

# **ACT YOUNG DRIVER CHALLENGE**

**: an incentive – based initiative for provisional drivers**

## **AUTHOR**

Davies R., Community Partnerships Section, ACT Department of Education and Community Services.

## **ABSTRACT**

The Young Driver Challenge (The Challenge) is an ACT community initiative that uses incentives to promote driving excellence for young provisional drivers.

The Challenge involves a large number of community partners including:

- ?? Australian College of Road Safety (ACT and Region)
- ?? ACT Department of Education and Community Services
- ?? 9 ACT (Year 11 and 12) secondary colleges
- ?? Rotary Club of Belconnen (major sponsor)
- ?? 22 ACT and region driving instructors (subsidised driver reviews)
- ?? an ACT radio presenter on FM 104.7

The Challenge:

- ?? builds on the incentive approach developed in the ACT Safe Young Driver Awards Scheme (SYDAS) operated between 1997 and 2000
- ?? resolves the previous scheme's problem of subjective determination of awards and rewards

The Challenge's objective is, through a review driver process, to:

- ?? raise students' awareness of the issue of performance deterioration within 12 months of provisional licensing

There are 3 levels of rewards ranging from up to \$10 for an excellent review drive, (\$50 for the best driver from each college) and \$750 distributed between placed ACT Challenge Finalists.

The driver review scores will indicate whether, on their best behaviour, young provisional drivers drive competently or show signs of skill slippage.

If skill slippage is an issue, and transport authorities are seeking a suitable intervention, they may consider whether a review drive 'reality check' for young drivers could/should be included as part of a graduated licensing process.

## **KEY WORDS**

Young Driver, Skill Slippage, Incentives, Driver Review

## **INTRODUCTION**

The ACT Young Driver Challenge (The Challenge) builds on the incentive approach developed in the ACT Safe Young Driver Awards Scheme (SYDAS) that operated between 1997 and 2000. While the rationale for each program is the same the process whereby rewards and awards are determined for young drivers is different.

## **USING INCENTIVES TO IMPROVE YOUNG DRIVER PERFORMANCE**

The rationale for using incentives to improve young drivers' safety performance is the same for The Challenge as for SYDAS and was outlined in a paper presented at the Road Safety Research, Policing and Education Conference, Canberra, 29-30 November 1999. Anderson et al 1999 (1)) In summary, there is:  
?? a relative shortage of incentive-based road safety programs and promotions targeting young drivers.  
Regulations and sanctions backed up by enforcement and cost penalties are still the main methods of road safety intervention

?? research showing that incentives can be an effective deterrence to risk taking. Elliott 1993 (2), Wilde, 1998 (3), Wilde 1999 (4)

At the MAA Young Driver Seminar Sydney, 31 March 2000 Professor Gerald Wilde quoted his research:

“The effectiveness of incentives in enhancing safety has been clearly established. (Rewards such as) insurance rebates are the best way governments or agencies can motivate people to alter target levels of risks. For example, 15,000 Californian drivers were offered an extension of their driver licences if they didn't have an accident over a period of time. The accident rate fell 33% relative to the control group.....the rebellious 18-25 year olds responded best.” Wilde 1999 (4)

Consequently, the development and implementation of SYDAS and The Challenge incentive type programs, rewarding young drivers who display desirable behaviour, rather than punishing those who misbehave, is an appropriate addition to the more traditional range of measures currently used to influence young drivers.

## **SKILL SLIPPAGE – A YOUNG DRIVER ISSUE**

Young drivers' crash rates rise at around six to twelve months after gaining a provisional licence. This could be due to young drivers:

?? not perceiving that the 'positives' of rapidly increasing car control skill are offset by 'negatives' of slower growth in risk/hazard perception. This leads to misplaced confidence levels; and,

?? copying the sometimes dubious driving habits of other motorists, resulting in skill slippage. Catchpole et al 1994 (5), Wilde, 1998 (3).

## **USING A REVIEW DRIVE TO OBJECTIVELY IDENTIFY SKILL SLIPPAGE**

The 'Achilles Heel' of the SYDAS program was that students' rewards for safe driving were made subjectively by teachers and/or Student Representative Council members observing students drive in college environs. The only students subjected to a review drive were students nominated by colleges for the ACT finals. Although college communities generally supported SYDAS the subjective, random observation method of determining rewards and awards affected the scheme's credibility.

In 2000, teachers at Copland College used a 'review drive method' of determining college awards and nominations for the ACT SYDAS finals. Students were able to have their driving performance assessed by a driving instructor, win a small cash reward and possibly become their college representative for the ACT finals and win a substantial reward and award.

The teachers reported that both mainstream and 'students at risk' were willing to participate in a driving review. In particular, the driving instructor was impressed with the attitudes of the so-called 'notorious student drivers'.

Based on the Copland College experience, the Young Driver Challenge was developed. An objective driver review became the key process in determining students' rewards and awards.

### **YOUNG DRIVER CHALLENGE OBJECTIVES**

The Young Driver Challenge's objective is, through a review driver process, to:

?? raise students' awareness of the issue of performance deterioration within 12 months of provisional licensing

### **COLLEGE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CHALLENGE**

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Term 1</b> – colleges' receive review drive grant and small promotional budget <b>Terms 2 and 3</b> – students' review drives occur <b>September holidays</b> ACT finals are conducted <b>Early Term 4</b> – colleges provide program feedback and financial acquittal <b>Term 4</b> - ACT winner / placings announced, media statement and report released
<b>Documents</b>	Early Term 2 College YDC co-ordinators receive key documents: Implementation Guide; Participating Driving Schools/Instructors List; Driver Review Assessment Forms; and, Promotional Posters
<b>Arranging The Driver Review</b>	Co-ordinators book the driving school/instructor (Document 1) (Note: 22 driving instructors, nearly all affiliated with ADTA, agreed to provide subsidised driver reviews ensuring that all rewards and awards are objectively based) Colleges are advised to book at the same weekly, fortnightly time Driving school/instructor advised whether an automatic or manual required
<b>The Driver Review</b>	For each one hour booking 2 students are reviewed For each student there is a 25 minute drive and 5 minute feedback A review sheet is provided to each student (Document 2) Driving Instructor completes assessment forms and returns to students
<b>Student Rewards</b>	Student takes completed assessment form to the Front Office Student paid the reward identified on the assessment form Rewards are \$10 less \$1 for each type of mistake made All payments made from the college's Young Driver Challenge account
<b>Instructor Payment</b>	Front Office pays driving instructor by cheque on invoice.
<b>Targeting</b>	All college P plate drivers targeted
<b>Best College Driver</b>	The student with the best review drive performance is the College Challenge winner and is nominated for the ACT finals held in the September holidays
<b>ACT Finals</b>	The Australian College of Road Safety (ACRS) and Community Partnerships, Department of Education and Community Services conduct the finals. The main prizes are \$350, \$250 and \$150. All other finalists receive \$50
<b>Media</b>	'The Challenge' is promoted by Mr Marty Haines on his FM 104.7 radio program

The following two documents are provided to colleges to arrange and document the driver reviews:

?? Document 1 'Participating Driving Schools/Instructors'

?? Document 2 'Driver Review Assessment'



**2001 YOUNG DRIVER CHALLENGE - PARTICIPATING DRIVING INSTRUCTORS/SCHOOLS (Document 1)**

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Co-ordinators note: The Following Driving Instructors/Schools have generously agreed to provide subsidised driving reviews.

<b>INSTRUCTOR / DRIVING SCHOOL</b>	<b>CONTACT</b>	<b>COLLEGES INSTRUCTORS MAY CONTACT</b>								
		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
Rod Giles Driving Instructor	Ph: 62873735	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Gary Micallef, Keith Chappel APEX	Ph: 62583779		X			X		X		
CITY - CROSS (12 instructors)	Ph: 62314544 Fax: 62314777 Email: citycross@hotmail.com	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Kerry Myers METAL	Ph: 0416 008047 (W) 62478749 (H)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Brian McKinlay	Ph: 0412 851435 Fax: 62585760 Email :mckinlay@dynamite.com.au		X			X		X		
Lindsay Richmond Elite Driving School	Ph: 0418 889973:				X		X		X	
Peter Gray Driving Instructor	Ph: 0409 442123		X			X		X		
Linda Stegnjaic Drive to Survive	Ph: 0413 398381 (W) Fax 6297 1999				X		X			
Brian Lockley The Bottom Line	Ph: 0412 161209 Fax: 62589695 EMmail lockley@cyberone.com.au	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Pat Hayden Anson	Ph: 0412 107220 Email anson@dynamite.com.au	X			X		X		X	X
David Sutton PRODRIVE	Ph: 62811484	X			X		X		X	X

<b>YDC ADMINISTRATOR</b>	<b>COLLEGE</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>
1.	Canberra	1
2.	Copland	2
3.	Dickson	3
4.	Erindale	4
5.	Hawker	5
6.	Lake Tuggeranong	6

7.	Lake Ginninderra	7
8.	MacKillop	8
9.	Marist	9

**2001 YOUNG DRIVER CHALLENGE- DRIVER REVIEW (Document 2)**  
**Sponsored by the Rotary Club of Belconnen**

(thank you to participating driving instructors who are providing their services at a subsidised rate)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ COLLEGE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

CBTA or LE \_\_\_\_\_ No of Lessons \_\_\_\_\_ Held Licence For \_\_\_\_\_ Manual or Auto \_\_\_\_\_

	Task	Skills and Attitudes	Comments	Point Lost
1.	Preparation	<u>Adjusts</u> seat and mirrors <u>Fastens</u> seatbelt		
2.	Moving Off Procedure	Checks mirrors indicators blindspot		
3.	Hazard Approach	<u>Anticipates/ responds</u> to conditions <u>Uses</u> horn appropriately		
4.	Giving Way	<u>Observes/ responds</u> to signs/signals <u>Judges</u> approach speed of others		
5.	Lane Change Overtaking	<u>Allows</u> 3 sec. signal and lane change <u>Checks</u> blind spot before movement		
6.	Speed Control	<u>Drives</u> according to speed limits and traffic conditions		
7.	Maintains Space	<u>Maintains</u> a 2+ sec gap <u>Allows</u> for an escape route		
8.	Stopping Distance	<u>Allows for</u> extra SD when wet <u>Keeps</u> approp. gap when stationary		
9.	Stopping Slowing	<u>Checks</u> mirrors <u>Uses</u> brakes smoothly and early <u>Avoids</u> braking in corners		
10.	Cornering	<u>Positions</u> correctly for entry and exit, <u>Holds</u> line through the corner		
11.	Steering Method	<u>Uses</u> PP steering, 2 hands, above centre, outside rim. No self return		
12.	Intersections Roundabouts	<u>Uses</u> appropriate indication <u>Enters, turns, exits</u> appropriately		
13.	Reverse or Rt. Angle Parking	<u>Demonstrates</u> safe/efficient parking between 2 vehicles		
14.	System of Car Control	<u>Applies</u> SCC for any hazard (or turn)		
15.	Hazard Recognition	<u>Scans</u> all intersections <u>Uses</u> mirrors every 8/10 secs		
16.	Transmission - manual	<u>Selects</u> appropriate gear for the task <u>Operates</u> controls smoothly		
17.	Transmission - auto	<u>Selects</u> lower gear for slow moving traffic or hills. <u>Can apply</u> kickdown		
18.	Smooth Driving	<u>Drives</u> smoothly and economically <u>Considers</u> the vehicle's mechanics		
19.	Attitude To Road Users	<u>Displays</u> consideration and courtesy toward other road users		

**Note:** Exceeding speed limit (lose 5 points), intervention by instructor (lose 3 points).  
 Error in any other task category (lose 1point)                      **\$10 less ( ) points lost = \$.....**

<b>GENERAL COMMENTS:</b>	<b>OFFICE USE ONLY: (for student payment)</b> Teacher (signature) _____  Front Office (signature) _____
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<b>Reviewed By:</b> _____	Student (signature) _____  <b>Ledger Code (        ) Young Driver Challenge</b> (please photocopy for Front Office and teacher)
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### **COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION**

Community initiatives usually involve considerable time and financial support from partners to improve and/or re-organise social processes. The Challenge is no exception and involves a large number of ACT and region community partners including:

- ?? Australian College of Road Safety (ACT and Region Chapter)
- ?? ACT Dept. of Education and Community Services
- ?? 9 ACT (Year 11 and 12) secondary colleges
- ?? Rotary Club of Belconnen (major sponsor)
- ?? 22 ACT and region driving instructors (subsidised driver reviews)
- ?? Marty Haines, radio presenter, FM 104.7

### **EVALUATION**

It would be extremely difficult to attribute improvements in ACT young driver performance or reduced crash risk to the Young Driver Challenge given the small scale of this project and the number of other current ACT education and enforcement road safety interventions

It is expected that students will drive to the best of their ability to maximise their reward and status with their peers. What may be assessed is whether the driver review scores indicate that, on their best behaviour, young drivers drive competently or show signs of deskilling soon after provisional licensing.

### **THE POTENTIAL**

If skill slippage is an issue, and, transport authorities are seeking an intervention, they may consider including a review drive for young drivers as part of a graduated licensing process.

Whether The Challenge will prove to be a valuable long term young driver initiative will depend on:

- ?? the willingness of a teacher(s) to be a champion(s);
- ?? continued sponsorship
- ?? whether the rewards/awards are seen by students as worthwhile Wilde 1998 (3)

### **CONCLUSIONS**

The Young Driver Challenge is an ACT community initiative that uses incentives to promote driving excellence for young provisional drivers. The scores received from driving reviews will be of value in determining the degree of young driver skill slippage. If skill slippage is shown to be significant a review drive 'reality check' may be an appropriate strategy to raise students' awareness of the issue of performance deterioration within 12 months of provisional licensing.

### **REFERENCES**

1. Anderson R and Davies R, 1999, Can Carrots Improve The Focus Of Young Drivers? The ACT Safe Young Driver Awards Scheme Road Safety Research, Policing and Education Conference paper, Canberra, 29-30 November 1999
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