



P-plate driving age report tabled

A parliamentary committee report tabled today has recommended, by majority decision, lowering Victoria's P-plate driving age to 17.

In making this recommendation, the Law Reform, Road and Community Safety Committee found that young people in non-urban areas may be at greater risk of disadvantage than those in metropolitan areas due to a number of factors, including issues of accessibility.

"Accessible transport options may make a real difference to the social connectivity and healthy development of young people in rural and regional areas," the Committee said in its report.

Reflecting the broad debate in the community around these issues, there were differing opinions among members of the Law Reform, Road and Community Safety Committee about the safety risks associated with lowering the P-plate driving age.

The majority view was to recommend that the Victorian Government lower the probationary driving age to 17 years.

Committee Chair Geoff Howard said the Committee was in full agreement that if the Government does not lower the driving age to 17 years, it should introduce an exemption process that allows young people to apply for a probationary licence at 17 years based on grounds of undue hardship.

"Either option should facilitate opportunities for 17 year-olds to undertake employment, education or training," he said.

Among its 11 recommendations, the Committee is seeking to strengthen the already world-leading Victorian graduated licence scheme.

This includes placing greater restrictions on probationary drivers, improving the 120 hour supervised driving experience for learner drivers and encouraging young people to purchase safer vehicles.

"It is my belief that these initiatives will contribute to Victoria achieving continued reductions in road trauma," Mr Howard said.

The Committee was also cognisant of the need to support young people experiencing disadvantage to become safe, independent drivers and to access affordable and reliable vehicles.

“Recommendations to this effect, combined with recommendations that focus more broadly on transport mobility, and not only on licensing, aim to enhance young people’s capacity to contribute to their community and make positive transitions into adult life,” Mr Howard said.

The report is available from the Committee’s [website](#).

Media Queries

For media comment, contact the Committee Chair, Geoff Howard MP on (03) 5331 7722.

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