in the ACT towards Vision Zero.

Together we must reduce the over-representation of young drivers and their peers in fatal and serious injury crashes; cut the cost of road trauma; and better prepare our young adults for a safer transition into driving on our roads.

Shane Rattenbury MLA
Minister for Road Safety



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Participate in the survey at
www.yoursay.act.gov.au or send your
comments via email to
roadsafety@act.gov.au.

Written submissions can be sent to:

**Graduated Licensing Scheme Review
Road Safety Policy, Justice and
Community Safety Directorate
GPO Box 158**

IN 2016, THE MEDIAN
AGE AT WHICH PEOPLE
IN THE ACT OBTAINED
A LICENCE:

L PLATES
16years 9months

P PLATES
18years

NO PLATES
25years

WE ALSO KNOW THAT THE
MAJORITY OF CANBERRANS
HOLD SOME TYPE OF
DRIVERS LICENCE:

93% of **17-24**
YEAR OLDS HOLD A LICENCE

97% of **25** YEAR
OLDS
AND OLDER HOLD A LICENCE

PROVISIONAL DRIVERS
represent **6.5%** of all
LICENCE HOLDERS IN THE ACT

LEARNER DRIVERS REPRESENT
3.6%

YOUNG DRIVER CRASH STATISTICS

Between 2006 and 2017, 15 young drivers (aged 17-24) have been killed while driving on our roads with five of those driver deaths between midnight and 5am.

In the same period, cars driven by young drivers (aged 17-24) killed 23 other drivers, cyclists, passengers or pedestrians, with 10 of those deaths between midnight and 5am.

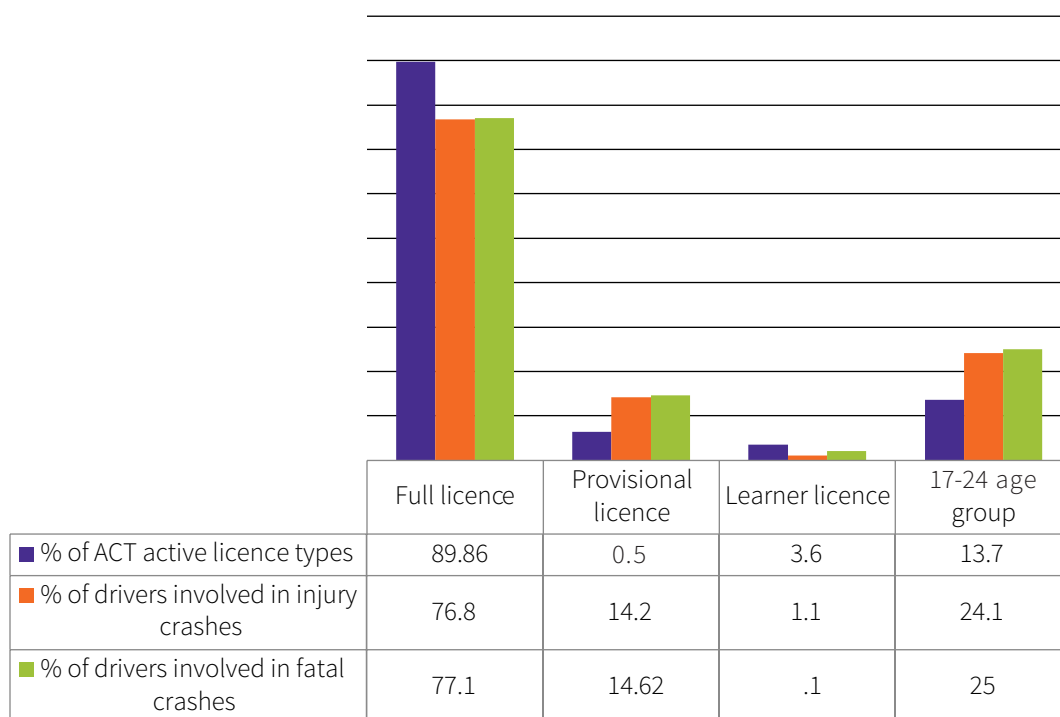
The majority of young drivers typically display safe driving behaviours and follow the rules but the over-representation of this age group in the road toll is a continuing concern.

Driving solo requires good judgement, risk assessment and decision making – these skills are enhanced from continued experience and guidance, but a lot is dependent on age and cognitive development

Due to inexperience, provisional drivers of any age pose a high risk of being involved in crashes, especially in the first six months of unsupervised driving. Younger drivers (aged 17-24) may be fully licensed, but are in the high risk category due to their relative inexperience, their risk taking choices, or their pattern of driving behaviours.

All of these things we can do something about. This review looks at both inexperience and age when considering the future of graduated licensing in the ACT.

Table 1: ACT licence holders and casualty crashes 2011-15



WHAT IS THIS DISCUSSION PAPER ABOUT?

This discussion paper presents a range of ways to improve the safety of young drivers. The initiatives are based on research and best-practice which have shown an improvement in the safety of young drivers.

Key questions that the government is seeking input on are:

- > the timing of introduction of these reforms to ensure a smooth transition with minimal impact to the community
- > the appropriate staging of restrictions (whether they should apply to P1 or P2 drivers and for how long), and
- > the design and application of any provisions for exemption of the new components to minimise undue hardship on members of our community.

A 2017 Australian Automobile Association report analysing the cost of road trauma nationally in 2015, found that each of Australia's road fatalities had a total economic cost of \$4.34 million. This is in addition to the lasting emotional toll on families, friends and the community from avoidable loss of young lives on our roads, which is immeasurable.

The current ACT graduated licensing scheme does not provide an opportunity for optimal development of driving skills and does not adequately reduce young driver exposure to high risk scenarios.

Evidenced based restrictions on young drivers (with appropriate exemptions) and more comprehensive driving practice and testing requirements as detailed in this discussion paper can help better prepare our young adults for a safe transition into driving.

ACT'S GRADUATED LICENSING SCHEME

A Graduated Licensing Scheme is a staged approach to licensing for young and novice drivers. Restrictions and sanctions gradually reduce over time as the drivers become more experienced and skilled in operating a vehicle. This allows new drivers to gain experience and develop safe driving skills under low risk driving conditions before moving on to the next stage and finally obtaining a full licence.

In the ACT, there are three main stages:

1. the learner phase of driving under adult supervision,
2. the provisional licence phase with restrictions and sanctions, and
3. the unrestricted, full licence phase.

New drivers gain experience and skills under less risky driving conditions before moving on to the next stage.

The ACT graduated licensing scheme was first introduced in September 1993, with the Road Ready education components introduced in 2000. Road Ready is a compulsory pre-licensing education program completed in Year 10 at school, or through an authorised Road Ready Centre. The course focuses on education rather than skills training, with a variety of interactive activities relating to safe driving practices.

While all Australian jurisdictions have a graduated licensing scheme for drivers and riders, they each vary in the type of restrictions and sanctions applied. International and national research indicates these systems are successful in reducing young driver crashes.

CURRENT ACT GLS SYSTEM



PLATE LEARNER'S PERMIT

- > 15 years 9 months or older
- > Pass Road Ready knowledge test
- > Must hold learner licence for 6 months
- > Zero blood alcohol limit



PLATE PROVISIONAL LICENCE

- > 17 years of age or older
- > Pass assessment from an Authorised Government Assessor or complete the competency based assessment with an Accredited Driving Instructor
- > 3 years
- > Zero blood alcohol limit
- > 4 demerit points
- > At 6 months, an additional 4 points can be granted on passing an optional Road Ready Plus course.
- > No P1 or P2 stages



FULL LICENCE

- > 21 years of age
- > Have held a provisional licence for 3 years

NATIONAL BEST PRACTICE

In 2014, the Transport and Infrastructure Council endorsed an *Australian Graduated Licensing Scheme Policy Framework*, designed to encourage and guide improvements to graduated licensing scheme in all states and territories. This met a commitment in the *National Road Safety Strategy 2011-20* to develop an evidence based system for new drivers.

The national framework identifies components of a graduated licensing scheme which are best practice and ranks those against a tiered system of 'standard', 'enhanced' and 'exemplar' models. The ACT is aiming to introduce components of the 'exemplar' model.

The current ACT graduated licensing scheme has fewer components than other Australian jurisdictions, and does not meet all of the components of the national framework 'standard' model. Key areas of inconsistency with the standard model for the ACT relate to minimum driving hours (*no minimum is set in the ACT*); low demerit points for learners (*higher number in the ACT*); use of hands-free mobile phones (*allowed in the ACT*); and hazard perception testing (*does not occur in the ACT*).

SUCCESS IN OTHER STATES AND TERRITORIES

All Australian jurisdictions have introduced components of the national framework and some have increased restrictions in recent years. This has followed evaluations demonstrating significant reductions in young driver involvement in fatal and serious injury crashes since the introduction of new rules.

VICTORIA

The Victorian graduated licensing scheme evaluation found 42.5% fewer drivers aged 18–23 years have been involved in fatal or serious injury crashes in the decade since the graduated licensing scheme was introduced in 2007-2008.

QUEENSLAND

Queensland introduced minimum 100 logged hours and late night peer passenger restrictions in 2007. A three year evaluation, showed a 38.32% reduction in fatalities for P1 provisional drivers and an overall reduction of 31% for all novice driver categories.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

In the 11 months after new learner and provisional laws were introduced in South Australia, fatal crashes involving people under 25 years of age were more than halved from previous averages.

NEW SOUTH WALES

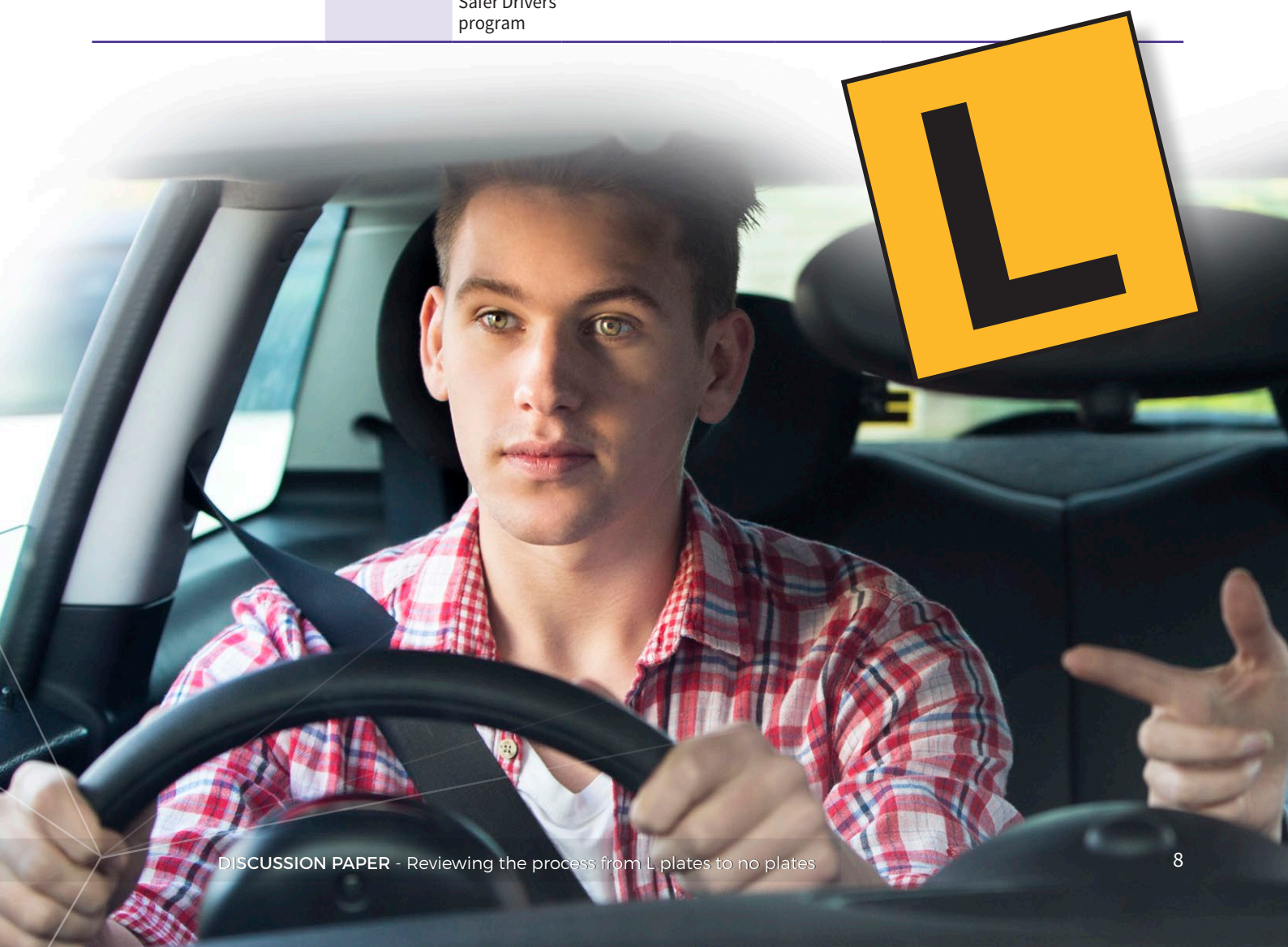
A 2011 Auditor-General performance review found fatal crash involvement rates for young drivers (under 26) declined by 51% from 1999-2000 to 2009-10, compared with a reduction of 35% for drivers aged 26 years and over. This reduction in crash rates coincided with the introduction of the revised graduated licensing scheme (minimum 120 hours logged experience over 12 months on L plates) in 2000.

42.5% fewer drivers
aged
18–23 years
have been involved in
fatal or serious injury
crashes in Victoria.



JURISDICTIONAL COMPARISON OF GRADUATED LICENSING SCHEME COMPONENTS

LEARNER PERIOD									
	ACT CURRENT	ACT CHANGES	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	NT
Min Age	15 years 9 months	No change	16 years	16 years	16 years	16 years	16 years	16 years	16 years
Min length	6 months	12 months	12 months	12 months	12 months	12 months	12 months	12 months	6 months
Expiry	2 years	5 years	5 years	10 years	3 years	2 years	3 years	3 years	2 years
Tests	Road ready course and road knowledge	No change	Driver Knowledge Test	Road law knowledge	Road law knowledge	Road law knowledge	Road law knowledge, driving test after 25 hours & 6months as learner	Road law knowledge	Road law knowledge
Penalties	12 points in 3 years	4 points in 3 years	4 points in 3 years	5 points in 12 months 12 points in 3 years	4 points in 12 months	4 points in 3 years	4 points in 12 months	4 points in 12 months	5 points in 12 months 12 points in 3 years
Max speed limit	Sign posted	No change	90km/h	Sign posted	Sign posted	100km/h	100km/h	80km/h	80km/h
Supervised driving logged	0 but 50h recommended	100h including 10h night	120h inc 20h night OR 100h and Safer Drivers program	120h including 10h night	100h including 10h night	75h inc 15h night	50h in one block inc 5h at night	50h (L2)	0



P1 PERIOD									
	ACT CURRENT	ACT CHANGES	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	NT
Min Age	17 years	No change	17 years	18 years	17 years	17 years	17 years	17 years	16 years 6 months
Min length	3 years	No change	12 months	12 months	12 months	12 months	6 months	12 months	2 years
Tests to get P1	Driving test or CBTA	Driving test or CBTA and HPT	Driving test and HPT	Driving test and HPT	Driving test	Driving test or CBTA and HPT	HPT and driving test	Driving test	Driving test
Passenger restrictions	No	One peer passenger only (16-24 years)	Only one passenger under 21yo between 11pm-5am	One peer passenger only (16-22 years)	One peer passenger between 11pm-5am	One peer passenger only (16-20 years)	No	No	No
Late night restriction	No	12am-5am	Only if multiple passengers	Only if multiple passengers	Only if multiple passengers	12am-5am	12am- 5am first 6 months of P1	No	No
Max speed limit	Sign posted	No change	90km/h	Sign posted	Sign posted	100km/h	100km/h	80km/h	100km/h
Mobile phone	Hands free permitted	No mobiles	No mobiles	No mobiles	No mobiles	No mobiles	Hands free permitted	Hands free permitted	No mobiles
BAC	Zero	No change	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero
High powered vehicle restriction	No restriction	No change	Prohibited vehicle conditions	No high performance vehicles	No high performance vehicles	No high performance vehicles	No restriction	No restriction	No restriction
Penalties	4 points in 3 years 8 points in 3 years if complete Road Ready Plus	4 points in 3 years	4 points in 3 years - Any speeding offence results in P1 licence suspended for at least 3 months	5 points in 1 year 12 points in 3 years	4 points in 1 year	4 points in 3 years	4 points in total for L and P1	4 points in 1 year	4 points in 1 year
CBTA = Competency Based Training and Assessment. BAC = Blood Alcohol Concentration. HPT = Hazard Perception Testing									



P2 PERIOD									
	ACT CURRENT (as per P1)	ACT CHANGES	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	NT
Min Age	N/A	18 years	18 years	19 years	18 years	18 years	N/A	17 years	N/A
Min length	N/A	2 years	2 years	3 months	2 months	2 months	18 months	2 years	N/A
Tests to get P2	N/A	N/A	N/A	Demerit point free	HPT	Demerit point free	Demerit point free	Demerit point free	N/A
Mobile phone	N/A	No mobiles	No mobiles	No mobiles	Hands free permitted	Hands free permitted	Hands free permitted	Hands free permitted	N/A
Max speed limit	N/A	N/A	100km/h	Sign posted	Sign posted	100km/h	100km/h	Sign posted	N/A
BAC	N/A	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero	N/A
Vehicle	N/A	No restrictions	High power vehicle conditions	No high performance vehicles	No high performance vehicles	No high performance vehicles	N/A	No restriction	N/A
Penalties	N/A	4 points in 3 years	7 points	5 points in 1y 12 points in 3y	4 points in 1y	4 points in 3y	8 points in total for L until 2 nd year P2	4 points in 1y 12 points in 3y	N/A



FULL LICENCE									
	ACT CURRENT (as per P1)	ACT CHANGES	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	NT
Min Age	N/A	18 years	18 years	19 years	18 years	18 years	N/A	17 years	N/A
Min length	N/A	2 years	2 years	3 months	2 months	2 months	18 months	2 years	N/A

IMPACT OF CHANGES ON DRIVERS AND FAMILIES

The introduction of many of these new rules may result in an increased, incidental burden to prospective drivers and their families in terms of independence and mobility.

Introducing a requirement for a higher number of hours of supervised driving would require the learner driver to have access to a vehicle for longer periods; significant actual time on the road with a supervising driver; or perhaps increased costs to pay for supervised driving lessons. Extending the length of a learner licence aims to offset this impact by spreading the costs and driving hours over the longer period. However, there will be situations where a prospective driver will incur more costs in order to obtain their full licence.

Consideration must be given to how a new system could provide opportunity for disadvantaged demographics to meet the conditions of gaining driving experience. Certain exemptions and restricted licensing options for people who prove they are unable to achieve minimum requirements are being considered.

Restrictions will be enforced by licence type and we welcome comments to assist the development of exemptions for the passenger restriction and night time driving components of a new scheme. For example, exemptions may apply for employment, education or emergency situations. Given that the evidence related to risk is predominantly attached to the younger age group, there is potential to apply broader exemptions from certain restrictions for mature-aged (over 25 years) novice drivers.





INCREASE MINIMUM LEARNING HOURS

A learner driver will be required to hold their learner licence for a minimum of 12 months and record a minimum of 100 supervised driving hours (including at least 10 hours at night) before they will be eligible to apply for a provisional licence.

The expiry date of a learner licence will be increased to 5 years.

Without an extensive amount of supervised learner driving, it is possible that some ACT learner drivers will not experience driving under more challenging and complex situations until after obtaining their provisional licence. The evidence supports setting minimum supervised hours including minimum required hours at night, and in adverse weather conditions.

The proposal to increase the supervised driving hours to 100 hours is consistent with the enhanced model of the national framework. Extending the length of a learner licence to five years allows more time for a learner to complete the minimum hours of supervised driving without the pressure of their learner licence expiring.

Other jurisdictions vary in their minimum supervised driving requirement. For example, NSW and Victoria require 120 hours, Queensland requires 100 hours, and SA requires 75 hours. Modelling by Austroads predicts that requiring at least 80 hours of supervised driving would lead to a 17-22% reduction in provisional driver crashes for drivers aged 18 or over.

NSW learner drivers have an option to reduce minimum supervised driving by 20 hours by completing the *Safer Drivers Program*. NSW learners can also credit another 20 logbook hours by undertaking 10 hours of supervised driving with a professional instructor. There is potential to consider a similar incentive in the ACT by crediting hours via completion of a course such as Road Ready Plus, or driving with an accredited driving instructor.

Increasing the minimum learner period in the ACT from 6 months to 12 months is also consistent with the national framework. Longer periods of licensing ensure that learner drivers have adequate time to gain experience on the road under supervision before applying for their

provisional licence. Modelling by Austroads predicts that a minimum learner period of 12 months could lead to a 26% reduction in fatal crashes for 16 year olds and a 17% reduction for 17 year olds.

There will be no changes to the current minimum age for learner or provisional licensing.

The national framework recommends measures to encourage drivers to enter the licensing system at an older age and after a minimum amount of supervised hours. In the ACT, the current learner age is 15 years 9 months to enable students to participate in the mandatory Road Ready program which forms part of the year 10 curriculum. If we increased the age, we could disadvantage some students who then may be excluded from this opportunity.

Delaying the age of independent, provisional driving increases the likely maturity level of drivers, and reduces exposure during the higher risk age-group. Relevant graduated licensing scheme components, such as minimum supervised driving hours, can delay licensing until substantial driving experience is gained. The median age of ACT drivers attaining their provisional licence is already 18 years which achieves this component.

Pros

- > **research shows more hours reduces crash risk**
- > **increased minimum hours provides a more complete learning experience**
- > **ability to experience conditions all year round as a supervised driver - all seasons and wet weather**

Have your say

- > **should supervised hours be 100 or 120 hours?**
- > **should credit apply for professional driving lessons?**

www.yoursay.act.gov.au



INTRODUCE HAZARD PERCEPTION TESTING

Hazard perception testing for provisional licensing

Hazard Perception Testing (HPT) is a computer based touch screen test that measures a driver's ability to recognise potentially dangerous situations on the road and respond appropriately. HPT is a component of each level of the national framework.

Research by Austroads notes a number of evaluations proving the value of HPT in predicting subsequent crash risk, including one study that found those drivers who failed HPT at least twice were more likely to be involved in a crash compared to those who passed their first attempt.

There is currently no HPT requirement in the ACT. The proposal to introduce HPT in the ACT would mean that learner drivers cannot progress to a provisional licence without first passing the HPT. This is the same approach adopted by NSW, where it costs \$45 per attempt. Practice tests would also be made available.

Pros

- > tests a learner's ability to accurately identify and respond to risks or hazards
- > gets young people thinking about driving safely

Have your say

- > what should be the consequence of failing a Hazard Perception Test?

www.yoursay.act.gov.au



REDUCE DEMERIT POINTS

The demerit threshold for learner and provisional drivers will both be limited to four points in three years.

The national framework supports swift, certain and severe sanctions in deterring high risk driving behaviours, and provides for "low" or "very low" demerit point thresholds for young and novice drivers.

In 2016, only 2.8% of provisional licence holders had a licence suspension for exceeding the demerit threshold, and 88% of 16-19 year old drivers did not incur a demerit point at all.

Learner drivers in the ACT have a demerit threshold of 12 points over three years, and reducing this to four points over three years is consistent with NSW and SA, and with national framework recommendations.

Currently, provisional drivers who have held a licence for at least 6 months are able to increase the demerit point threshold on their provisional driver licence, from 4 to 8, by successfully completing the Road Ready Plus course.

Consistent with the recommendations of the Review of Road Ready, and given this incentive does not align with the current evidence that shows the need for swift, certain and severe sanctions to deter high risk driving behaviours among young and novice drivers, it is proposed that this incentive be removed.

Pros

- > swift and certain penalties to deter high risk driving

Have your say

- > what will be the impact of limited points?

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EXTEND THE MOBILE PHONE BAN

A total ban on the use of mobile phones (including hands-free) for learner, P1 and P2 drivers

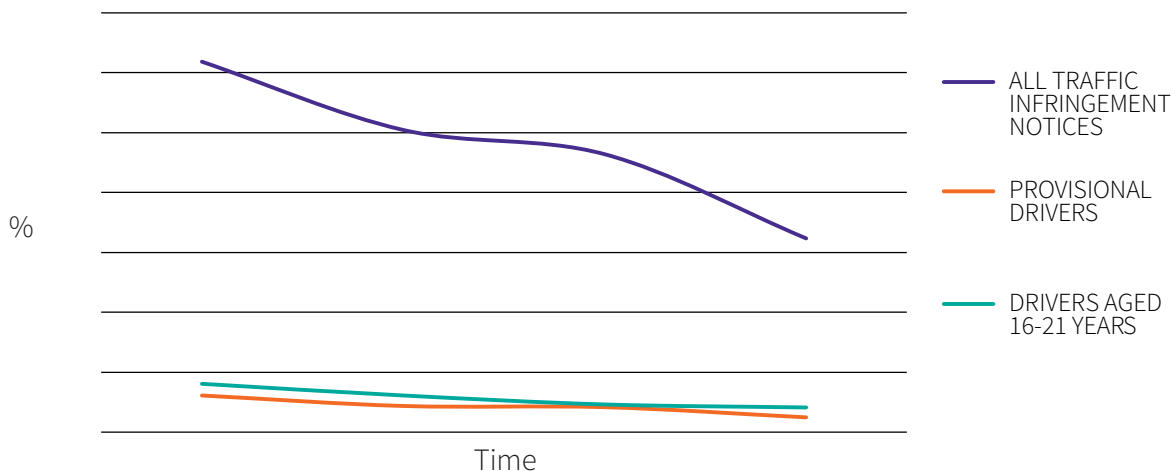
Any activity that distracts the driver or competes for their attention while driving can result in more lane deviations, greater fluctuations in speed, delays in driver reactions and increase the risk of the driver not anticipating potential hazards.

Using a mobile phone while driving causes visual, cognitive and physical distractions, and evidence suggests that hands-free phones are not safer to use while driving than hand-held, as it is the cognitive distraction that has the most impact upon driving performance. Research shows that young drivers are more prone to distraction.

Currently in the ACT, it is illegal to drive a vehicle while using a hand-held mobile phone. A driver using a mobile phone is liable for an infringement penalty of \$447 and three demerit points. A driver who uses a mobile phone for messaging, social networking, mobile application or accessing the internet can be liable for a \$548 fine and four demerit points. This means that a provisional driver could lose their licence for three months for a single offence of this type.

Data from ACT Policing (Table 4) shows that young and provisional drivers are responsible for around 12% of traffic infringement notices for using a hand-held mobile phone while driving.

Table 4: Mobile phone infringements ACT



The ACT Road Safety Action Plan 2016-20 already includes an action item to introduce a full mobile phone ban (including via Bluetooth) for novice drivers for the entirety of the learner and provisional period.

This would mean that learners, P1 and P2 drivers cannot use any function of their mobile phone while driving, including the hands free and the GPS functionality (even if the SIM-card is removed). Learner, P1 and P2 drivers will be allowed to use a mounted GPS device which is not a phone. While some may argue that using the navigational functions on a mobile phone is more convenient, the potential to be distracted by phone calls, text messages, social media and other functions is very real.

Pros

- > reduces distractions for all drivers
- > safety lesson for life

Have your say

- > what is the potential impact of a total ban of mobile phones?

www.yoursay.act.gov.au



P PLATES

AMEND LICENSING STAGES

Introduce P1 (for 1 year) and P2 (for 2 years) to distinguish between stages of restrictions.

The probability of being involved in a motor vehicle accident is highest during the first months after provisional (solo) licensing. Comparatively, learner drivers are at much less risk of being involved in a crash because of the fact they are supervised by an adult. One of the reasons for this is that driving unsupervised requires judgement, risk assessment and decision making that develops from experience, guidance, and cognitive development.

Between 2006 and 2017, 15 young drivers (aged 17-24) were killed while driving in the ACT.

Casualty crashes involving cars in the ACT during 2011-15 confirms the disproportionate representation of drivers in the 17-24 age bracket. The table below shows that the involvement of 17 year old drivers in casualty crashes is almost three times their proportion of the licence holding population.

A graduated licensing scheme involving two provisional licensing stages (P1 and P2) is better able to target restrictions at the most at risk age classes, while gradually lifting restrictions as the driver gains experience. The restrictions and potential exemptions that apply at each stage are set out under each relevant proposed change.

Pros

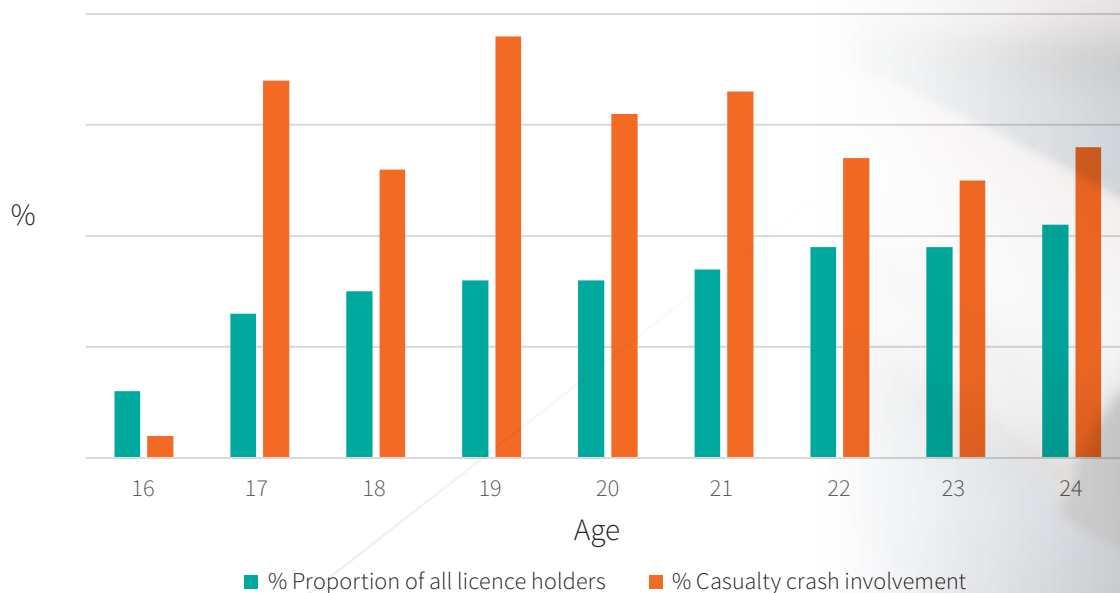
- > provides stages to introduce restrictions
- > young people gain experience and develop safe driving skills under low risk conditions

Have your say

- > what restrictions should apply to P1 and P2 drivers?

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Table 2: Young driver licence holders, casualty crash rates – ACT 2011-15





YOUR **P**LATES

NIGHT DRIVING RESTRICTIONS

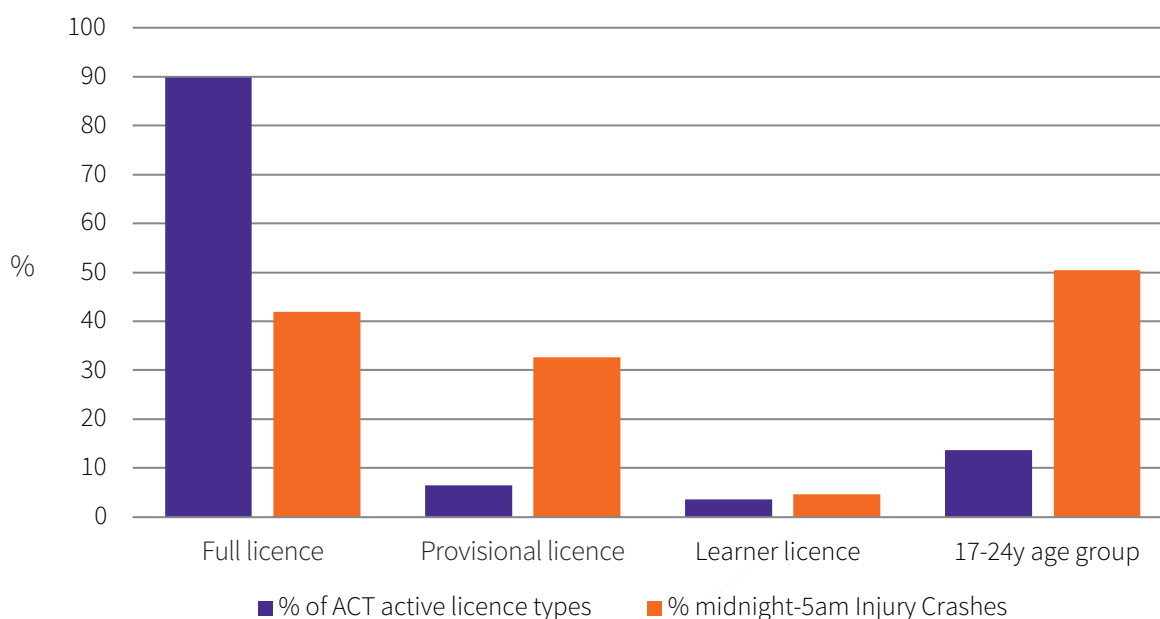
P1 drivers will be prohibited from driving between the hours of midnight and 5am (exemptions may apply)

The national framework recommends, and research supports, a minimum number of supervised night time driving hours be completed before a driver gains their provisional licence.

Once a driver gets their provisional licence they continue to be at a heightened risk of crashing as the dangers of distraction, challenging driving conditions and fatigue are enhanced at night. Restriction of night time driving also reduces the likelihood of unintentional low range drink driving by novice drivers, if they are drinking socially and would otherwise choose to drive themselves or others home.

Restrictions would be applied for the P1 period only, to enable experience in solo evening driving before moving to P2.

Table 3: Injury crashes midnight to 5am – ACT, 2011-15



The table above demonstrates that proportionately more casualty crashes in the hours of midnight to 5am involve young and novice drivers. Of the eight vehicles involved in fatal crashes in that time period in the ACT, five drivers were aged 17-24 (62.5%). Of the 107 vehicle drivers involved in injury crashes during those hours, about one third held provisional licences, and half were aged 17-24.

Unfortunately the over-representation of young drivers involved in crashes, especially at night has a profound impact on passengers and other road users, with statistics showing that young drivers cause more fatalities to others than themselves while driving.

Between 2006 and November 2017, 15 young drivers (aged 17-24) were killed while driving in the ACT with five of those driver deaths between midnight and 5am.

In that same period, cars driven by young drivers (aged 17-24) killed 23 other drivers, cyclists, passengers or pedestrians with 10 of those deaths between midnight and 5am.



PLATES

For a midnight to 5am restriction for drivers aged 17, expected benefits include a 44% reduction in fatal crashes at night and 21% during the day.

South Australia and Western Australia do not allow P1 drivers to drive at all between midnight and 5am (unless exempted). In NSW and Queensland, night driving restrictions only apply as a component of passenger restrictions.

The midnight to 5am restriction period provides a compromise between mobility of young adults and the clear evidence that night time driving significantly enhances risk of fatal crashes for novice drivers. While a night time restriction starting from 9pm would provide an additional safety benefit, this may disproportionately affect the mobility of young drivers.

A restriction between midnight and 5am is a compromise between young driver mobility and safety. Any restriction on night time driving would be considered subject to exemptions.

Considerable thought must be given to an exemption model which may also be applied to mature aged provisional drivers. Implementing an administrative process may delay urgent needs for an exemption, or interrupt the needs of people who may, for example, change circumstances of employment at short notice.

Some jurisdictions apply an automatic exemption from the night driving restriction for employment and education/training purposes, or for participation in sports, training or eligible events that require them to leave home by car earlier than 5am. That model places the onus on the driver to satisfy police roadside that they fit the exemption criteria - for example, by carrying a letter from their employer, education or training organisation, or sports club.

Pros

- > **research shows night time restrictions reduces crash risk**
- > **brings ACT into line with nearby states**

Have your say

- > **when should night time restrictions apply to P1 and P2 stages?**
- > **what exemptions, if any, should apply?**

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**A midnight to 5am
restriction for drivers**

aged 17

is expected to result in a

44%

**reduction in fatal
crashes at night**



PLATES

PASSENGER RESTRICTIONS

P1 drivers will not be permitted to carry more than one peer aged (16-24 years) passenger (exemptions may apply)

Transporting peer aged passengers significantly increases the crash risk for young drivers, providing distraction or sometimes encouragement for risk taking. The risks are highest for 16-17 year old drivers but also elevated for 18-19 year olds when multiple passengers are present.

For example, one study found that the presence of male teenage passengers was linked with risky driving behaviour among both male and female teenage drivers. Another found that for 16-19 year olds, accident involvement was approximately twice as high for those with passengers than those without.

The national framework recommends restrictions on carrying multiple peer aged passengers during the early provisional period. The Austroads report predicts a range of benefits of passenger restriction to include at least a 12% reduction in fatal crash involvement of 17 year olds, and a 7% reduction in fatal crashes of drivers aged 15-17.

While a complete prohibition on driving with any peer aged passengers would provide additional safety benefits in terms of a 21% reduction in fatal crashes of drivers, this may disproportionately affect the mobility of young people. A one peer passenger limit is a compromise between young driver mobility and safety.

Passenger distraction features more significantly during night time crashes (midnight to 5am) in the ACT.

In the period 2011 to 2015, three of the five drivers aged 17-24 (62%) involved in fatal crashes had three passengers; and 10 of the 54 drivers of that age group (19%) involved in injury crashes had two or more passengers in the car.

NSW and QLD allow P1 drivers to carry only one peer aged passenger between the hours of 11pm and 5am. In NSW, exemptions are only granted in exceptional circumstances, are limited to specific conditions such as for part of employment, and may also be limited to certain vehicles. Victoria and SA do not allow more than one peer aged passenger (16-22 years) at any time. WA, Tasmania and NT have no passenger restrictions.

Passenger restrictions in the ACT would be subject to a similar model of applying exemptions as for night driving, where the onus is on the driver to show they meet the required exemption circumstances.

Pros

- > **a compromise between young driver independence and safety**
- > **reduces passenger distraction and risk-taking driving**

Have your say

- > **when should passenger restrictions apply to P drivers?**
- > **what age should the peer-aged restriction apply to?**
- > **what exemptions, if any, should apply?**

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OUT OF SCOPE

MOTORCYCLES

The paper is limited to car licence classes and does not extend to motorcycle licences.

A review of the scheme for motorcyclists is an action item under the *ACT Road Safety Action Plan 2016-2020*, and will build upon the framework developed as part of this review for car drivers.

VEHICLE POWER RESTRICTIONS

There are currently no vehicle power restrictions for learner or provisional drivers in the ACT, and there is no intention at this time to amend this.

The national framework research report notes a higher crash injury risk for young drivers of high performance vehicles; however, prevalence of ownership is typically low. Assuming 100% compliance with a restriction of these vehicles would see less than 2% reduction in injuries.

There is a risk that restricting these vehicles, which could include the family car, would place young and inexperienced drivers into less safe or cheaper vehicles. Such vehicles may not provide adequate occupant protection, and could still be driven dangerously or driven at high speeds.

The ACT Government has recently partnered with the Australasian New Car Assessment Program (ANCAP) in a *Safer Vehicle Choices Save Lives* campaign encouraging young drivers to purchase the safest vehicle that they can afford. The government intends to continue promoting safer vehicle choices, and recognises that in some cases this may include vehicles with a high power to weight ratio.

REDUCED SPEED LIMITS

The government does not intend to reduce speed limits for learner or provisional drivers.

The national framework does not include this as part of the recommended components. Obliging only some vehicles to drive at a reduced speed limit could risk aggressive driving and unsafe overtaking by other drivers able to travel at higher speeds.

APPLICATION OF CHANGES

Any changes to the system introduced following the consultation process will only apply to drivers entering the licensing system at that time. Changes will not be retrospectively applied to those who are already licenced under the current system.

NATIONAL GRADUATED LICENSING SCHEME FRAMEWORK MODEL

STANDARD	ENHANCED	EXEMPLAR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Learner permit at 16 years, solo licensing from 17 years > 12 months minimum holding of learner permit > Requirement to undertake 50 hours supervised driving recorded in a log book > On-road tests to achieve solo licence > Hazard Perception Test as part of GLS > Zero BAC and no hand held mobiles during entire Provisional period > Lower demerit point threshold for novice drivers > Community education about risks associated with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P1 drivers and late night driving and carrying multiple passengers • Young drivers on a full licence and drink driving > Support programs to assist disadvantaged to progress 	<p>ALL of the Standard GLS measures with the following improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Requirement to undertake 80-100 hours supervised driving recorded in a log book, at least 10 hours at night > Provisional period for 3 years in total (1 year P1 + 2 years P2) > Restriction on the carriage of multiple passengers for P1 (at night or preferably full time) > Restriction on use of hands free phones during P1 phase 	<p>ALL of the Standard GLS measures with the following improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Learner permit at 16 years, solo licensing from 18 years (a mandatory minimum age of 18 years for a provisional licence is exemplar policy. However, jurisdictions that cannot achieve this should aim to achieve a median licensing age in real terms of 18 years or older) > Requirement to undertake 100-120 hours supervised driving recorded in a log book, at least 15-20 hours at night > Provisional period for 4 years in total (1 year P1 + 3 years P2) > Restriction on the carriage of multiple peer aged passengers (full time) for P1 drivers > Restriction on late night driving for P1 drivers > Restriction on use of hands free phones during entire P phase > Very low demerit point threshold during the GLS > Educational programs where there is sound research evidence of improved safety outcomes



