

# Older driver reforms: questions and answers

## New licensing system for older drivers

Overview of new system:

- A change to the commencement age of the annual medical assessment from age 80 to age 75.
- Redesigning the over-85 driving test and making it more practical, with testing every two years
- Introduction of the option of driving assessment through accredited driver training organisations like the NRMA and the Australian Driver Trainers Association
- Maintaining modified licence options for over-85 drivers
- The establishment of an Older Drivers Implementation Panel to introduce reforms.

## Questions and answers

### What is a 'modified' licence?

Older drivers may opt for a modified licence on their licence renewal without the need for a driving assessment. The options that can be negotiated on a 'modified licence' may include a radius restriction or a 'home to town'. The details of a 'modified licence' will be developed by the implementation panel.

### What is involved in driving assessment conducted by a driving instructor?

A licensed driving instructor accredited by the RTA to conduct driving assessment will be able assess an older driver's competency and be able to recommend them for their licence or identify areas that may need further action prior to a further assessment. These driving instructors will conduct the assessment in the driver's local area, based on criteria agreed to by the implementation panel.

### How will the aged driving assessment be changed?

The interval between driving assessments will be adjusted to every two years, from the age of 85. Additionally a new, more appropriate driving test which focuses specifically on the critical issues related to older people and their driving behaviour will be developed. Drivers will have the choice of doing the assessment with the RTA or an accredited driving instructor.

### Will older drivers have to do a driving test with the RTA at a motor registry?

No, to obtain an unrestricted driver licence a driver 85 years or over will have a choice of an driving assessment conducted by the RTA or by a licensed driving instructor. Driving assessments conducted by a driving instructor will commence from the older drivers' home. Alternatively, older drivers may opt for a modified licence on their licence renewal without the need for a driving assessment.

### What will the implementation panel be responsible for?

An implementation group will be established to oversee the changes to the older driver licensing process.

The group would be chaired by the RTA and include representatives from the NSW Police Force, the Council on the Ageing, NRMA Motoring and Services, Australian Driver Trainers Association and the Australian Medical Association.

**When will the new system commence?**

The new system requires extensive communications and process changes. These are planned to be completed by early 2009.

**I've already received my letter to do my annual driving test. Will I be able to apply for a 'modified' licence?**

The current system will remain in force until the changes are implemented in early 2009.

**I'm currently aged 77. When will I be required to undertake a medical examination?**

The current system will remain in force until the changes are implemented in early 2009.

**What fees will apply?**

The driving test conducted by the RTA will continue to be provided at no charge. The driving assessment conducted by accredited driving instructors will be on a 'user pays' basis. Older drivers will be able to choose any driving instructor accredited by the RTA to deliver the assessment.

**Can any driving instructor conduct the driving assessment?**

No, only driving instructors who are accredited by the RTA will be able to conduct the assessment.