

Sent: Friday, September 05, 2014 4:44 PM

Subject: Fw: Attention; The Evidence That the Elderly Drivers Are the Safest Drivers and are Being Discriminated Against is Coming In Faster Than I Can Process it.

Discrimination Confirmed By The Anti -Discrimination Commissioner of Tasmania, After a Investigation Launched by the Infrastructure Minister.

FROM THE ANTI-DISCRIMINATION COMMISSIONER On 26 August 2011, Tasmanian Infrastructure Minister David O'Byrne launched The Alternative Older Driver Licensing System for Tasmania Final Report and announced that there would be significant changes to the driver licensing system for older drivers.

The current system requires drivers to undertake a compulsory annual medical assessment from the age of 75 and a compulsory annual on-road assessment from the age of 85.

The report found that the current system is discriminatory based on age and that discrimination could not be justified, as research showed that older drivers are safe, there is no evidence that older drivers are more likely to cause a crash and older drivers are under-represented in crash statistics.

No evidence supported retaining compulsory annual medical and on-road assessments on the basis of age.

Under the new system, as of October this year, drivers aged 85 years and over will no longer have to have a compulsory on-road assessment. In 2014, compulsory medical assessments for drivers aged 75 years and over will end.

The new system will focus on driver self-assessment of their driving skills, with the assistance and support of their family, friends and doctors and a system for reporting drivers

I welcome Minister O'Byrne's announcement of significant progress to remove the barrier faced by older drivers; a barrier that can result in social isolation and reduced activity. Tasmania has a very active and engaged older population and this is a fact to be celebrated and encouraged. The improvements to the driver licensing system for older drivers recognise the importance of transport to older people continuing their contribution and participation in our community.

The changes to the system are an appropriate and balanced response to the 2008 report of the former Anti-Discrimination Commissioner, Sarah Bolt, into the issue of testing of older drivers and the discrimination highlighted in that report.

That report was the result of an own-motion investigation conducted under the Anti-Discrimination Act 1998 (Tas) by the former Commissioner.

I am currently conducting a similar own-motion investigation into the practice of some insurance companies excluding people from the protection of volunteer insurance on the basis of age.

Submissions have now closed and further investigation into this issue is being undertaken. The findings of the current investigation will similarly rely on evidence about what, if any, additional risk of injury faces young and older volunteers and how that risk relates to the type of volunteer activity they engage in.

Robin Banks
Anti-Discrimination Commissioner

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