Helping Young People ‘Get In2 Gear’

A program to help disadvantaged young people gain their 50 hours of supervised driving experience was launched at St Helens in August by Break O’Day Mayor, Robert Legge, and Lyons MP, Heather Butler. The program, ‘Get In2 Gear’, helps young people who have difficulty accessing an appropriate supervisor and/or vehicle.

The program is an initiative of the local Community Road Safety Partnership Committee and the Break O’Day Council, and is supported by the Break O’Day Youth Council. Community-led Learner Driver Mentor Programs (LDMP) such as this, play an important role in helping disadvantaged young people to gain their 50 hours supervised driving experience and there are now nine such programs operating across Tasmania.

Heather Butler commended the volunteer mentors for dedicating their time to participate in Get In2 Gear. At the time of the launch, the program had attracted eight mentors - three were already operating, and five were enlisted to start the program.

Through the Tasmanian Road Safety Strategy, the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources (DIER) has developed a Learner Driver Mentor Program Resource Kit to assist organisations intending to develop similar programs.

The Tasmanian Road Safety Strategy will also see the Government provide seed funding to assist organisations in developing LDMPs. DIER is currently developing the funding program, which is intended for implementation later this year.

Driver Training: Training programs are also available for experienced drivers including interactive scenario-based responsive driving programs. These venue-based driver education programs are conducted at our MST Training Facilities at Baskerville and Symmons Plains.

4WD Programs: Motor Safe Tasmania (MST) offers basic and advanced 4WD & recovery programs which are held over one to two days depending on client needs. Programs can lead to nationally recognised qualifications.

ATV Safety Programs: MST is now offering an ATV Safety Program. Conducted in a similar format to the 4WD programs at the Baskerville Training Facility, Programs can lead to nationally recognised qualifications.

OHS & Corporate Services: The Corporate Services training program involves crash investigation, incident reviews, driver assessment, coaching, counselling and remedial training, needs analysis, vehicle familiarisations and eco-driving.

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Strategic Road Safety Message Targets Bikers

The Glamorgan Spring Bay Council on Tasmania’s East Coast has once again demonstrated its commitment to the safety of motorcyclists in an innovative way.

Using a mobile digital display trailer, a simple and effective ‘Ride Safe’ message was displayed on a portion of very twisty and challenging road, targeting motorcyclists on their way to the annual Bicheno RSL motorcycle Show and Shine. The trailer is being used strategically throughout the Glamorgan Spring Bay area, through the Community Road Safety Partnership program, to raise awareness about speed.

“We are a ‘motorcycle friendly’ municipality,” said the local Mayor and well-known motorcycle identity, Bertrand ‘Le Frog’ Cadart. “We are in the game of encouraging safe and enjoyable use of our roads by all road users.”

The president of the Tasmanian Motorcycle Council (TMC), Shaun Lennard, was in attendance at the annual show and said the TMC fully supported this kind of informed approach to motorcycle safety. “Too often there is an over-emphasis on speed but, on country roads, it’s the corners and what might be coming the other way that poses greater risk to riders,” he said.

Mayor Bertrand Cadart pictured with the flashing ‘Ride Safe’ mobile sign in the Glamorgan Spring Bay municipality

Partnership Agreement set to Tackle Highway Safety

The Premier and the Mayors of local councils bordering the Midland Highway have agreed in-principle to develop a formal partnership agreement with the State Government in the next 3 months that will relate specifically to the highway from Launceston to Hobart.

On 7 August, Premier David Bartlett, Local Government Minister Jim Cox and representatives of Hobart City, Clarence City, Glenorchy City, Brighton, Southern Midlands, and Launceston City Councils met to discuss their goals for highway upgrades in the short, medium and long-term.

Premier Bartlett said the Midland Highway is such an important piece of infrastructure for Tasmania that we really need State and Local Government to work in partnership to plan the future. “That is why the Mayors and I have agreed in-principle that we will create a specific new Partnership Agreement on the Midland Highway, and embed within it clear plans for the future of the highway over the next two, five and ten years,” he said.

A second meeting followed soon after to agree to the terms of reference and to start work. It is expected that the partnership agreement will be completed within three months. Once signed, a delegation will meet with the Federal Government in Canberra to secure funding to implement the plans. State Government departments have begun working with the relevant councils to identify the issues for inclusion in the new agreement.
Report Explores Roads and Transport Tax Reform

The President of the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA), Clr Geoff Lake, has called for local roads to be included in any move to link road funding with road use. His comments follow the release of the report called *A Conceptual Framework for the Reform of Taxes Related to Roads and Transport* by Professor Clarke and David Prentice from Latrobe University. The report was commissioned as part of the Henry Tax Review.

In responding to the report, Clr Lake said Local Government generally supports the principle recommended in the Clarke/Prentice report that there should be a direct linkage between the use of road infrastructure, charging and funding. “Future reform that more directly links funding of local roads to their usage would be welcomed by Local Government,” he said.

However, Clr Lake warned against any suggestion that local roads be excluded from any charging regime that might be developed, as this would lead to a two-tier roads system. The report recognises the danger of a two-tier road system that could result in “rate running” by motorists and heavy vehicles to avoid being charged for road use.

Local Government is strongly of the view that any system of road user charging that may be adopted by the Federal and State Governments must be comprehensive and cover the entire road system. The report will be considered by the committee, chaired by Treasury Secretary Ken Henry, charged with the Review of Australia’s Future Tax System and due to report to the Government by the end of 2009.