

SENIORS MOVING SAFELY

**An Information and Media Strategy
for Older Road Users in the ACT**

April 2009

A Report for Council on the Ageing (COTA)

Sponsored by the NRMA-ACT Road Safety Trust





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Council on the Ageing, ACT (COTA ACT)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Seniors Moving Safely is an information and media strategy that creates a framework to deliver key messages to a rapidly growing road safety risk group and their support network over the coming years – and do so in a way that complements the Territory and Municipal Services (TAMS) road safety media strategy and the work of the ACT Council on the Ageing (COTA).

The basis for investigating safety for older road users (those over 65) ultimately lies with the fact that the percentage of the Australian population aged over 65 is projected to more than double by 2032. At the 2006 census, 9.5% of the ACT's population was aged 65 or over; by 2032, the proportion is expected to be between 20 and 25%. In addition, drivers over 75 may be over-represented in serious injury and fatal crashes per head of population and distance travelled. These drivers are more fragile (prone to injury in a crash) than younger drivers.

Drivers over 70 years of age do not show up as a particular problem in ACT crash statistics at present, with this age group being involved in fewer than 5% of all crash casualties in 2006 and 2007. However there will be growing numbers of older road users as the 'baby boomers' age. It is in anticipation of these increasing numbers that steps should be taken with a view to forestalling the emergence of any problem.

Part 1 of *Seniors Moving Safely* identifies key audiences to receive critical transport safety messages. As well as older road users, these audiences include their families and friends, health professionals, ACT public and the media, and transport providers and policy makers.

There are two types of messages to be delivered. In developing key ideas to focus on, it is important to remember that people need to believe there is a problem and they are involved (requiring strategic messages), before they are willing to take action (using specific messages).



Critical transport safety messages are both strategic and specific in scope. Strategic messages include a focus on road safety, the community benefit of maintaining the mobility of seniors, transport options for seniors, lifestyle options to facilitate mobility, the need to be supportive yet realistic with older community members, the need for health professionals to better recognise the role they play in advising seniors, and the need for transport professionals to more clearly consider the needs of seniors in their work. A key theme is that cessation of driving should be a gradual transition or process – not a sudden, traumatic event.

Specific messages focus on the comparative performance of seniors relative to the rest of the population, the need for tolerance of seniors from time to time, safe car choice and improving driving and pedestrian skills.

In Part 2 we outline the behaviours we wish to promote in each of our target audiences. Some communication principles exist for all audiences. However, the most effective means of communicating with older road users and their support networks is through informal, self-controlled learning with information available in small, accessible chunks, and delivered in a positive and encouraging but not condescending manner. When communicating with health and transport professionals, the message and medium need to be tailored specifically for these groups.

Part 3 examines ACT and interstate road safety publicity material with a view to ensuring that we do not ‘reinvent the wheel’. In some important areas, materials exist that require only slight modification to make them suitable for use in the ACT. Examples are relatively generic topics, such as selecting a car to buy, driving and medication, or material aimed at an audience for whom localisation may not matter, such as professionals. However for some important information, localisation and even individual tailoring will be essential, such as information to assist with the decision about giving up driving.



Part 4 presents our recommended older road users' road safety campaigns, based on the findings of earlier parts of the report. In essence, our five year program is proposed as a two-year initial program, followed by a review, then the remaining three years. A launch in conjunction with Seniors Week in March 2010 would be followed by a strategic or a specific campaign every four months.

A summary of the proposed specific activities for the first two years is as follows.

- Seniors Week 2010 will be used to launch our 'conversation' about seniors' mobility, using three themes – older drivers are safe; the mobility transition; and options for future mobility. Media activity would draw on personal case studies and material from the new 'Seniors Driving Longer, Smarter, Safer' package. Estimated cost \$8,000
- July 2010 will focus on family and friends being supportive and realistic – again using local materials and examples. Estimated cost \$3,000
- November 2010 will cover how to keep driving safely for as long as possible; and buying a safe and appropriate car. Estimated cost \$3,000
- March 2011, prior to Easter, will promote tolerance on the road and safe interstate driving. Estimated cost \$3,000
- July 2011 would be a more substantial event, to reinforce the 'mobility transition' message; doing without a car; and re-launching the Livedrive website. Estimated cost \$7,000
- November 2011 can challenge seniors to assess their ability to still drive safely with a 'Have You Still Got It?' tagline. Estimated cost \$6,000

There is also a need for ongoing 'information trickle' activities, which could occur in three ways

- A CSO TV ad on key themes Estimated cost \$20,000



- Distribution of fact sheets in seniors' annual rego renewals Estimated cost \$5,000
- Ads and articles in *'The Chronicle'* and seniors' press Estimated cost \$5,000

In summary, the estimated cost for these nine specific and 'information trickle' activities is \$60,000. This would include development and implementation of media products (such as ads or news releases); media events; project officer costs; and specialist media and road safety advice.

There is also a clear and essential need for overall program coordination, client liaison and ongoing support. This would be most effectively done by a part-time Project Coordinator, assisted at times by specialist expertise. This would cost up to \$10,000 for two years. This person would also undertake much of the specific project work.

Finally, the proposed review of years one and two and development of a future program could cost around \$20,000

TOTAL SUGGESTED TWO-YEAR COST \$90,000

The balance of strategic versus specific campaigns changes over the five years, with the initial emphasis on strategic messages gradually giving way to more specific messages. In year one, a specific-message campaign is suggested. In year two, specific messages are brought in as an offshoot of the strategic campaigns – in many ways as a means of making the strategic messages more real. Throughout, human interest case studies are proposed to communicate the real-life impact of mobility safety decisions.

Finally, Part 5 suggests approximate costings and summarises possible funding sources. It also proposes an evaluation of the effectiveness and success of the program at about the end of its second year. The evaluation should look at crash statistics, attitude changes in our target audiences, the efficiency with which the



campaigns have been conducted, and summarise the informal evaluations of each of the campaigns.

This information and media strategy seeks to create behavioural change not only in older road users themselves, but in all road users, so the practices and attitudes the strategy will put in place become part of ACT road use culture. The ultimate goal is to make the most appropriate levels of mobility available to older road users in ways that are as safe as possible. The anticipated increase in the proportion of older road users means that it makes good sense to address any emerging problems early, to allow time to ensure that we develop effective measures that meet the sensitivities of our target audiences.



INTRODUCTION

In January 2008 the ACT Department of Territory and Municipal Services (TAMS) and the Council on the Ageing ACT (COTA), undertook an analysis of the ‘Older Persons Road Safety Needs Analysis’ report and the Churchill Fellowship report ‘New Moves for Older Road Users’ by Mr Robin Anderson, in order to determine priority initiatives on transport safety for seniors in the ACT.

This comparative evaluation rated five study recommendations involving information and publicity issues as of very high priority, but considered that it would be very desirable if these could be progressed as part of a specific older road user information and media strategy which would also be compatible with the new TAMS road safety media strategy.

RATIONALE FOR STRATEGY

For the purposes of this study, older road users are defined as people over 65 years of age. Most road authorities and health professionals tend to use 65 as a good age to start looking for early warning signs and to implement preventative strategies, as it is from there on that seniors start to recognize changes in their driving abilities and alter the way and amount they drive.

Information on ACT population structure shows that there has been a substantial growth in the 45 to 60 age groups from 1986 to 2006 (see graph below), and as this ‘baby boomer bulge’ ages, there will be significant impact for seniors’ mobility and road safety in the ACT (*ACT in Focus*, 2007).

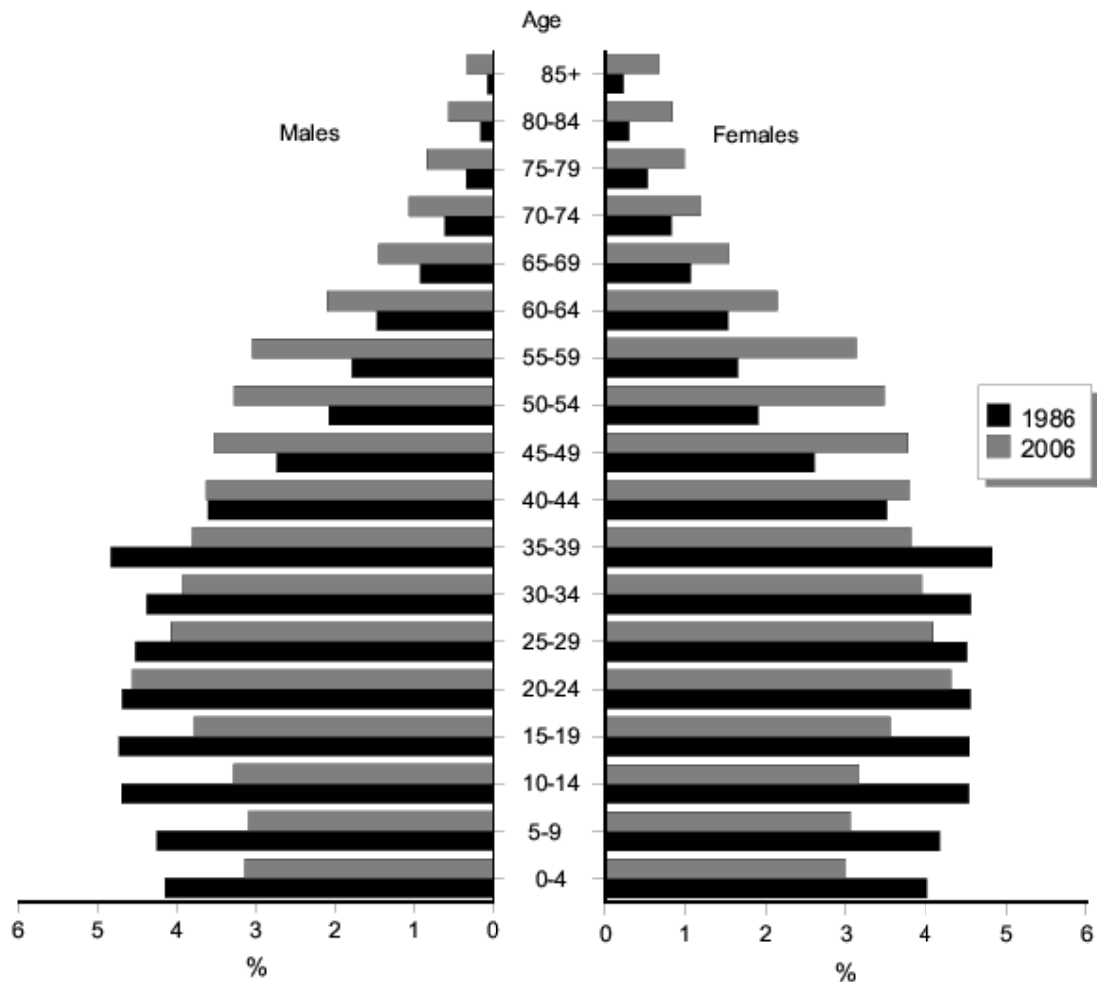
Indeed, the basis for investigating safety for older road users ultimately lies with the fact that the percentage of the Australian population aged over 65 will double by 2050. At the 2006 census, 9.5% of the ACT’s population was aged 65 or over. (ACT Environment Commissioner, 2007) By 2032, the proportion of the ACT population that is aged 65 or over is expected to double, to be between 20 and 25%.



(*ACT Population Projections 2002-2032 and beyond*, 2003; *ACT Population Projections: Snapshot to 2032*, 2003) In addition, because of the higher rate of car use by ageing ‘baby boomers’, the frequency of older driver crashes could triple unless effective countermeasures are implemented. (Anderson 2006 p6)

ACT Population Structure

By age and sex: June 1986 and June 2006



Source: ABS Publication 1307.8 *ACT in Focus* 2007

Older people, especially the ‘baby boomers,’ have increasingly high expectations. They will demand to drive as long as possible – and then expect to have alternative transport to meet their individual needs. They will also have the numbers,



education, contacts and political clout to ensure they are heard! There are thus growing efforts to address the coming wave of older road user needs – and we will be doing well to meet just the basic mobility needs, let alone the wider demands.

It is highly likely that baby boomers' travel patterns and behaviour will be significantly different from the current over-70s, although at this stage it is not certain how. Accordingly new measures, especially transport information and regulations, should be sufficiently flexible to allow for a diverse range of mobility solutions.

Older drivers *are* safer than commonly believed. Once adjusted for travel exposure, their crash rates are quite reasonable, with serious problems mainly in the over 80 age group. In many cases, driving will remain a better and safer (or often only) option, versus walking or public transport (Anderson, 2006, p7).

Drivers over 70 years of age do not show up as a particular problem in ACT crash statistics at the present time. In terms of ACT vehicle controllers in 2006 and 2007, there were 729 casualties over the two years where the age was identified, with only 35 (5%) involving a driver 70 years of age or older. (*Road Traffic Crashes in the ACT*, 2006 p.23 and 2007, p22)

Even so, current national crash rates suggest that older drivers may be over-represented in serious injury and fatal crashes per head of population and distance travelled. This is because there are relatively fewer older people in the population, fewer are licensed, and they tend to drive less frequently and shorter annual distances. Older drivers are also more fragile (prone to injury in a crash) than younger drivers. (*ACT Road Safety Action Plan*, 2007, and 2008 p24)

Unfortunately, current public perceptions are very different. Most people have a negative story about older drivers – a relative, friend or an on-road encounter. It will thus be a significant challenge to get the community to accept that older drivers are not a major risk to other road users.



The recently released ACT road safety media and communications strategy points out that while there are higher priority road safety concerns at the present time, ACT authorities are well aware of the emerging issue of older drivers. With changing demographic patterns, older drivers are likely to present a major challenge for road safety over the next 20 to 30 years. This will require a better understanding of driving behaviours, travel patterns and crash risk in order to develop effective strategies and programs to support continued mobility and safety (*ACT Road Safety Action Plan*, 2007, and 2008 p24).

Accordingly, this study will develop an older road user information and media strategy which will set the framework to deliver key road safety messages to a rapidly growing risk group and their support network – and do so in a complementary way with the TAMS media strategy and the ACT Council on the Ageing.

REPORT STRUCTURE AND METHODOLOGY

This project's key objectives are to:

- Develop a media strategy that identifies key messages on older road user safety for the ACT;
- Establish how these messages can be delivered in a well targeted and cost-effective way;
- Determine which seniors' road safety information and media programs should be given priority in the next five years; and
- Ensure this strategy is compatible with the TAMS road safety media strategy.

To do this, the study will address the following points in succession:

1. What are the key ideas and messages to be disseminated on older road user safety?
2. What is the most effective way(s) to deliver these messages to the various target audiences?



3. What current ACT and interstate materials are available on these issues?
Can they be used/adapted for future needs, or are new items needed?
4. Which information programs should be given priority over the next five years?
5. Suggest indicative costings and funding sources for such programs.

ROLE OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE

The role of the Steering Committee was to ensure input by key stakeholders so as to make the finished information and media strategy as useful as it could possibly be. This involved much more than details of the contents of the final report. The discussion en route ensured that all players were in agreement about proposals for the direction of road safety effort and the implications for the allocation of scarce road safety resources.

Officially, Rod Templar represented COTA and David Quinlan represented TAMS on the Steering Committee. However, involvement by Eddie Wheeler from the NRMA-ACT Road Safety Trust and wider discussion with colleagues by all those involved spread understanding of the information and media strategy during its development. The authors greatly appreciated the widespread support and interest shown during the course of the work.



PART 1: Key Ideas and Messages

In terms of methodology, this study does not attempt an exhaustive analysis of older road user issues in an information needs context. Rather it has used key reference material and informal input by nationally recognised experts to identify the key ideas and messages relevant to older road user safety in the ACT. The references provided at the end of this report give some idea of the range of individuals and organisations involved.

Extensive studies by Bailey (2004) and COTA (2006) provide considerable information on older drivers' perceptions of their mobility and safety information needs and how they obtain such information. The COTA study's survey of nearly 1,500 ACT seniors is especially useful in this regard.

General Considerations

Mobility is critical for healthy ageing. Health and road safety professionals frequently receive pleas for advice on the process of giving up driving and its often dramatic effects on personal mobility and self-image. Older Australians consider medical professionals, rather than family or friends, as the only real authoritative voice on cessation of driving. GPs are the prime source of advice, although optometrists, pharmacists and community nurses are also important players (COTA, 2006, p161).

Mobility is very important in ensuring a healthy old age – both physically and mentally. (Buys and Carpenter, 2000) Information and programs to help older people maintain mobility provide not only safety benefits, but economic and social gains as well.



It is essential to emphasise that cessation of driving should be a gradual transition or process – not a sudden traumatic event. A key element is to get the issue of a mobility transition onto the agenda early – for both seniors and health professionals (Anderson, 2006, p10-12).

An increasingly important issue will be how to reach the small proportion of older drivers who do not self-regulate or avoid assessment. These lapses are often due to lack of recognition of a problem due to illness (often early dementia) or fear of losing their license. Provision of information on both safe driving assessment and mobility alternatives to seniors and their support networks of family, friends and health professionals is the first step in addressing this problem. Again, it is essential to use the concept of a mobility transition to, if possible, phase out driving while providing viable transport alternatives (Anderson, 2006, p12).

There are two types of messages to be delivered. In developing key ideas to focus on, it is important to remember that people need to believe there is a problem and they are involved (requiring strategic messages), before they are willing to take action (using specific messages).

Strategic Messages

The initial focus of a seniors' mobility safety campaign should be on improving perceptions and information among both seniors and the general community.

The strategic messages cover broader principles and issues and are directed at various members of the target audiences, rather than addressing a specific issue of seniors' road safety.

The strategic messages will follow themes based around:

- Community awareness and general road safety
 - Inform the community and policy makers that older drivers do not represent a major risk to other road users.



- Older people in particular (and society overall) will benefit substantially by remaining mobile.
 - Persuade the public to support transport options developed for older people.
 - Plant the seed that from 65 people should be making long-term (next 20 years) lifestyle changes.
- Supporting seniors
 - Clearly acknowledge the concept that older people are generally able to meet their transport needs by driving successfully and safely.
 - State the importance of giving support to seniors in a variety of ways.

The information provided in the strategic messages will cover the themes of seniors and the general community needing to be informed about the importance of preparing for alternative transport/mobility well before the need to stop driving. Providing information to seniors that will aid them in making informed decisions about mobility while they still have other options available is crucial. Key messages including information about timing and techniques for self-regulation; gradual phasing out of driving; and developing post-driving mobility options – leading to gradual behavioural change – are also of importance.

As part of the Media Strategy, these issues will be expressed as succinct messages that are relevant to each target audience.

Specific Messages

The specific messages are designed to be put in place once the strategic messages have been disseminated and there is general community awareness around the issues of senior mobility.



Their purpose is to provide essential messages to seniors and the target audiences about the things that may affect senior mobility and the importance of preparing for and recognising these.

Specific messages will look into the themes of:

- Comparative performance of older road users and tolerance towards them.
- Planning for lifestyle change.
- Declining sensory and cognitive abilities and how this effects driving.
- Interacting with other road users, including pedestrians.
- Updating the knowledge levels of road users and increasing the information available to the relative of older road users.
- Impressing the importance of supporting older road users upon family and friends.
- Helping medical practitioners realise the important role they play in decisions made by seniors, and having such advice reinforced by other health professionals (pharmacists, optometrists, nurses etc).

While it is important to initially concentrate on the ‘strategic’ messages outlined above, it is also desirable that some of the more ‘specific’ messages should also be concurrently disseminated. In particular, it seems sensible to publicise some of the valuable older road user resources and programs currently available in the ACT (Anderson & Wheeler, 2000, p103-105).

STAKEHOLDERS AND TARGET AUDIENCES

Stakeholders

Developing and strengthening partnerships between government, health and road safety groups, seniors’ organisations and the wider community will be invaluable in trialling, implementing and maintaining, and evaluating best-practice seniors safety programs (Anderson, 2006, p19).



In many cases, very good results can come from partnerships where generic policies or products of national or state agencies are adapted for local use by community organisations. The ACT, as a ‘city state’ is in a very good position to progress such older road user community programs through joint initiatives by the ACT Council on the Ageing, the NRMA-ACT Road Safety Trust and the ACT Government (Anderson & Wheeler, 2000, p103-105).

It is vital to take a holistic approach. In the end, if we focus mainly on road safety to solve the problems of older road users, we will have largely incomplete and unsatisfactory solutions.

Stakeholders include but are not limited to; ACT seniors, family and friends of seniors, local community, COTA (ACT), U3A, Association of Independent Retirees, National Seniors Association, TAMS, ACT Health, NRMA-ACT Road Safety Trust, and the Australian Federal Police.

Target Audiences

The older road user information and media strategy has five target audiences that information and programs will be created for.

- **Seniors**
 - Assistance could usefully be provided with individual information gathering by presenting relevant material in forms that are easily accepted. Useful information includes perceptions by other road users and peers.
- **Seniors’ families and friends**
 - When seniors receive complex information or are making decisions about ceasing driving and looking into alternative transport options, their support networks are very important.
- **Health professionals**
 - There are hundreds of health professionals throughout the ACT. In order for doctors in particular to be able to easily facilitate the discussions with their patients the information that we provide doctors with needs to be simple and clear – an appropriate segue to broach the often difficult subject of driver safety/driving cessation.



- **ACT public and the media**
 - The ACT public and media are an important target audience, particularly when the strategic messages are being delivered.
- **Transport providers and policy-makers**
 - 'Providers' includes for example, bus drivers and drivers of special needs transport for seniors, as well as people who arrange seniors' transport. 'Transport policy-makers' potentially includes everyone from police to vehicle inspectors, traffic signals engineers to transport analysts and traffic sign designers to legal drafters.

While many messages will be common to all these groups, it will of course be necessary for some material to be formulated and disseminated differently for the various audiences.

STRATEGIC AND SPECIFIC MESSAGES

In the table below, the Strategic and Specific messages have been broken down by intended audiences to ensure that road safety messages are correctly targeted to gain maximum efficiency and reach.

Strategic key messages

General public

T H E M E	<i>Road safety message</i>	Older drivers are not a major road safety risk.	M E S S A G E
	<i>Community benefit message</i>	It is of benefit to the whole community to maintain the mobility of older road users – by driving and by a variety of other means.	



Transport options message

Inform our community of transport options that are available to maintain the mobility of senior citizens.

These options could include:

- Private transport where safe and affordable,
- Standard public transport (noting the increasing number of kneeling buses etc.),
- Specialised public transport such as the taxi subsidy scheme and disabled taxis, and
- Community transport, some of which is provided by private sector organisations such as clubs.

These messages are all keyed towards introducing the transition to non-driving.

The transport options are probably similar for all those who are transport poor in our community – as well as seniors, these include the young, poor, a number of those who are sick or disabled, and carers without cars (often women, including those caring for young children). This is likely to broaden the appeal of such a media campaign.

Older road users

Lifestyle message

Plan your transport future. Effective planning includes consideration of the need to move house, as well as the ability to physically relocate. If it is finally decided to remain in the same residence, consideration of options is important. In other words, plan holistically for your transport needs

Mobility options message

Cessation of driving should be a gradual transition, not a sudden, often traumatic event. Experience some alternative means of getting around. (This message ties in with both the transport options message and the lifestyle message ie try some alternative transport means as part of planning for your transport future.)



Family and friends

'Be supportive' message

Help your older friends and family members plan sensibly and realistically to safely retain their mobility and independence for as long as possible. This includes driving where it is safe and affordable. It may also include helping them find information, or finding information for them. (This message ties in with the lifestyle message, the transport options message and the mobility options message.)

'Be realistic' message

Help your older friends and family members to be aware of their situation, including their personal capabilities and age-related cognitive and sensory losses.

Health professionals

'Community perceptions of health professionals' message

Recognise the status that older members of the community give to your opinions – doctors most importantly, but not exclusively. Accept the responsibility placed on you by the community's respect.

'Set the agenda' message

Get mobility issues on the table early, before it is necessary to act on them. In other words, help to lay the groundwork for seniors to develop an effective transport future for themselves by drawing their attention to mobility issues while there is plenty of time to plan for them. (Ties in with transport options message, mobility message, lifestyle message. The point here is that a transport-related discussion need not be about giving up the driver's licence, and when it is necessary to have that discussion, there will be a background for it, and the person will have in place plans to continue a full and rewarding life without driving.)



Transport

professionals

'Consider the elderly' message

Be supportive of older road users in the services that are provided and in the means of communicating those services to seniors. As well as the provision of services that are suitable for older road users, it means considering the needs of the group at the planning stage, and providing information about the services that exist.

Specific key messages

General public

Comparative performance message

Although older road users are not a major road safety risk group, remain aware that the senior driver or pedestrian in front of you may be physically and cognitively poorer than you are. They:

- may not have vision that is as good as yours
- may not have hearing that is as good as yours
- may have a slower reaction time than yours
- may not be able to assess the situation as quickly as you can
- may not be able to move as fast as you think they can

Tolerance message

Be aware of how you cope with bad driving by other people. Being impatient with older drivers may only make the situation worse. Older drivers have as much right to be on the road as you do. Forcing older drivers to stop driving may cost more than accommodating their driving habits. It may also be worth remembering that one day you might also be an older driver. (This message has road safety applicability to a wide range of audiences.)



Older road users

Sensory and cognitive decline message.

There are well-documented sensory and cognitive losses that accompany age. For safety's sake, be aware of:

- specific declines in certain abilities (a media campaign would need to be specific, but would include speed of walking, hearing, vision, etc.)
- effects of medication on driving, etc.

Safe car message

What to look for when buying a car. For instance, older cars are not safer – given the greater fragility of older people in the event of an accident, the protective features built into modern cars make them safer.

Safe driver message.

Obey the road rules and give yourself plenty of time. How do you cope with other drivers' bad behaviour? When not to drive is a matter for each person, but if peak hour traffic upsets you, don't drive then. Choose your transport mode, choose your time, and choose your route. Also, update your knowledge of current road rules, such as apply with merging and at roundabouts.

Safe pedestrian message.

Wear bright clothing and carry brightly coloured bags. Be aware of your limitations in speed of crossing roads. Walk straight across a road (ie don't J walk) and use pedestrian crossings where possible. People with limited mobility should wait for the next green signal before entering a signalised pedestrian crossing.

Family and friends

The main message is to help family and friends accept the specific messages provided above to older road users. In this sense, this is not a separate specific message, but is covered by the strategic messages proposed for older road users.

Health professionals and Transport professionals

There may be some specific messages that could usefully be given to health and transport professionals. One example concerns the way in which older people prefer to learn, using a variety of sources, and having some control over the learning experience.



PART 2: Behavioural Change and Message Delivery Mechanisms

Part 2 of this report focuses on what we are hoping to achieve with our target audiences, and how we might deliver messages to them so as to effectively improve the safety and lifestyle of older road users.

DESIRED BEHAVIOURS

It is worth setting out briefly the behaviours that we would like to see in each of the target audiences that have been identified.

Seniors

As a result of this strategy and the engagement of the various audiences who have an influence on seniors, we hope to generate a positive attitude to the issue of seniors' mobility. We know that seniors like to be treated with respect and prefer to receive information in manageable sections. We know we have to keep it simple, clear and relevant. Our aim will be to create conversations within the seniors' community that deal with the key issues such as fitness to drive and the alternatives to cars. Ultimately we hope to contribute to an environment where the issues of seniors mobility are known, understood and acted upon and where seniors are actively engaged in the need to 'prepare' for their future.

Seniors' Families and Friends Network

We must equip this audience to have a conversation about seniors moving safely, both with their own family and in the broader community. Families and friends must clearly understand the importance of mobility to seniors and the serious threat that altering their mobility choices can have to their physical and mental well being. This is a serious issue. Our case studies must explore the various challenges and



opportunities that face seniors' families and friends, and will seek to encourage them to be more active and engaged. We hope that our strategy leads this group to be moved to do 'something positive' about creating the most appropriate transport outcomes for the seniors with whom they come into contact.

Health Professionals

We need to ensure that health professionals understand the influence they have with seniors and the respect and esteem in which they are held with seniors. We need to ensure that health professionals are up to date with the latest research and motivate them to raise the issue with their patients as appropriate. We need to engage the medical media in Canberra (*Canberra Doctor* magazine) and GP representative groups such as the AMA and the Australian GP networks, other health professionals, the Pharmacy Guild and other organisations. Our efforts with the general media (events during Seniors Week, interviews on ABC and commercial radio, the announcement of specific ACT Government initiatives etc) should also reach the health professionals networks. However we will also need to walk through their front door and put our issues on their agenda.

ACT Public and the Media

Our biggest impact on target audiences and the ACT public will be through the mainstream media. In the ACT that is *The Canberra Times* (especially the regular 'older lifestyle' supplement), ABC radio and TV, WIN Television, community radio, *The Chronicle*, the various commercial radio channels and the specialist seniors and motoring magazines. To achieve the impact we desire, we must engage the media. To engage the media we must find appropriate and interesting case studies or stories to illustrate our messages. Stories about people are an age-old means of communication whose effectiveness should not be underestimated.

We must also take advantage of events such Seniors Week and the latest research (NRMA – ACT Road Safety Trust and other) to draw attention to the messages we want to communicate. The media responds to 'news' and we must be ready to take



advantage of the news cycle. We should also ensure that our ‘stories’ are used in as many channels as possible (newsletters, websites, specialist media).

If we successfully engage the mainstream media, we will succeed in spreading our messages to the broader community in which we live. We want the Canberra public to be aware of both the community benefits resulting from seniors moving safely, and the challenges involved. We want these understandings to be expressed in attitudes and conversations.

Transport Providers and Policy Makers.

As the specialist providers with the ability to directly impact on the quality or provision of the mobility service, this audience must be fully aware of the issues. We need to identify where they are located, how many of them there are and what is the best way to reach them. Ultimately, communicating a simple, clear message – that transport professionals in their work should constantly consider older road users – will give us our best chance of influencing this group and making sure that we are consistent in the information we are communicating.

CONSIDERATIONS IN MESSAGE DELIVERY

So far this Report has indicated that our communication strategy must:

- Determine effective key messages for the target audience
- Make key messages simple, clear and concise
- Facilitate changes in attitudes and behaviours among both older road users and the broader ACT community, and
- Be compatible with the TAMS road safety media strategy

In this section we consider how key messages can be delivered in a focussed, cost-effective way that will evoke a positive response from the target audience.



Educational Approaches for Older Drivers

Education theory and past experience in health programs indicate that it is important to consider older drivers as self-directed learners and to base information provision on the views older drivers hold on their information needs.

Older drivers are a heterogeneous group, their views differing by age, gender, location and individuality. Accordingly, there are significant differences in such areas as self-regulatory behaviours, awareness of their sensory decline, and views on the timing of giving up driving. Research and past experience thus suggest that information materials for older drivers should involve a range of learning approaches and delivery mechanisms, in which self-determined information needs are a key part. Such diversity can also have a bonus in assisting drivers to challenge existing knowledge and values about their driving and lead to better self-regulatory behaviour (Bailey, 2004, p27-28).

A particular public safety interest lies in developing older driver information materials and approaches that encourage appropriate self-regulation of driving, including the decision as to when to stop driving altogether. Seniors generally tend to conceptualise their driving in terms of how to best maintain their mobility, rather than thinking about giving up.

By and large, older adults consider themselves to be very much in control of their learning directions. However, in terms of encouraging older drivers to regulate their driving, or perhaps cease altogether, the success of educational initiatives is very much dependent on an individual older driver's sense of personal responsibility.

Thus, learning among older adults is most effectively accomplished when they are allowed to have some control over their learning and when new information is connected to, and built upon, prior knowledge and actual life experiences. For older drivers, this may well mean focusing on how to maintain their mobility – with or without driving. Highly personalised feedback (especially from medical professionals) is particularly important (Bailey, 2004, p16-17 & 83).



The bottom line is that informal, ideally personalised, information, delivered by credible peers and medical professionals, is the best option to engage seniors and hopefully influence their behaviour.

Older road users are somewhat defensive of their position based on the common view that older drivers are bad drivers. The approach to tailoring the messages we direct at older road users needs to take into consideration what information older road users want, and how they want to receive this information.

Research from COTA shows that older road users want to be spoken to in a positive and encouraging but not condescending manner. The attitude and tone of the message is extremely important in terms of successfully delivering the message. It is proposed that the information needs to be “attractive, brief, have good impact and be offered ‘little and often’ ” (COTA, 2006 p.171).

Older road users have also shown a desire to be properly acknowledged for what they are doing right on our roads and by getting the community to recognise that their stereotypes may not be correct, we are taking the first steps towards opening and strengthening the channels of communication.

If older road users are less defensive of their position, they will be more likely and willing to take in information that relates to their driving behaviour.

Delivering the Message

Seniors’ importance ratings of information sources suggested a strong preference for informal learning opportunities, such as those afforded through mainstream media channels of print and television. Most of the drivers accessed information about driving through between three to eight different sources, which suggested that the dissemination of information to older drivers should occur through a variety of sources rather than via a ‘one size fits all’ approach (Bailey, 2004, p7).



This view is also reflected in the COTA study, which found the best ways of informally reaching seniors on road safety issues are information accompanying car registration and license renewals, the NRMA magazine, *The Canberra Times*, ABC TV and local radio (COTA, 2006, p151-157).

In terms of formal feedback, advice from health professionals was by far the highest rated, with over 80% of seniors expecting their GP to tell them when to stop driving (Bailey, 2004, p58; COTA, 2006, p 161, 196-197).

Strategies are also required to disseminate the results of this study to our audience who are not older drivers. As has been pointed out, these groups include:

- Non-driving seniors as there are some aspects of road rules of which senior pedestrians should be aware
- Family members and friends of older road users
- Health professionals, and
- Transport providers, transport regulators and policy makers

More general strategies of information distribution, such as the mainstream media, may miss some of these people. For instance, fliers included in older drivers' registration renewals may be an excellent mechanism for reaching older drivers, but may miss non-driving pedestrians, family members, and health professionals.

Further, the messages to some groups are likely to differ. For instance, probably the greatest need for health professionals is to understand the high value placed on their opinions by senior drivers. Having knowledge of other road safety related messages may be useful once health professionals recognise the responsibility that, rightly or wrongly, is imposed upon them by the attitudes of older drivers. Yet without this recognition of their responsibility, it may be close to useless to give busy health care professionals road safety orientated messages about seniors.

For these groups, some measures will be cheap and effective, such as the dissemination of the final report of this study, and talking to professionals about its



recommendations. Other approaches will need to be specific and targeted in both message and medium.

Communication Principles

Creating rapport with the primary target audience (older road users) is extremely important in ensuring older road users are open to accepting messages. Creating rapport will also create trust between the older road users and the organisation that delivers the programs.

The *Older Persons' Road Safety Needs Analysis for the ACT* (COTA, 2006, p.166) found that older road users 'resent being tagged as bad drivers. They also don't like being identified as old or targeted specifically for road safety education...they are quick to become defensive and resistive to any information with critical overtones'. Also, current programs and material delivered to the target audience, while reaching them, had not been designed or delivered in ways that provided a high uptake of the material.

Some key principles to be remembered when delivering safety information to seniors are:

- Delivery through holistic 'healthy ageing' programs are probably more effective than specific driver education or safety publicity.
- Keep information simple and up to date.
- Material should ideally focus on a single outcome or message.
- To maximise effect, aims and benefits should be personally relevant, and ideally, take advantage of existing motivations to empower individual action.
- Introduce new ideas - people seldom change their behaviour in response to information they already have.
- Best-practice delivery mechanisms need to be tailored for specific local or group needs, so should be developed and introduced through seniors' networks and community health services, ideally at a local level.
- Road safety inputs should be carefully targeted in two areas:



- Through lifestyle or community programs for more general behavioural or health outcomes.
 - Some specific programs for defined mobility or safety outcomes
- (Anderson, 2006 p15-16; OECD 2001 p116-118).



PART 3: ACT and Interstate

Materials

The objective of Part 3 of this information and media strategy is to ensure that the ACT does not ‘reinvent the wheel’. Effective media materials are expensive to produce, and there is no point in redeveloping them if effective materials are available elsewhere in Australia. Australian professionals involved in road safety have shown themselves to be generous in the support they provide to colleagues in all jurisdictions.

Inevitably, some interstate material that is also generally suitable for the ACT will need to be tailored to suit ACT audiences – albeit this needs to be clearly identified, as the modifications may be minor, or they may be costly.

Finally, there may be desirable messages for some ACT audiences for which no existing material is suitable. We need to be aware where new resources will be required.

Appendix 1 covers a wide range of materials on older road user safety, which have been developed in the ACT over the past 15 years.

Of the currently available ACT materials, the following are seen as particularly useful:

- The ‘Seniors Driving Longer, Smarter, Safer’ (SDLSS) program, which is being developed by Monash University Accident Research Centre with a grant from the NRMA-ACT Road Safety Trust, will be finalised by mid-2009. It is a comprehensive education package for senior road users which focuses on the key areas of seniors’ road safety risk; their changing capabilities; driving strategies; and alternative mobility options. Given its ‘best practice’ currency and being tailored for the ACT, it is hoped that a wide range of SDLSS material



can be used immediately, or with minimal adaption, for many of the information and media initiatives proposed in this report. An outline of the SDLSS program is at Appendix 3.

- The 'Livedrive' website also has much useful material and should be regularly updated and maintained. It is likely to be an increasingly important source of information for the 'baby boomer bulge', who are much more internet oriented than the current over 70 age group.
- The current ACT 'Older Drivers Handbook' and 'Retiring From Driving Handbook' should continue to be distributed.
- The Safedrive' Medical Seminars are a thorough and proven way of engaging health professionals.

Appendix 2 contains information about the great variety of road safety materials employed elsewhere in Australia that apply to older road users. These resources are produced by State Government agencies, local Governments and motoring organisations. It is not by any means a comprehensive list and concentrates on information and media resources.

Quite a number of the interstate materials listed may be directly transferrable to the ACT, or require only minimal 'localisation'. Typical generic topics could include selecting a safe and appropriate car; pedestrian safety; driving and medication; scooters and mobility devices; and material for health professionals.

It is also valuable to publicise some of the other currently available (non-media) older road user materials and programs, which can initiate and reinforce the messages we need to promote. These include, as examples:

- 'The Years Ahead – Road Safety for Seniors' Program', released by the NRMA in March 2009, is a resource that, with NRMA agreement, is likely to be highly applicable with little modification.



- Fact sheets derived from ACT and interstate material are likely to be produced quickly and easily. These may cover a wide variety of relatively generic topics that need little modification for ACT use, such as, among others, selecting and owning a car, pedestrian safety and driving and medication.
- Material aimed at health and transport professionals may be well accepted without 'localisation'.

Other interstate initiatives are valuable, but will require greater preparation and ongoing support. Local government initiatives are valuable as they are frequently implemented with minimal resources.

The bottom line is that we should avoid 'reinventing the wheel' if at all possible. The Australian road safety community has a strong tradition of encouraging evidence-based best practice, and sharing good information resources is a key way of doing this.



PART 4: Five Year Program

RECOMMENDED CAMPAIGNS

An initial set of proposed strategic and specific media campaigns and publicity campaigns for the ACT is contained in the table below.

A distinction is made in the report between media and publicity campaigns. Media campaigns are seen as targeting a broader audience with likely requirements for the use of mass media outlets. Publicity campaigns are seen as focusing on a more specific audience probably without the use of mass media. For instance, it may be proposed that transport professionals should be reached by a short article in a relevant journal and a talk at a professional association meeting.

Five strategic and two specific media campaigns are proposed, as well as two strategic publicity campaigns aimed at professional audiences, and four specific publicity campaigns.

It will be important throughout all these campaigns that they have a unified and strong consistent main focus – whether this is a tag line or theme.

Strategic Campaigns

-
1. General public strategic media campaign combining the road safety message and community benefit message. Seek engagement with COTA

 2. General public strategic media campaign containing transport options available to older road users (ie the ‘transport options message’)

 3. Older road users strategic media campaign containing the lifestyle message

 4. Older road users strategic media campaign containing the mobility options message

 5. Family and friends strategic media campaign combining the ‘be supportive’ and ‘be realistic’ messages



-
6. Health professionals strategic publicity campaign combining the ‘community perceptions of health professionals’ message and the ‘set the agenda’ message
 7. Transport professionals strategic publicity campaign containing the ‘consider the elderly’ message.
-

Specific Campaigns

1. General public specific media campaign containing the comparative performance message
 2. General public specific media campaign containing the tolerance message (the reason this might be a separate campaign is simply that it is a message with very wide applicability, not simply in relation to seniors. Otherwise it would be combined with the comparative performance campaign)
 3. Older road users specific publicity campaign containing the sensory and cognitive decline message
 4. Older road users specific publicity campaign containing the safe car message
 5. Older road users specific publicity campaign containing the safe driver message
 6. Older road users specific publicity campaign containing the safe pedestrian message
-

OUR APPROACH FOR YEARS 1 TO 2

So far the report has identified who we are trying to influence (audiences) and what we are trying to say (key messages). It has also given us the necessary insight into how seniors and other related audiences like to receive their information and importantly, identified a number of specific key campaigns that will help us to achieve attitudinal and behavioural change.

In the ‘Educational Approaches for Older Drivers’ and ‘Delivering the Message’ sections of the report, it clearly states that media is among the most effective channels to reach our audiences.

That being the case our approach relies strongly on engaging the media with our message and story in such a way that we will capture their interest through facts and



interesting anecdotes. Of course, we also need to get information directly to our identified audiences, but if we fail to engage the media we will lose the ‘memorable impact’ we need to achieve.

Approach

Our focus will also be on the particular media that has a strong influence with the target audiences we are looking to influence. In Canberra the most influential media for seniors are ABC radio 666, *The Canberra Times*, *The Chronicle*, and WIN Television. We need also consider how we use the seniors’ own media (COTA publications and others) in order to influence our nominated audiences. A combination of the free media, senior citizens’ media, facts sheets, seminars and other publications will be included in our information and media strategy.

The second key element of our approach will be to rely strongly on the materials that have been produced both in the ACT and interstate on the very same issues that we are looking to communicate. We will seek not to reinvent the wheel.

The third element of our approach is that we want to communicate our message in a friendly and engaging manner. We want to display a sense of humour. While there are elements of the road safety which are serious and important, we want to avoid the tone of being too ‘preachy’. We want people to open to our recommendations and suggestions and to look to the lighter side of what is a serious issue. It’s not to suggest that we should be flippant but it will be important to see the ‘bright’ side and to have fun with our campaign and the words and images we use.

In summary, the approach we recommend is a ‘big hit’ launch to gain attention, followed by regular campaigns, complementing ongoing ‘trickle’ information, such as brochures, fact sheets and website information.



Suggested Program for Years 1 and 2

Aim:

To ensure the issue of seniors mobility is well understood by all stakeholders and that seniors are encouraged to engage constructively with the communication program in a way that positively impacts on their attitude to mobility and driving behaviour.

Five year program

In order to begin this program, we need to place mobility near the top of key issues for seniors and engage in a highly active promotional period that seeks to communicate a number of our strategic and specific campaigns.

Launch March 2010 – Seniors’ mobility issues

An event such as Seniors Week is the ideal time to launch our ‘conversation’ about mobility issues for seniors, and suggest COTA makes mobility their theme for Seniors Week 2010.

We would then focus on three elements of our seniors’ mobility story on three days of Seniors Week.

The first element would focus on the community awareness message and be titled ‘Older Drivers – Not a menace after all’. This ‘kickoff’ campaign would use the facts and figures that support the contention that older drivers are not a menace on the road. By challenging the perceived wisdom with a sharp media release, a sense of humour and some strong imagery, it’s a story that will gain attention. It needs to be supported by the relevant expert (perhaps Robin Anderson) and a local ‘case study of an excellent older driver’. In order to support the move we would also seek to align our second specific campaign of ‘tolerance’ which reaches out with a secondary message to encourage everyone to take it easy on the roads. We would target all key media with this message.



Our second story for the launch week would be ‘Keeping Seniors Moving – Are you ready for 2020?’ This aims to put the story back to seniors and start a conversation with them around their preparations and options for future mobility. Rather than focusing on transport options, this story focuses on people – putting you in a position to both keep driving safely and also investigate other transport options that are available. We would focus on the importance of mobility to healthy ageing and explore the notion of ‘responsibility to prepare’ with older drivers. This story would be targeted at the general community but would also have elements that specifically tried to reach the families and friends and health professionals who support seniors.

Our third and final story for the week would focus on transport options, with a working title of ‘The Transport System – Future Options?’ It would focus on outlining transport options available to the growing numbers of seniors over 65, whose proportion of the population is expected to more than double by 2032. (Strategic campaign number seven targets transport professionals to ‘consider the elderly’). This story would have a sharper focus on the challenges that face policy makers and transport officials. It would clearly explain the challenges that Senior’s face in transitioning from driving their cars to staying mobile, the growth in numbers expected in the years up to 2050 and the need to plan now.

In support of our Seniors Week mobility theme and activity, we suggest approaching various local media (ABC, *The Canberra Times*, specialist seniors’ media) to be our ‘media partners’. This would help to put a strong foundation beneath our communication activity and ensure strong support for our messages.

Along with the various media stories, we also suggest some specific events be organised (seminar on transport needs or ‘Safe Drive’ medical seminars) that would help to support the media activity. The week would be full of information and events around the issue of mobility for seniors and seek to establish it as an ‘issue’ that needs to be discussed.



At all times we need to simplify and clarify our communication – not try to say too many things to too many audiences but to plan our activity in such a way that it helps stimulate debate and discussion in the community.

We would also produce a brochure sourced from the ‘Seniors Driving Longer, Smarter, Safer’ (SDLSS) project and/or material from other states that could be distributed to all of our key audiences in support of the seniors’ mobility message. That brochure would capture our key themes from Seniors Week activity.

The launch is comprehensive and focussed into a relative short period of time. There would be a number of hours consulting with stakeholders, meeting with potential media partners, finalising events and releases, producing copy, obtaining approvals on copy and activity, contacting media and finalising the media program activity for the three stories.

Launch Cost Estimate - \$8,000 depending on the availability of resource material from the SDLSS research. The cost provides for the printing of brochures and other material, and immediate launch costs. Overall program coordination is dealt with below.

Follow up

Once we have established seniors’ mobility as an issue we need to keep it current and look to initiate media activity on a fairly regular basis in support of each of our strategic and specific campaigns. We need to find fresh angles and stories that will capture the media’s attention.

We believe that planned activity (be it specific publicity or general media activity) three times a year is realistic. With other elements of the ACT road safety story being communicated to audiences in the ACT we need to share the available space. Activities are proposed for July 2010, November 2010, March 2011, July 2011 and November 2011, following a March 2010 launch.



Thrice yearly activity is likely to be more realistic for resourcing purposes, yet would ensure the issue of seniors' mobility is regularly being considered and discussed in the community. Of these three annual activities, we suggest that one be of greater intensity and duration, so we propose to feature seniors' road safety during one week each year. In addition, we propose that there would be a continuous information trickle to seniors and to the broader community. Proposed activities and the information 'drip feed' are discussed below.

The program is drawn from the strategic and specific campaigns outlined above. They have been selected because they are appropriate in the early stages of a five year campaign. They emphasise strategic messages to be conveyed – specific messages will make more sense when people have a context in which to place them. These strategic messages provide that context. From this list, thrice-yearly activities would be selected based on priority, topicality and the views of COTA and other stakeholders.

There is also a clear and essential need for overall program coordination, client liaison and ongoing support. This would be most effectively done by a part-time Project Coordinator, assisted at times by specialist expertise. They would also respond to media enquiries as required, and provide a very brief report on the success of each event (the launch and five subsequent activities over 2010 and 2011). An outline of reporting requirements is provided in Part 5 of this Report.

2010-2011 Project Coordinator Cost Estimate - \$10,000

Activity – July 2010

Theme: 'Families and Friends'

With Seniors' Week having set the scene in March 2010, the July activity requires a slightly different stance. Our view is that we should develop a 'Family and Friends' focus. (Strategic campaign number five – Family and Friends strategic media campaign combining the 'be supportive' and 'be realistic' messages).



Two activities are suggested:

- Encourage seniors to undertake the SDLSS program – assuming COTA has this up and running.
- A case study that illustrated the importance of family, friends and seniors working together to find the best possible ‘mobility solution’.

For both of the above, we would approach the same key media that were engaged during the launch in March. We would also seek to emphasise the messages of the specific campaign number three which emphasises publicity of the impact of sensory and cognitive decline.

July 2010 Activity Cost Estimate - \$3,000

Activity – November 2010

Theme: ‘Seniors’ Mobility

We have introduced a range of topics on Senior’s mobility and it would pay to reinforce them in the final part of the year. The issue of transport planning for seniors could be revisited to see what progress has been made on settling the mobility plans for the future. The importance of assessing competence in older drivers is another theme that could be revisited at this time. It would be useful to restate the ‘community benefit’ message of keeping seniors mobile (strategic campaign 1) and the Family and Friends campaign (strategic campaign five).

To bring these issues to life we would need fresh case studies and perhaps some national or international research we could rely upon as the ‘hook’ for our story.

We might also consider running specific campaign number four which targets older drivers and publicity around the ‘safe’ car message. This is a time when people are on the road and they are being encouraged to check the safety and stability of their vehicle. While it might be communicated in the context of ‘preparing for the holidays’ we might be able to align our message with some of the wider road safety ‘safe car’ messages that are being communicated. With ‘New Year turnover’, car



sales in January, tips on selecting a new, safer and appropriate car can also be included.

November 2010 Activity Cost Estimate - \$3,000

Activity – March 2011

Theme: ‘Tolerance on the Roads’

The Easter holiday period with its intense focus on the holiday road toll is always a useful context in which to communicate road safety messages. The media are often looking for ‘secondary’ road safety stories to follow.

While promoting the ‘tolerance on the roads’ message (Specific campaign 2) we should also be promoting the ‘mobility options’ message. This is a more specific message for the seniors’ audience and their family and friends.

Being from the family of ‘road safety’ messages, we believe that the media could be engaged around this issue, especially as the issue of driving safely interstate could be picked up as part of the ‘tolerance on the roads’ theme.

March 2011 Activity Cost Estimate - \$3,000

Focus Week – July 2011

Theme: ‘Doing without a Car’

Thinking of tolerance on the roads leads to consideration of leaving the car at home, and mobility options without a car. The opportunity for July 2011 will be to provide further information and opportunity as to what seniors can do to transition to life without driving.

Printed materials with information drawn from SDLSS, the Victorian program of ‘Getting around without a car’ package and the ACT ‘Retiring from Driving’ handbook would be useful resources to re-purpose and promote the theme of the



Focus Week. A re-launch of the Livedrive website, dealing with road safety for older people, would also be appropriate.

The opportunity exists to challenge one of the reporters (perhaps from *The Canberra Times* or ABC Stateline) to produce a story based on not having access to a car for a week. They could tell the story first hand of the difficulties faced for people (including seniors) who are unable to use a car. Hopefully a story such as this will attract the attention of policy makers, family and friends, medical professionals and the wider ACT community.

July 2011 Focus Week Cost Estimate - \$7,000

Activity – November 2011

Theme: ‘Have You Still Got It?’

Our focus for November 2011 would shift to communicating with those seniors who are (appropriately) continuing to drive. We would encourage older drivers to make sure that they are taking adequate steps to maintain their capability to meet all normal on-road situations. We would be appealing to their sense of responsibility both to themselves and to all other road users.

This ‘Have you still got it?’ or ‘Are you ready’ style campaign would draw on a number of elements of our strategic and media campaigns and repeat the third launch campaign message from the previous year (March 2010). It would engage directly with senior drivers to challenge them in a positive way about their preparedness to drive. Our targets would also be the audiences of medical professionals, and family and friends.

Appendices 1 and 2 include a variety of materials available to support our media activity. They include the Royal Automobile Club of Queensland ‘Years Ahead refresher drive’ course and the older driver’s self assessment questionnaire, the ACT Older drivers refresher course and video, the ACT’s driving instructors handbook



to assist older drivers, SDLSS and the RACV's 'Years Ahead – Road safety for Seniors' presentation and brochure. All of these materials can be used to develop a series of activities that will support the theme of communicating to senior drivers that 'If you are going to continue to drive, then you need to be capable'.

A co-ordinated approach to this communication program will communicate a message to the community that seniors do take their responsibilities to be safe drivers seriously and they are taking action to ensure that they are safe. This is a very positive and activist stance to take with the community.

November 2011 Activity Cost Estimate - \$6,000

Information Trickle – March 2010 and ongoing

We recommend that, between the major focus events, an information 'drip feed' on the safety of older road users be maintained. This communication strategy is based on research suggesting that seniors like small, regular information inputs. We have identified five possible forms that this may take.

Information Trickle 1: Printed handouts

Some material already exists, and its distribution should continue. The ACT Older Road Users Handbook is distributed to drivers at age 70, and the ACT Retiring from Driving Handbook is distributed at age 75. In addition, there should be some (we suggest three or four) 'fact sheets' developed that can be distributed with vehicle registration renewals to older drivers. They should cover mainly strategic themes rather than specific activities. Material from the SDLSS program and other interstate sources can probably be easily modified to A4 fact sheets suitable for mail distribution.

2010-2011 Cost Estimate - \$5,000



Information Trickle 2: Ads in printed publications

Material from the fact sheets can be adapted to provide small, relatively cheap ads in publications such as *The Chronicle* or *Seniors' Times* (COTA) or the National Seniors' magazine. These ads would not be frequent, but would be a part of the drip feed concept. For instance an A6 ad in *The Chronicle* may be less than \$2,000 for four issues.

2010-2011 Cost Estimate - \$5,000

Information Trickle 3: Short TV 'trigger' or 'reminder' ad

We recommend that a single short public safety advertisement focusing on the safety of older road users could be developed and run in conjunction with a local television station as part of their community service activities. The ad may be as short as 10 to 15 seconds, or it may be slightly longer. We suggest that, by putting in some funding, the station would be likely to match it in kind, assisting with production and broadcast. Such an ad could be used for two to three years in CSO slots.

2010-2011 Cost Estimate - \$20,000

Information Trickle 4: Online resources

Significant resources exist online. As increasing numbers of computer-literate older road users emerge, online material will become an assumed resource. The aim is not to develop new online sites, but simply to draw attention to those that already exist. The COTA Livedrive site is a good example of an ACT specific site whose use is to be encouraged, although there are many other local and interstate sites that contain relevant information. We do not see this as requiring additional resources, but it is an information drip feed source that can be included in printed material in particular.

2010-2011 Cost Estimate - nil

Information Trickle 5: 'Opportunistic events'

Along with our own activity we also must keep an eye out for the 'opportunistic' events that we might be able to support our message.



There may be an incident in the ACT, interstate or overseas that makes ‘seniors mobility’ topical. It may be positive (older driver awarded special commendation for unblemished record) or negative (senior driver causes serious crash) but either way it will be news and the media will be seeking comment.

We need to be ready when these opportunities arise and make sure we have our spokespeople prepared, willing and able to use the activity to communicate our message. We envisage that a representative from COTA or a relevant road safety expert be available to make comment.

Additionally there may also be useful research that emerges outside our quarterly campaigns. Again we need to be ready to move quickly to take advantage of the news cycle momentum that this may generate.

This is not seen as additional cost, but would be expected to be included in the work of the part-time program coordinator.

2010-2011 Cost Estimate - nil

Total Information Trickle Cost Estimate - \$30,000

In summary, the estimated cost for these nine specific and ‘information trickle’ activities is \$60,000. This would include development and implementation of media products (such as ads or news releases); media events; project officer costs; and specialist media and road safety advice.

OUR APPROACH FOR YEARS 3 TO 5

We have spoken about the need to develop plans for a five year period and the structure that we have outlined can support a roll out over that period. However,



we believe it is important that the strategy and the associated activity be reviewed on an annual or biennial basis to assess what has been achieved, what behaviours or attitudes have been adjusted and what levels of discussion we have generated in the community. (The review process is discussed in more detail in Part 5.) For this reason, we have not recommended a rigid list of campaigns and timing, but rather have provided some ideas from the range of campaign options presented earlier.

In years three to five, there should be a transition from the initial concentration on strategic messages, to a more equal balance with specific messages. The direct program would be set following the proposed review in late 2011. The following campaigns and target audiences might be considered.

- Using the latest research there should be a return to the original specific campaign, which (depending on it being verified by the data) would again re-state the fact that older drivers are competent and no greater risk to the community than any other cohort. On top of the consistent communication messages and activities being undertaken over the initial two year program, we would hope that the issue of seniors' mobility and its importance becomes well established.
- The opportunity would also exist to refresh a number of the key strategic and specific campaigns that have been executed. The community benefit message along with the lifestyle message would be a key part of this element of the information and communication program. Case studies should show examples of senior drivers as excellent drivers. We would look to make personalities of some of these good drivers and perhaps set up their 'Top Ten Tips' for safe driving which could apply to drivers of all ages. The idea of this element of the campaign would be to establish positive senior driver role models. We want to have people stop and consider that seniors can be good drivers and they are a long way from the 'stereotypical' menace as sometimes portrayed by the media.



- Along with the general campaigns we should also initiate some more specific activity aimed at our segmented audiences. For example, we may decide to engage an expert to discuss with health professionals the latest research that suggests the positive links between mobility and healthy ageing. That same expert may also be available to present such information to the transport professionals and policy makers.
- Pedestrian safety initiatives are very important and should be included in year three. The SA ‘Walk With Care’ and Canterbury City Council ‘Watch Out, Cars About’ programs may be useful initiatives for the ACT.
- There should be a mobility story focusing on health professionals and their ability to influence seniors on their mobility choices. Working with the medical professions and targeting some of the specialist media (*Canberra Doctor*), we recommend promoting the importance of doctors giving advice to their patients. Again, a strong, illustrative case study with a clear supporting image would likely attract some interest from the media.

That activity should be supported with a seminar series, such as the Safedrive medical seminars. A specific mail out piece, supported by the appropriate medical association, could also be developed to support this message. We don’t believe the final quarter of any year is the right time to be running information seminars. We believe they should be targeted for the middle two quarters of the year.

- In support of the mobility options story, there is a vast array of material that can be drawn upon from both the ACT and other jurisdictions. There is also the work of the ACT ‘Scooter Safe’ project (see appendix 1) that could be refreshed and reused.

Depending on which materials are reused, we envisage that the push to educate the Family and Friends and Seniors audiences would come through mainly seniors’



media and other more direct channels. Again we would seek to use the media identified and to leverage the relationships with key personalities established through the life of the program.

Campaigns should be heavily targeted at the media and looking for them to take up our message. Each of the campaigns needs to have a strong case study and visual component to attract the interest of television and print photographers.

However, irrespective of what message and audience we are targeting, the maxim 'keep it short and simple' should be kept well in mind.



PART 5: Evaluation, Costings and Funding

Part 5 looks at the questions of how we might assess whether the information and media strategy we propose is effective, what it might cost, and how it might be funded.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

The program we have recommended is structured as an immediate two-year program, followed by a review before continuing with the program for the next three years. This review at around the two-year mark allows for evaluation of the program up to that point and consultation with stakeholders. Depending on the success and intensity of the campaigns, this timing may be altered although we would expect it to fall within the range of 18 months to three years.

With the projected rise in numbers and proportion of older road users, it is likely that a further review at the end of the five year program would be sensible. In fact, an ideal pattern would be a two-year road safety program followed by a review. This would allow the accumulation of longitudinal data to help maximise the effectiveness with which our road safety messages can be targeted. We have not canvassed these review options in detail, but the question of a subsequent review or reviews clearly presents itself and may be taken up at the time.

Effectiveness is critical to our success. Are we doing the right thing? A somewhat inaccurate shot at the right target is preferable to an accurate shot at a wrong target. Measuring effectiveness of individual road safety initiatives is notoriously difficult, but ultimately success in road safety is determined by outcomes.

The clearest outcome is the safety of those using roads, so rates of road deaths, serious injuries and crashes are vital. These can be assessed reasonably easily, as



data on road deaths and traffic crashes are already collected. One problem is that ACT numbers are relatively small, so determining a clear trend usually takes a number of years. A second problem concerns the difficulty of ascribing causes – is a reduced injury rate among older road users caused mainly by our media campaign? Despite the difficulties, the numbers, rates and causes of fatalities, injuries and traffic crashes of older road users should continue to be monitored as the first means of evaluation.

A useful second measure concerns the attitudes of older road users and our other target audiences. Typically, behavioural changes are accompanied by attitudinal changes in the same direction as the behavioural change. Fortunately, COTA undertook a 2006 survey of older road users, which provides us with a satisfactory benchmark from which to measure change. (COTA 2006) This needs analysis was specific to the ACT.

At the proposed two year review, we recommend a small survey of between 80 and 120 respondents to assess changes against these benchmarks. This survey should be stratified so that each of our target audiences is sampled and identified. This survey would confirm our views on the level of understanding of each of the audiences we are attempting to reach and influence. It would also help us to clarify what issues are important to them and help us to apportion priority. We could obtain a clearer picture of the degree of success we are having in shifting attitudes and behaviour.

A third measure of the program's effectiveness would be to evaluate the various campaigns and activities as they are being undertaken. These evaluations would form part of the reporting back mechanism and would enable the program owners to assess the effectiveness of the campaigns undertaken. For instance, the program coordinator could report on:

- Perceived recognition and impact on the target groups.
- Perceived success of the campaign by key organisations involved.
- An assessment of 'what worked, what didn't work and what could be improved'.



- Ideally, all media activity that can be reasonably obtained and monitored would also be recorded and submitted as part of the evaluation.

A fourth form of evaluation would be to assess the progress of campaigns and activities and whether or not they are being completed against the specified time. Although this is not a measure of impact of activity, it is a measure of the efficiency of the program, which is a key contributing variable to effectiveness.

Finally we recommend taking ‘informal’ soundings of the various stakeholders of the program. They will have a reasonable understanding of the feedback they are receiving and perhaps even be able to communicate some instances of positive behaviour that could be at least in part be attributed to the organised approach to information and media. Such feedback can provide insight into causes and processes associated with both our target audiences and the broader community.

Estimate for a review of the program at approximately the end of Year 2 (envisaged as the end of 2011), including a brief analysis of crash statistics, a qualitative attitudinal survey covering 80 – 120 respondents, a quick analysis of the efficiency of the campaigns to this point, and ‘informal’ discussion with stakeholders and key players – **\$20,000**



COSTINGS AND FUNDING

Years 1 and 2

The costs in the table below are derived from the program as previously outlined.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Sub-category</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
March 2010	Launch		\$8,000	
July 2010	Activity		\$3,000	
November 2010	Activity		\$3,000	
March 2011	Activity		\$3,000	
July 2011	Week Focus		\$7,000	
November 2011	Activity		\$6,000	
2010-2011	Coordination		\$10,000	
2010-2011	Activities		SUBTOTAL	\$40,000
2010-2011	Information trickle	1: Printed handouts	\$5,000	
2010-2011	Information trickle	2: Ads in printed publications	\$5,000	
2010-2011	Information trickle	3: Short TV 'trigger' ad	\$20,000	
2010-2011	Information trickle	4: Online resources	Nil	
2010-2011	Information trickle	5: 'Opportunistic events'	Nil	
2010-2011	Information trickle		SUBTOTAL	\$30,000
2011-early 2012	Biennial review		\$20,000	
2011-early 2012	Biennial review		SUBTOTAL	\$20,000
<u>2010-early 2012</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>		<u>\$90,000</u>



Funding Sources

Implementing this strategy will cost money, and there are a number of possible funding sources.

NRMA – ACT Road Safety Trust

The Trust plays a key role in supporting road safety in the ACT. They may be prepared to fund certain elements of the plan we have outlined.

There is a long and successful history of community partnerships facilitated by the Trust, and the ACT as a cohesive ‘city state’ is amenable to co-operative programs between government agencies, community groups and the transport industry.

COTA

While COTA has numerous calls on its resources to fund a wide range of activities, it may be able to support one or more elements of this information and media strategy.

ACT Government agencies

A key challenge for the strategy is to ensure that all relevant ACT Government agencies are kept well informed at all times about proposed activity. As alignment with their broader road safety strategy has to be a key objective of this plan, TAMS may be able to provide some support financially or in the form of in-house resources. The role of Roads ACT in liaising with all organisations involved in road safety policy and delivery is important, to ensure coordination between all groups and common understandings of priorities – ‘singing from the same song sheet’.

Seniors road safety is part of both the ACT Road Safety Strategy and the Road Safety Media Strategy. Accordingly, there is scope for some of the initiatives suggested in this report to be undertaken as elements of these Roads ACT programs. For example, distribution of fact sheets in seniors’ vehicle registration annual renewals would be a very effective, yet marginal cost activity for TAMS.



Federal Government agencies

Federal Government agencies should be considered for funding, especially agencies responsible for health and safety programs, and initiatives for seniors.

Community groups

This is a wide range of community groups such as service clubs (Rotary, Apex, Lions, Probus, etc.) that have an interest in safety and mobility matters for seniors. They could provide financial, organisational and publicity support.

Transport industry

The motor vehicle industry, transport training providers and transport unions may all be possible sponsors.



CONCLUSION

The key fact driving concerns over the safety of older road users is the projected increase in the proportion of people over 65 in our society – from less than 10% in 2006 in the ACT to between 20 and 25% in another quarter of a century. This scenario is not a cause for panic or quick reactions, but for measured preparation.

It makes sense to plan for this increase so that we can address any problems as they emerge, rather than waiting until someone decides that immediate, impromptu action is required. Anticipating emerging needs allows time to ensure our responses are sensitive to the needs of those involved, as well as being both effective and efficient.

This report builds on previous work that has been based on the view that sensitively providing appropriate and timely information to relevant target groups is a vital step in achieving suitable levels of mobility for older road users in ways that are as safe as possible.

We have identified who in the community needs to be aware of the issue of older road user safety. However, there are also some specific audiences – seniors themselves, their networks of family and friends, professionals involved with seniors in their workplace life, and the media – without whose interest and involvement we are unlikely to gain a sympathetic hearing from members of the broader ACT community.

We have also identified a range of specific and strategic messages. Strategic messages include the need to focus on road safety, the community benefit of maintaining the mobility of seniors, transport options for seniors, lifestyle options to facilitate mobility, and the need to be supportive yet realistic with older community members. Specific messages focus on the comparative performance of



seniors relative to the rest of the population, the need for tolerance of and by seniors from time to time, and safe cars, safe drivers and safe pedestrians.

We have proposed media and publicity campaigns aimed at these audiences and messages. The basic concept is that, after launching the program, activities should roll out three or four times a year, both to present new messages, and to reinforce messages that previous activities have presented.

We propose that, after about two years, a review is undertaken to assess whether, at that point, we are on the right track. This is consistent with our view that our role should be to ensure that our responses to any emerging road safety issues for older road users are sensitive, effective and efficient.

We do not claim to have solved the road safety problems of ACT seniors. Rather, we prefer to think that we are documenting a cautious and sensible approach to what we believe is an issue that is better addressed now than later, so as to minimise the long-term pain and suffering, and maximise the joys of being older and living in our ACT community.



APPENDIX 1: ACT OLDER ROAD USER INITIATIVES

This Appendix covers a wide range of materials on older road user safety, which have been developed in the ACT over the past 15 years. Many of these initiatives were characterised by strong community partnerships, with numerous programs being developed and implemented through the co-operation of the Council of the Aging-ACT, the ACT Department of Urban Services, and the NRMA-ACT Road Safety Trust.

ACT Older Drivers' Handbook

The Older Drivers Handbook contains information about how an older driver can determine for themselves whether they are driving safely, how to continue to drive safely and when to make the decision to hand in their licence. The handbook points out risks for drivers over 80 years, such as health, emotions, physical condition and maintaining a current knowledge of changing road rules. It also emphasises that the community needs to work together to be aware of those risks, and to minimise them. It is distributed with ACT Driver's Licence renewals at age 70, and is also available on the web at

http://www.tams.act.gov.au/move/roads/road_safety/olderdriversafety

Retiring from Driving Handbook

The 'Retiring from Driving Handbook' is aimed at people who need to prepare or must consider retiring from driving. It is distributed with the ACT Driver's Licence renewals at age 75, and 8,000 copies have also been distributed by COTA throughout the ACT.

The booklet provides a checklist designed to help older drivers determine whether their ability to drive a motor vehicle safely has been impacted by a number of factors, including health, which can be beyond the driver's control and gives information and help to anyone considering the transition from driver to non-driver. It offers drivers:



- A checklist to see if driving skills are ‘up to scratch’
- Recognising the signs that may be effecting driving skills
- Making the decision whether to drive or not to drive
- Living without a car, and
- Advice regarding other areas of driving.

The booklet has a strong focus on the need to prepare for a time when driving is no longer possible, and the transitional steps that aid the process. A 2004 evaluation of the booklet found that it was considered a useful, appropriate and valued community resource with good information that had a positive influence on older peoples’ decisions to retire from driving. However, it was suggested that the booklet required stronger promotion and distribution.

OverDrive – Older Driver Refresher Program

The OverDrive program ran from 1999 to 2001, targeted at drivers between 60 and 70 years. The program was in four parts and offered participants first aid training, information on medications and their effects on driving, classroom training on driving skills and strategies for safer driving. Over 800 drivers undertook the program.

‘Older Drivers’ Video’

In 1996, COTA commissioned a video entitled ‘Coming of Age’ to complement the Older Drivers Handbook and refresher courses mentioned above.

The video deals with common driving problems facing older motorists as well as driver assessment to help decide on when, why and how to change driving patterns or even stop driving. Over 600 videos were distributed by COTA, with copies available for loan from libraries and some doctors, optometrists and pharmacists.

Seniors Driving Longer, Smarter, Safer

Monash University Accident Research Centre is currently developing and evaluating an innovative education and training package aimed at improving driving performance and travel behaviour of older drivers. The two-day course covers four key areas:



- Seniors' crash and injury risks;
- Changing functional abilities;
- Strategies for driving longer and safer; and
- Alternative transport and mobility options.

Given its 'best practice' currency and being tailored for the ACT, it is hoped that a wide range of SDLSS material can be used immediately, or with minimal adaption, for many of the information and media initiatives proposed in this report. An outline of the SDLSS program is at Appendix 3.

'Driving Instructors' Handbook to Assist Older Drivers'

A Handbook to assist professional driving instructors with the assessment and retraining of older drivers was developed by the School of Occupational Therapy, LaTrobe University in 2001, for use in both ACT and Tasmania.

Driving instructors gain a resource to assist them to identify common older driver problems and provide appropriate instructional methods for older people (as opposed to their usual younger clients).

'Scooter Safe Project'

In 2002 COTA undertook a review of the legislative, policy and insurance framework in relation to electric wheelchair and motorised scooter use in the ACT. The resulting 'Scooter Safe' package comprises a training video and handbook called 'There is something about scooters' which comprises a series of safety vignettes on issues such as recognising and dealing with safety hazards, crossing roads, visibility and planning trips. The package has been widely distributed throughout the ACT, and NRMA Member Services has reproduced the entire package and distributed it to all NSW municipal libraries.

'Livedrive'

In 2005 COTA developed a website to assist access to a comprehensive range of road safety information of relevance to older drivers, pedestrians and scooter users.

To view the 'Livedrive' website click on following link

<http://www.livedrive.org.au/index.html>



‘Safedrive’ Medical Seminars

A number of seminars for doctors and other health professionals were held in Canberra between 2003 and 2006. Delivered by Dr Peteris Darzins from the Monash University Ageing Research Centre, these seminars are designed to improve awareness and skills in relation to older driver safety issues and were well attended and very popular with a wide range of health professionals.

Other Programs

Other ACT older road user programs include:

- The ‘Drivers with Dementia’ study by the ACT Alzheimers Association; and
- University research on:
 - = Low light vision problems for older drivers (Griffith Uni)
 - = Hazard perception and cognitive ageing (ANU)
 - = Crash risk and older female drivers (MUARC)
 - = Self regulation, travel patterns and crash risk of older drivers (MUARC)
- ACT Regional Community Bus Services provide a flexible, affordable and ‘seniors friendly’ mini-bus services



APPENDIX 2: INTERSTATE EXAMPLES OF OLDER ROAD USER INITIATIVES

This Appendix outlines some of the older road user initiatives used in Australia outside the ACT. While it is not by any means a comprehensive list and concentrates on information and media resources, it illustrates some useful programs that could be adapted to the ACT region.

NEW SOUTH WALES

NSW Roads and Traffic Authority - 'A Guide to Older Driver Licensing'

This brochure and website explains the NSW driver licensing system, licensing options and what the practical driving assessment involves.

See <http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/licensing/downloads/olderdriverguide.pdf>

NSW Ministry of Transport - Establishment of a Seniors Taxi Club

The NSW Ministry of Transport has put together a program which outlines how to set up a seniors' taxi club to provide an affordable and flexible mode of passenger transport. It covers the process involved, the resources needed and the details of the service. The program has been successfully established in two towns in 2001 and 2002 and continues to operate.

NRMA Motoring and Services provides a number of community education programs and initiatives for senior drivers as detailed below:

'Age Driver Test Preparation' is part of the NRMA Safe Driving Schools Curriculum. It offers a tailored series of assessment by experienced instructors for those who are seeking an objective evaluation of their driving skills or preparing for an age driver license. For more information contact the NRMA on 1300 696 762.

'Changes to the Licensing System for Older Drivers' is a factsheet outlining the modifications to the NSW licensing system for senior drivers that were put into place in December 2008. It summarises the changes, and stresses the importance of



annual medical check-ups for those aged over 75, biennial testing for those aged over 85, and the introduction of voluntary driver assessment or the choice of a modified driving license for those aged over 85. See the NRMA or RTA websites http://www.mynrma.com.au/cps/rde/xchg/mynrma/hs.xsl/licensing_changes.htm
http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/licensing/olderdriver_changes.html

‘Motorised Scooters – Scooter Safe Package’ Motorised scooters are becoming increasingly popular as an alternative mode of transport for seniors and those who are disabled. This package highlights the rights and responsibilities of the users of these devices, and educates them on how to stay mobile while maximising their safety. The Scooter Safe Package is distributed throughout all New South Wales Councils and can also be downloaded at http://www.mynrma.com.au/cps/rde/xchg/mynrma/hs.xsl/motorised_scooters.htm

The NRMA also provides a ***Motorised Wheelchair Fact Sheet***, summarising the key facts regarding the use of a motorized wheelchair. It is available from the NRMA website and can be downloaded at http://www.mynrma.com.au/cps/rde/xbcr/mynrma/motorised_wheelchairs_dec_07.pdf?cpssessionid=SID-D4BF9DE3-3329E181

‘Years Ahead – Road Safety for Seniors’ Program

The ‘Years Ahead’ program is a new education package developed by the NRMA to improve awareness of safe driving practices and encourage the elderly to monitor their driving ability, and where necessary, seek professional advice. It involves a one hour presentation and discussion, conducted by a trained senior NRMA professional including information about road rules, safe driving tips, vehicle safety, pedestrian safety, physical fitness and driving and mobility alternatives. The program will be officially launched in NSW Seniors Week in March 2009. Details of the program can be accessed at the NRMA website <http://www.mynrma.com.au/cps/rde/xchg/mynrma/hs.xsl/yearsahead.htm>



Shoalhaven City Council - 'Seniors on the Move'

This program aims to help older drivers make a gradual transition from driving to using other forms of transport. It assists them identify and use appropriate public transport available in the Shoalhaven region, as well as assessing safe driving practices and making informed choices on their future mobility options.

The program consists of three parts:

- Local driving instructors are invited to a seminar addressing the special needs of older drivers
- Driver refresher lessons will be offered to seniors who identify themselves as being at risk of losing their licence. This assessment is made using the COTA self identification model.
- A question and answer session on local public transport options. Each participant is given a pack that outlines all the options and includes things like bus timetables and free bus vouchers. This pack is also distributed to the local RTA, hospital and GP's to assist their clients in making the transition from driving to other transport options.

Canterbury City Council - 'Watch Out. Cars About' Senior Pedestrian Safety Program

This used supermarket receipt 'shopper docket' (widely read by seniors) to give away free bright yellow shopping bags printed with safe walking messages.

Hundreds of bags were collected by seniors and both their use of crossings and visibility to drivers improved.

VICTORIA

Vicroads places a strong emphasis on senior driver education within the community, with numerous safe driving programs available. These include:

'Victorian Older Drivers Handbook'

The 'Victorian Older Drivers Handbook' provides information for senior drivers about safe driving practices. The handbook aims to help older drivers to continue driving safely and alert them to changing personal factors that may affect their ability to continue driving. It incorporates a questionnaire that allows senior drivers to assess their own driving and identify possible problems, and gives information



on health issues, medicines, tips for safe driving practices, and hints to reduce and eventually cease driving.

Travel Assist: ‘Keeping you on the move’ Pilot Program

This pilot program was an outcome of the 2007 ‘Maintaining Mobility’ report, which recommended the need for a range of travel options to help support seniors as they limit or cease driving. Travel Assist provides a personalised plan and advice on available transport options; support services and programs; concessions, motorized mobility devices; and public and community transport.

‘A Guide for Choosing and Using Mobility Devices’

This brochure contains information about the road use of motorised mobility devices such as scooters. It includes important points such as legal requirements for owning and using a mobility device, tips for choosing and servicing the right device, road rules, and safety checklists.

‘Getting Around Without a Car’

This package contains information on Victoria’s licensing system, and provides a range of travel options and ideas for people who do not drive. It informs drivers about assessing whether it is safe to continue driving, alternative options for driving such as walking, travelling with friends, family and neighbours, community transport, and motorized mobility devices. It also provides a list of services that can be accessed from the comfort of one’s home, such as grocery shopping home delivery, meals delivered to the doorstep, and Internet and phone banking.

Wiser Driver Program – Hawthorn Community Education group.

This program allows older people to enhance their knowledge about road safety, discuss road related issues, and also plan for future transport options. The Wiser Driver Programs are held in local community venues in conjunction with Regional Roadsafe Committees or local Councils. For details see

<http://www.hcec.edu.au/WiserDriverProgram.htm>



Royal Automobile Club of Victoria (RACV)

The RACV has three main programs to assist seniors drive safely and provide support to help make the mobility transition easier for everyone involved.

‘Making the Right Choice – Vehicle Safety Advice for Seniors’

This brochure outlines the importance of owning and purchasing a safe car. It covers safety features such as airbags, seatbelts, and vehicle handling features, as well as suggesting items one should avoid, for example, bull bars and large four-wheeled-drives.

Years Ahead – Road Safety for Seniors – RACV

This involves a one hour discussion based presentation to groups of older people throughout Victoria by specially trained RACV staff. It covers the following areas:

- Driving and road safety tips for drivers, passengers and pedestrians
- The importance of choosing a safe vehicle
- The importance of being fit to drive
- The impact of health and medications on driving
- How to assess personal driving ability
- Information about alternative transport options
- How to plan for future mobility

The program has proven to be very successful, with over 50,000 people participating since 1997. For further information see

<http://www.racv.com.au/wps/wcm/resources/file/eb16774b0192b6c/years%20ahead%20brochure-jul07.pdf>

‘Getting Around If You No Longer Drive’

This brochure provides seniors with information and advice on alternative transport options when they have stopped driving. It includes information about the different modes of public transport available to seniors in Victoria, eligibility for concessions and discounts, community transport information, and other transport options such as travelling with family and friends, walking, and mobility scooters. There is also a list of contacts in local community councils.

The brochure can be downloaded at



http://www.racv.com.au/wps/wcm/resources/file/eb167a4b01ca11b/getting_around_if_you_no_longer_drive_brochure.pdf

To access further information about RACV programs for senior drivers go to <http://www.racv.com.au/wps/wcm/connect/Internet/Primary/road+safety/road+safety+for+seniors/>

QUEENSLAND

Royal Automobile Club Queensland (RACQ) programs for senior drivers include

'Years Ahead' Program -

This aims to assist older motorists in driving safely for longer whilst being aware of their own capabilities, and also help family and friends of older drivers, and community groups who coordinate activities involving older drivers. The free program is delivered in a 90 minute group discussion covering age related safety issues, awareness and application of road rules. For more details see

http://www.racq.com.au/motoring_advice/safer_drivers/education/older_road_users/years_ahead_older_drivers_program

'Years Ahead Refresher Drive' -

This is a practical road assessment with a qualified driver trainer. The refresher drive is not a test, but rather offers senior drivers the opportunity to have their driving skills assessed in a constructive manner and a written report on ways to better improve ones on-road safety skills. For information on the program and costs involved see

http://www.racq.com.au/motoring_advice/safer_drivers/education/older_road_users/years_ahead_older_drivers_program

'Older Driver Self Assessment Questionnaire'

The electronic self assessment questionnaire provides senior drivers with the opportunity to review themselves on a range of driver related issues. A score is calculated from the responses in the assessment and a list of handy hints is then



displayed based on the responses to the question. To view the questionnaire please go to <https://secure.racq.com.au/ssl/saq/saq.cfm>

'Older Drivers' Vehicle Selection Tips'

This page on the RAC Q website gives older drivers information on how to select an appropriate vehicle for themselves with suitable safety features. It provides details about new cars, occupant safety features, active safety features, vehicle size, and comfort features. See http://www.racq.com.au/motoring_advice/safer_drivers/education/older_road_users/older_drivers_vehicle_selection_tips

Further information on RACQ senior driver programs and initiatives is at http://www.racq.com.au/motoring_advice/safer_drivers/education/older_road_users

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Royal Automobile Club Western Australia (RACWA)

RACWA is heavily involved with older road user safety, speaking to over 15,000 seniors a year about the implications, legalities, and costs of driving. Its newest initiative is *'Educating the Community'*, which includes a Seniors Program containing three presentations:

- 'Surviving Our Roads' reveals the important information seniors must know in order to be a safe driver and pedestrian. Information in this talk can include, current road safety information, how to choose a safe car, and survival tips for driving on the road.
- The 'Your Driving Future' seminar assists seniors in updating their road knowledge and helps prepare them for their driving future. It discusses changes in the road rules and regulations, tips on how to assess ones driving, and provides advice for the Seniors Driving Assessment.
- 'Scooters for Seniors' provides information about the benefits of motorized wheelchairs. The presentation includes information about different types of scooters', registering, licensing, and insuring ones scooter, as well as road rules and safety advice for scooter users.



For further information regarding the RAC WA ‘Keeping our Community Safe’ initiative see <http://rac.com.au/Community/Community-education/For-seniors.aspx>

‘Motorised Wheel Chair Handbooks: Users Guide & Suppliers Guide’

This Users Guide outlines important information that a consumer should know before purchasing a motorised wheelchair. It contains information about where a motorised wheel chair can be used, the importance of remaining physically active, helpful hints about crossing the road and intersections, parking, how to use the mobility device on public transport, safety issues surrounding wheelchairs, and legal and insurance obligations.

The Suppliers guide offers a set of guidelines to act as a reference for health professionals and suppliers of motorised wheelchairs. It includes information on functional ability, the user environment, product selections, supplier obligations, trials and testing, safety information, servicing breakdowns and parts, conditions and warranties, home modifications, after sales service, and licensing and insurance.

‘Get on Board’

The Public Transport Authority (Transperth) provides this program for newly arrived migrants, senior citizens, and people with special needs. It involves conducted tours at train stations, bus depots, and wharfs, to guide seniors and the other target groups through the process of using the public transport system. Trained officers help search for times, and chaperone the seniors to the appropriate station until they feel comfortable using the transport services by themselves. For further information about the ‘Get on Board’ transport program, contact the Transperth Community Education Team at education@transperth.wa.gov.au

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

The South Australian Handbook for Older Drivers’

This is similar to other states older driver handbooks, highlighting the importance of road rules, affects and impacts of physical conditions as well as emotions on driving, and helpful hints to maintain ones car. There is also very good information on alternative means of transport. The Handbook is at



http://www.transport.sa.gov.au/pdfs/personal_transport/driving/complete_handbook.pdf

‘Walk with Care’

This program from the Department of Transport Energy and Infrastructure, allows older pedestrians and community groups to discuss local road safety issues and concerns. It provides seniors with tips on how to walk with care in various situations such as at traffic lights, roundabouts, and gives them information about knowing their capability as a pedestrian. Two advertisements emphasising the importance of pedestrians walking with care are at

http://210.247.132.180/alt-host/assets/pdf_file/0006/24198/wwc_poster1_2004.pdf

http://210.247.132.180/alt-host/assets/pdf_file/0007/24199/wwc_poster2_2004.pdf

Further information about the ‘Walk with Care’ program is available at the Department of Transport Energy and Infrastructure website

http://www.dtei.sa.gov.au/roadsafety/programs_and_resources/archive/walk_with_care_program_2000_archive

Driver Assessment Clinic

The Driver Assessment Clinic at the University of South Australia ran from 1997 to 2003. It offered one-off community talks to seniors groups providing the latest research and statistics about road safety, information concerning driving retirement, and the benefits and drawbacks of retiring from driving. The clinic also focused on the individual needs of each driver, offering driving assessments, and transitional planning for those who were unfit to continue driving. Although the program had little advertisement, and worked on a word-of-mouth invitation system, it was very successful and won a community award.

TASMANIA

The Tasmanian Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources (DIER) provides the following programs relating to senior drivers.

Senior Driver Guidelines

The webpage presents information about the guidelines and regulations seniors must abide by to obtain their license after a certain age.



Safe Driving Practices

Safe Driving Practices webpage provides helpful and detailed information on Driving Safely, Road Rules, Seatbelts & Child Restraints, Driving & Alcohol, Keeping Your Car in Good Condition, Buying a Safe Car, Safer Driving, Vehicle Safety Checklist, and Loads & Towing. It is not aimed directly at seniors.

The Tasmanian Older Drivers Handbook

The handbook provides advice for older drivers on how to drive safely whilst remaining mobile. It includes information on

- a self assessment/questionnaire which allows seniors to assess their own driving abilities and identify possible trouble spots, then gives hints for elderly drivers based on the results from the questionnaire.
- information on health problems, medications, the use of alcohol
- keeping your car in good condition and information on buying a new car.
- healthy lifestyles and mobility
- licensing requirements for seniors and hints on how seniors can prepare themselves to cease driving yet still remain independent.

To view the Tasmanian Older Drivers Handbook go to

http://www.transport.tas.gov.au/licence_information_folder/the_tasmanian_older_drivers_handbook2

Retiring from Driving

This webpage offers seniors useful suggestions on how seniors can prepare to cease driving. The information provided includes small paragraphs focusing on the use and benefits of public and community transport and how to become familiar with the public and community transport system.

For additional information regarding senior driver programs in Tasmania, see

http://www.transport.tas.gov.au/search2?mode=results&queries_all_query=senior+drivers



APPENDIX 3: ‘SENIORS DRIVING LONGER, SMARTER, SAFER: AN OLDER DRIVER TRAINING PROGRAM’

Authors: Michelle Whelan, Anna Devlin, Jennie Oxley & Judith Charlton.
Monash University Accident Research Centre

Abstract:

Mobility is essential for general independence as well as ensuring good health and quality of life, and one of the most relevant and important activities of daily living for maintaining independence is the ability to drive, and this is particularly so for older adults. While it is generally acknowledged that many older drivers are safe and cautious drivers, making appropriate adjustments to their driving and travel behaviour, there is also evidence to suggest that there may be sub-groups of older drivers who do not adopt self-regulatory driving behaviours. These groups may be at higher risk of crash involvement compared with other sub-groups and may benefit greatly from targeted driver awareness, education and training programs. While there is a continued international recognition of the benefits of such programs, there are few existing programs in Australia. To address this gap, a new and innovative education and training program, ‘*Seniors Driving Longer, Smarter, Safer*’, was developed with the support and sponsorship of the NRMA ACT Road Safety Trust.

The aims of the *Seniors Driving Longer, Smarter, Safer* program are to provide groups of older road users with knowledge about crash and injury risk, raise their awareness of the effects of ageing on driving performance and crash risk, and provide tips and strategies on maintaining safe driving practices for as long as possible. In addition, the resource outlines strategies for successful reduction and cessation of driving and alternative transport options for older people.



The final product is a ‘ready-to-deliver’ program package for a two-day course, which is designed for use by local governments, non-government organisations, community groups, practitioners and volunteers who either provide services to or work with older populations.

The package’s resources include four components:

- i) an Instructor’s Manual,
- ii) a Powerpoint presentation,
- iii) Activity Materials/Instructions, and
- iv) a Driving Information Booklet for group session participants.

The instructor’s manual sets out clearly the set-up of classes and activities, strategies on effective teaching amongst older adults, and step-by-step messages to be delivered for each Powerpoint slide, as well as detailed procedures for activities.

The course covers four key areas:

- Seniors’ crash and injury risks;
 - = population changes and older driver crash risk
 - = understanding crash and injury risks
 - = safety and mobility
 - = the changing road system
- Changing abilities;
 - = functional abilities
 - = cognitive changes
 - = medication and driving
- Strategies for driving longer and safer
 - = adopting safe driving practices
 - = choosing and using a safe vehicle
- Alternative transport and mobility options.
 - = the importance of maintaining mobility
 - = successfully reducing (and eventually ceasing) driving
 - = alternative transport options
 - = walking safely



Evaluations of the program were conducted with groups of older drivers to assess the program's i) effectiveness in changing/improving overall knowledge of safe mobility and adoption of safe driving practices, and ii) acceptability by older drivers themselves. The findings suggested that attendance at the program resulted in a greater awareness of the impact of changing abilities on driving performance, some changed/improved attitudes to important road safety messages, and improvements in some driving behaviours and patterns. Moreover, the great majority of older drivers found the program to be very worthwhile, very informative, educational and useful.



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