

News Release Minister Michael O'Brien

Minister for Finance
Minister for Police
Minister for Correctional Services
Minister for Emergency Services
Minister for Road Safety

Wednesday, 24 July 2013

Bill to protect young drivers and their passengers

Road Safety Minister Michael O'Brien today introduced a Bill into Parliament which proposes changes to the Graduated Licensing Scheme (GLS) that aim to protect South Australia's young drivers and their passengers.

Mr O'Brien said the initiatives contained in the *Motor Vehicles (Learner's Permits and Provisional Licences) Amendment Bill 2013* follow extensive consultation and have the potential to save lives by reducing risks for young drivers.

"Key initiatives of the Bill include passenger and night-time driving restrictions for P1 drivers which will allow no more than one passenger aged 16 to 20 years (immediate family members are exempt) and no driving between midnight to 5am," Mr O'Brien said.

"However, the Bill will also include an exemption system to these restrictions.

"This has been designed to address concerns from young drivers regarding employment, sporting and family commitments and volunteer activities."

Under the exemption system:

- P1 drivers will be exempt from the passenger restrictions if they are required to carry multiple peer passengers during the course of their employment.
- P1 drivers will be exempt from the night-time driving restriction if they need to drive for employment, formal volunteer work, education, training or sporting purposes.

"The exemption system, which has the support of key stakeholders, will mean young people with work, education or sporting commitments are not restricted with the changes to the GLS," Mr O'Brien said.

"Drivers will need to carry a letter from their employer, volunteer organisation, education institution or sports association, or some other supporting evidence, if stopped by police.

"Young people are often required to change their working hours at short notice. The automatic exemption model provides flexibility and allows for immediate access to the exemption provisions."

Passenger and night-time driving restrictions will also not apply if a P1 driver is aged over 25 or has a passenger acting as a Qualified Supervising Driver (QSD) in the front seat next to them. A QSD is a person who has held a full driver's licence continuously for at least two years.

In addition, police members driving on duty and members of other emergency services, both paid and volunteer, driving on duty, will be exempt from both restrictions.

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Mr O'Brien said key initiatives of the Bill include:

- A passenger restriction for P1 drivers under the age of 25, allowing no more than one passenger aged 16 to 20 years for the duration of their P1 licence, excluding immediate family members (with an exemption system).
- A restriction on driving between midnight and 5am for P1 drivers under the age of 25 for the duration of their P1 licence (with an exemption system).
- Extending the total minimum provisional licence period from two to three years. This will mean one year on a P1 licence and two years on a P2 licence.
- Removing regression to a previous licence stage following a disqualification period.
- The Hazard Perception Test (HPT) being a requirement of graduation from L to P1, rather than P1 to P2.

Mr O'Brien said the proposed changes were not about removing the freedom that comes with having a licence, but rather ensuring young drivers have the best start.

"Young drivers are at greatest risk of a crash in their first year of driving unsupervised and SA has the second-worst fatality rate for the 16 to 19-year-old age group than all Australian states and territories," he said.

"If passenger and night-time restrictions had been in place over the past five years they had the potential to prevent 22 deaths, 240 serious injuries and 1397 minor injuries.

"These initiatives are already in place in other jurisdictions, the restrictions will only apply for 12 months on a P1 licence and the evidence tells us they will save lives."

Further information about the proposed changes to the GLS system can be found at www.myllicence.sa.gov.au/protecting_our_young_drivers

PROPOSAL – A NIGHT-TIME DRIVING RESTRICTION FOR ALL P1 DRIVERS BETWEEN MIDNIGHT AND 5AM

The night-time driving restriction does not apply if a P1 driver has a QSD* or is aged 25 or over

PROPOSED EXEMPTIONS FOR NIGHT-TIME DRIVING RESTRICTION BETWEEN MIDNIGHT AND 5AM	
EMPLOYMENT	
What does the exemption encompass?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Driving to and from work ➤ Driving in the course of performing employment ➤ Driving to and from work by the shortest most practicable route ➤ Able to pick up or drop off other passengers on the way to and from work if they fall within the passenger restrictions 	
EDUCATION / TRAINING	
What does the exemption encompass?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ School, university, TAFE, apprenticeships and other formal training providers ➤ Driving to and from education/training ➤ Driving in the course of undertaking a required education or training activity ➤ Driving to and from by the shortest most practicable route ➤ Able to pick up or drop off other passengers on the way to and from education/training if they fall within the passenger restrictions 	
VOLUNTEERS	
What does the exemption encompass?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Would encompass formal volunteering ➤ Driving to and from formal volunteer work ➤ Driving in the course of performing formal volunteer work ➤ Driving to and from formal volunteering work by the shortest most practicable route ➤ Able to pick up or drop off other passengers on the way to and from volunteering if they fall within the passenger restrictions 	
SPORTS	
What does the exemption encompass?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Elite athletes ➤ Formal sports associations/clubs ➤ School / university sports ➤ Driving to and from matches and training by the shortest most practicable route ➤ Able to pick up or drop off other passengers on the way to and from sport if they fall within the passenger restrictions ➤ Exemption would <u>NOT</u> include P1 drivers travelling to and from a local gym for their own personal fitness training 	
POLICE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES MEMBERS	
What does the exemption encompass?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Police members and members of other emergency services, both paid and volunteer, driving <u>on duty</u> would be exempt from night-time restrictions. 	

PROPOSAL – A PASSENGER RESTRICTION FOR ALL P1 DRIVERS ALLOWING NO MORE THAN ONE PASSENGER AGED 16-20 (IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBERS EXEMPT)

A P1 driver can carry one passenger aged 16 to 20 and immediate family members (i.e. siblings)
The passenger restriction does not apply if a P1 driver has a QSD* or is aged 25 or over

PROPOSED EXEMPTIONS FOR PASSENGER RESTRICTION ALLOWING NO MORE THAN ONE PASSENGER AGED 16-20

EMPLOYMENT

What does the exemption encompass?

- A need to drive peer age passengers in the course of employment that falls outside of the restrictions of -
 - no more than one passenger aged 16 to 20
 - immediate family members exempt
- There may be a case where a P1 driver as part of their employment is required to drive more than one peer age passenger age 16 to 20. This exemption would allow for this activity specifically.
- At all other times the passenger restrictions would apply –
 - no more than one passenger aged 16 to 20
 - immediate family members exempt

VOLUNTEERS , EDUCATION AND TRAINING, SPORTS

- An exemption from the passenger restrictions would NOT be available for these purposes.
- Passenger restriction applies at all times –
 - no more than one passenger aged 16 to 20
 - immediate family members exempt

POLICE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES MEMBERS

What does the exemption encompass?

- Police members and members of other emergency services, both paid and volunteer, driving on duty would be exempt from the passenger restrictions.

P1 drivers will need to demonstrate that they meet the exemption criteria by carrying a letter from their employer, volunteer organisation, education/ training institution or sports association, or some other supporting evidence, if stopped by police at the roadside.