

**Minister for Transport
The Honourable Rachel Nolan**

Thursday, July 01, 2010

No drinks for new drivers

All new drivers must now stick to a zero blood alcohol limit, regardless of their age.

Transport Minister Rachel Nolan said tough new laws coming into effect today (July 1) would remove a major risk factor for inexperienced drivers.

"The State Government is committed to getting tough on drink drivers, protecting our novice and learner drivers, and making the roads safer for everyone.

"Learning to drive at any age requires full concentration and crash data shows that novice drivers and riders affected by alcohol are at risk of a serious crash.

"Between 1 July 2001 and 30 June 2008, there were 36 fatalities in Queensland resulting from crashes where a learner or provisional licence holder aged 25 years or more had a positive BAC.

"This represents 43.9% of all fatalities from crashes involving these drivers and that's a tragic statistic."□

Ms Nolan said the new laws will apply to anyone on a probationary licence to have a zero blood alcohol limit (BAC).

"These new laws will require all learner, provisional, P1 and P2 licence holders, regardless of their age, and all RE motorcycle licence holders in their first year of riding, to drive or ride with a zero blood alcohol concentration (BAC). Currently, if you are a learner, provisional and probationary licence holder under 25 you must drive with a zero BAC. But people aged over 25, on one of these licences could drive with a BAC below 0.05.

"The zero alcohol restriction will reinforce the message to these licence holders that, regardless of their age, they are novice drivers and riders who need to take extra care as they develop their skills unimpeded by alcohol," she said.

Ms Nolan said by including people 25 years and over who are driving on a probationary licence, it ensures there is consistency in the laws.

"This makes it easier for both the drivers and the police because it is clear that if you are driving with an L or P licence or in your first 12 months of riding on an RE licence you must have no alcohol in your system," she said.

Ms Nolan said the new laws will apply to motorcycle riders on an RE licence in their first year of riding because this is the most critical time in terms of potential crash risk.

"More fatal crashes occur in the first 12 months of holding a motorcycle licence. From 2004-2008, there were 64 first-year motorcycle riders involved in fatal crashes. Of these 30 (or 46.9%) were aged 25 years or older," she said.

"Riding a motorcycle requires different skills compared to driving a car - such as balance and coordination of multiple controls, and any impairment as a result of alcohol consumption can impact on a rider's ability to apply these skills effectively."□