

*Austroads*

Research Report  
AP-R593-18



# **Australia and New Zealand Vehicle Registration and Driver Licensing Overview 2017-18**

**A Transnational Survey of  
Laws, Procedures and Trends**

# Australia and New Zealand Vehicle Registration and Driver Licensing Overview 2017-18

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## Abstract

This overview includes: an outline of the road safety imperative in Australia and New Zealand; a description of the key practices associated with the vehicle and driver licence pathways in the eight Australian jurisdictions and New Zealand; and a focus on the major areas of difference in the jurisdictions, and areas of potential change.

It is the first edition of the Australia and New Zealand Vehicle Registration and Driver Licensing Overview 2017–18, developed by Austroads on behalf of all Australian and New Zealand registration and licensing authorities. It will be supplemented by the release of an online data and information resource covering driver licensing and vehicle registration practice and trends, which will be continuously updated by Austroads member organisations.

## Keywords

Vehicle registration, driver licence, road safety, vehicle chain, pathway

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This report has been prepared for Austroads as part of its work to promote improved Australian and New Zealand transport outcomes by providing expert technical input on road and road transport issues.

Individual road agencies will determine their response to this report following consideration of their legislative or administrative arrangements, available funding, as well as local circumstances and priorities.

Austroads believes this publication to be correct at the time of printing and does not accept responsibility for any consequences arising from the use of information herein. Readers should rely on their own skill and judgement to apply information to particular issues.

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## About Austroads

Austroads is the peak organisation of Australasian road transport and traffic agencies.

Austroads' purpose is to support our member organisations to deliver an improved Australasian road transport network. To succeed in this task, we undertake leading-edge road and transport research which underpins our input to policy development and published guidance on the design, construction and management of the road network and its associated infrastructure.

Austroads provides a collective approach that delivers value for money, encourages shared knowledge and drives consistency for road users.

Austroads is governed by a Board consisting of senior executive representatives from each of its eleven member organisations:

- Roads and Maritime Services New South Wales
- Roads Corporation Victoria
- Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads
- Main Roads Western Australia
- Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure South Australia
- Department of State Growth Tasmania
- Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics Northern Territory
- Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate, Australian Capital Territory
- The Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities
- Australian Local Government Association
- New Zealand Transport Agency.

# Summary

The purpose of this publication is to improve regulatory and service delivery policy, planning and coordination, with the overarching objective of improving road safety across Australia and New Zealand. These resources will assist individual road and traffic authorities to understand how other jurisdictions are responding to ongoing policy and operational challenges. They will inform better policy development by all Austroads members and assist discussions in transnational taskforces and forums.

This publication will help other stakeholders—including other government agencies, peak bodies, research organisations, industry participants and the general public—to understand the practices and policy directions of road and traffic authorities.

This overview highlights the considerable progress made in harmonisation of registration and licensing regimes, especially across Australia. Key elements of harmonisation include:

- a national driver licensing system that has been adopted through model legislation (including uniform licence classes and types, conditions, a national demerit point scheme and Australian road rules)
- standard data elements for all Australian driver licence and photo card products
- national vehicle standards (Australian design rules)
- national identity proofing guidelines
- national competency framework for heavy vehicle driver licensing (implemented in three jurisdictions to date)
- the vehicle safety inspection system
- participation in development of the national driver licence facial recognition system
- alcohol interlock schemes
- a common Graduated Licensing Scheme
- mutual recognition of driver licences (including from New Zealand) and vehicle registrations
- ‘The Safe System’ approach

The future of motor vehicle and driver licensing regulation promises to be dynamic. New technologies are likely to change the transport landscape in fundamental ways over the coming decades. Automated vehicles are a future reality, with huge potential road safety benefits and complex policy challenges. The emergence of such vehicles will likely promote new models of vehicle ownership. Vehicle types and capabilities are being transformed. It will be critical for all market participants to have access to up-to-date information as a basis for informed policy making and strategy.



*Servi Beckers (left), Chairman, EReg and Nick Koukoulas, Chief Executive, Austroads, The Hague, Netherlands, 2017.*

It is hoped that this overview will improve links with regulators and industry participants elsewhere in the world. In 2017 Austroads and the **Association of European Vehicle and Driver Registration Authorities** (EReg) signed a strategic partnership (or collaboration) agreement. This overview complements EReg's biennial *Vehicle Chain in Europe* report, at [www.vehicle-chain.eu](http://www.vehicle-chain.eu), which similarly outlines major practices and challenges for 28 participating countries in Europe.

This is a summary of the major elements of the vehicle registration and driver licensing regulatory and service delivery arrangements in the eight Australian jurisdictions and in New Zealand.

The summary echoes the concept of the *Vehicle Chain*, developed by **EReg** in Europe, as part of a regular survey of its members, and uses a similar structure to the companion survey summary document. The 'vehicle and driver chain' concepts aim to reflect the chain of links in the life of vehicle and driver licences. However, in our region, the concept of vehicle and licence *pathways* has been adopted.

The vehicle chain and driver licence chain categories are shown below. There are some minor differences in terminology between our region and Europe, which are highlighted in the table. A particular difference is in the usage of the terms 'licensing' and 'registration'.

The base year for all data in this report is the 2016-17 financial year except where otherwise noted.

**Table 0.1: Comparison of European and Australian vehicle chains/pathways**

<b>EReg Vehicle Chain</b>	<b>Austroads Vehicle Pathway</b>
International regulation	→ National regulation
Manufacturing	→ Manufacturing
Type approval	→ Vehicle standards
Licensing	→ Registration
Taxation	→ Taxation
Insurance	→ Insurance
Tracing and enforcement	→ Data sharing and enforcement
Technical Inspections	→ Inspections

**Table 0.2: Driver licence chain/pathway**

<b>EReg Driving Licence Chain</b>	<b>Austroads Driver Licensing Pathway</b>
International regulation	→ National regulation
Training and examination	→ Training and assessment
Documents	→ Licence cards
Registration	→ Licensing
Offences	→ Offences and infringements
Withdrawal	→ n/a

## Glossary

**Australian states and territories are abbreviated:** **ACT**—Australian Capital Territory; **NSW**—New South Wales; **Qld**—Queensland; **Tas**—Tasmania; **Vic**—Victoria; **SA**—South Australia; **WA**—Western Australia; **NT**—Northern Territory

**Australasia**—refers to jurisdictions in Australia and New Zealand collectively, but **not** to Melanesia, Papua New Guinea, or any other countries in Oceania.

**NEVDIS**—National Exchange of Vehicle and Driver Information System (Australia)

**NHVR**—National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (Australia)

**Jurisdiction**—‘jurisdictions’ and ‘states and territories’ are used interchangeably in this document to refer to the eight Australian states and territories

**NZTA**—New Zealand Transport Agency

**PPSR**—Personal Property and Securities Register (Australia)

**Third party personal injury insurance**—this term is used generically for the motor vehicle compulsory third party insurance schemes which operate in all jurisdictions

**VIN**—Vehicle Identification Number.

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# 1. Road Safety



Source: Getty Images.

The key policy goal underpinning vehicle registration and driver licence regulation in Australasia is road safety.

## 1.1 Australia

Since 1970, Australia has continuously achieved large and lasting road safety gains from road improvements, safer vehicles, lower speed limits, graduated licensing and a range of successful behavioural programs targeting drink driving, seatbelt usage and speeding. Independent studies and other objective evidence have demonstrated the success of each of these initiatives in reducing road trauma. Despite these achievements, road crashes continue to cause large numbers of deaths and serious injuries each year. The social impacts are devastating—and the annual cost to the Australian economy has been estimated to be at least \$27 billion.

Under the National Road Safety Strategy 2001–2010, Australia was one of the first countries to formally adopt the [Safe System](#), which takes a holistic view of the road transport system and the interactions of its various elements. The Safe System aspires to create a road transport system in which human mistakes do not result in death or serious injury.

In Australia a National Road Safety Strategy 2011–2020 is in place, which continues to advance the Safe System, and commits federal, state and territory governments to an action plan to reduce fatal and serious injury crashes on Australian roads.

The mission and vision statements of most road agencies in Australia and New Zealand are focused towards road safety. In WA for example the vision statement is expressed as: “The world’s best drivers driving the world’s safest vehicles.” In Victoria the ‘Towards Zero’ policy aims to achieve zero deaths and serious injuries on the road network.

Australia’s 2011–20 strategy presents a 10-year plan to reduce the annual numbers of both deaths and serious injuries on Australian roads by at least 30 per cent.

## 1.2 New Zealand

Safer Roads is the New Zealand Government’s strategy to guide improvements in road safety over the same period 2010–2020. The New Zealand strategy also introduced the Safe System and aims to reduce the price paid for a mistake, so crashes do not result in loss of life or serious injury. Like Australia, the strategy is focused on road safety gains from road improvements, safer vehicles and lower speed limits, graduated licensing and programs targeting drink driving, seatbelt usage, and speeding. Overall, road travel in New Zealand has become safer in the last 25 years, however, since 2013 the levels of fatalities and serious injuries have not continued the downward trend experienced to 2012.

## 2. Registration and Licensing Authorities



Source: Getty Images.

Roads and traffic authorities are situated within broader transport portfolios and ministries in all Australian jurisdictions and New Zealand. In New South Wales, **Transport for NSW** is the lead agency of the NSW transport cluster and is responsible for strategy, planning, policy and legislation for vehicle registration and driver licensing. However, a separate government agency, **Roads and Maritime Services**, fulfils the regulatory role, while a government service delivery agency, **Service New South Wales**, conducts the customer-facing transactions. In Queensland, however, the **Department of Transport and Main Roads** oversees policy, undertakes regulatory functions and delivers its services through a mix of in-house and private sector providers.

In New Zealand, the Ministry of Transport provides leadership and assists the Government to set the strategic direction for the transport system. It also has responsibility for performance monitoring of transport Crown entities to ensure they are meeting system objectives. The New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) is the Crown entity and regulator focused on providing one integrated land transport system. New Zealand has contracted out driver testing, counter services, training and assessment for specialist driving licences, to the private sector.

**Table 2.1: Australian and New Zealand registration and licensing regulators**

Overview of Australasian Vehicle Registration Authorities			
	Category*	Organisation	Website
ACT	GA	Access Canberra	<a href="http://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au">www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au</a>
NSW	GA	Roads and Maritime Services/Service NSW	<a href="http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au">www.rms.nsw.gov.au</a> <a href="http://www.service.nsw.gov.au">www.service.nsw.gov.au</a>
NT	GD	Motor Vehicle Registry	<a href="http://www.mvr.nt.gov.au">www.mvr.nt.gov.au</a>
Qld	GD	Department of Transport and Main Roads	<a href="http://www.tmr.qld.gov.au">www.tmr.qld.gov.au</a>
SA	GD	Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure (DPTI)	<a href="http://www.dpti.sa.gov.au">www.dpti.sa.gov.au</a>
Tas	GD	Department of State Growth (Registration and Licensing Services Branch)	<a href="http://www.transport.tas.gov.au">www.transport.tas.gov.au</a>
Vic	GA	Roads Corporation, trading as VicRoads	<a href="http://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au">www.vicroads.vic.gov.au</a>
WA	GD	Department of Transport (Driver and Vehicle Services)	<a href="http://www.transport.wa.gov.au/dvs">www.transport.wa.gov.au/dvs</a>
NZ	GA	New Zealand Transport Agency	<a href="http://www.nzta.govt.nz">www.nzta.govt.nz</a>
Heavy vehicles (Australia)	GA	National Heavy Vehicle Regulator	<a href="http://www.nhvr.gov.au">www.nhvr.gov.au</a>

Note:

\* GA—Government agency/authority; GD—Government department

There is no one-size-fits-all approach across Australasia in delivering registration and licensing services, but there is a clear trend towards delivery of highly transactional services across digital platforms backed up by specialist service centres, and varying levels of service commissioning to external, private sector partners. For example, annual vehicle registration payments can be made through multiple channels, including electronic bill payment systems offered by the banks.

Registration and licensing policy is primarily directed towards road safety. A further trend is for registration and licensing services to be positioned as part of an integrated transport network. In NSW, for example, **Roads and Maritime Services** aims to enable safe, efficient and reliable journeys on road and maritime networks to deliver on NSW Government priorities for the transport system". Northern Territory's **Transport and Civil Service Division's** charter is focused on connecting citizens through its people, services, strategies and management of transport infrastructure.

## 2.1 Service delivery and funding approaches

Australasian agencies increasingly offer their high-volume, low-complexity customer transactions online, through a diversity of digital platforms. Increasingly they are also exploring opportunities to streamline or reform more complex transactions, both to reduce the compliance burden on customers and partner organisations and to improve customer services and internal efficiencies through greater use of digital service delivery.

Agencies in Australia and New Zealand generally aim to recover the cost of specific transactions through a full cost recovery model. Registration renewals, for example, generally attract a fee for the renewal period, plus a processing fee to cover the costs of administering registration renewals. The registration and licensing system therefore enables the collection of substantial revenue for government operations, in addition to fulfilling an important regulatory role for road safety.

## 2.2 Partners

Road agencies partner with a range of organisations to ensure that the registration and licensing system is effective and supported by high standard practices.

For example, all jurisdictions maintain a network of accredited vehicle inspectors, who are qualified to provide a range of certifications regarding vehicle safety and identity.

**Table 2.2: Accredited vehicle inspector regimes**

	ACT	NSW	NT	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	NZ
Network of accredited vehicle inspectors/inspection regimes	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

## 3. Vehicle Registration



Source: Getty Images.

Broadly, the tasks that are undertaken to ensure the legal and safe operation of motor vehicles on Australasian roads include:

- regulation, standards and manufacturing
- registration
- insurance
- data sharing, compliance and enforcement
- inspections.

Each of these tasks is outlined in this publication, and are similar to those undertaken in the vehicle chain in the European Union. Taxation is not a major feature of the Australasian arrangements, unlike in the EU, but is also addressed in this publication for completeness.

### 3.1 Regulation, standards and manufacturing

Most of Australia and New Zealand's on-road vehicles are now imported from Asia, Europe or the United States.

In Australia, the Commonwealth Government is responsible for national standards for vehicle safety, anti-theft and emissions.

Australian states and territories may impose additional standards, and will ultimately determine if a vehicle is registerable in a particular jurisdiction.

In Australia the **National Heavy Vehicle Regulator** (NHVR) has been established to administer a range of laws pertaining to vehicles with a gross vehicle mass over 4.5 tonnes. This organisation was established by agreement of the States, Territories and the Commonwealth of Australia (in recognition of the national aspects of heavy vehicle regulation and policy). The NHVR website contains a wealth of information about heavy vehicle accreditation, policies and standards. See [www.nhvr.gov.au](http://www.nhvr.gov.au)

New Zealand vehicle standards are established by the New Zealand Transport Agency. Like Australia, most of its vehicles are imported, and it generally applies standards from Japan, Europe, Australia and the United States.

Vehicle standards regulation in Australia can be summarised as follows:

**Table 3.1: Vehicle standards summary**

	ACT	NSW	NT	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA
<b>Light Vehicles</b>								
National Standards	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Additional jurisdictional standards	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓
<b>Heavy Vehicles</b>								
National Heavy Vehicle Regulator	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗

## 3.2 Registration

The registration of motor vehicles began in Australia and New Zealand in the early 1900s. In Victoria, for example, vehicle registration and the issuance of registration plates commenced in 1910. In all jurisdictions, the registration of motor vehicles enables governments to control what type of vehicles can access the road network.

In all Australian jurisdictions, other than Western Australia and Northern Territory the *registered operator* of a vehicle is required by law to ensure the vehicle is registered in order for it to be used on public roads. In WA and NT, the owner of the vehicle is responsible.

In New Zealand the responsibility falls on the owner or responsible person. See Table 3.2.

**Table 3.2: Registration responsibility**

Responsible Person	ACT	NSW	NT	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	NZ
Registered Operator	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		
Owner or Registered Operator			✓					✓	✓

The total number of registered vehicles, new vehicle registrations and vehicle transfers in each jurisdiction is in Table 3.3, below.

**Table 3.3: Basic vehicle registration demographics**

	ACT	NSW	NT	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	NZ
New vehicle Registration s.p.a.*	21,831	431,549	12,529	660,881	85,000	58,150	400,000	16,380##	363,129
Total Registered Vehicles #	330,831	6,429,693	197,844	5,147,380 81,948	1,771,287	604,709	5,849,864	2,831,625	4,858,279
Vehicle Transfers p.a.**	38,000	1,265,437	20,548	910,480	356,610	116,598	979,000	809,837	1,188,444

Notes:

# As at 30 June 2017

## WA data based on net additions to WA Registry

\* 2016/17

\*\* 2016/17

### 3.2.1 Annual charge

In all jurisdictions a set of annual registration charges is payable to the road authority. These charges include a premium for compulsory third-party personal injury insurance in most jurisdictions. The bundling of these charges links registration to the payment of the insurance premium (refer Section 3.3 Insurance below). In NSW the premium is paid to the insurer direct, but registration is not renewed if the payment is outstanding.

### 3.2.2 Periodic registration

All Australian jurisdictions allow for payment of this annual fee in instalments and through a range of payment channels. The table below shows the options available in Australia, and the approximate take-up rate by customers.

**Table 3.4: Short-term registration options and take-up rates**

	ACT	NSW	NT	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA
Short-term options (months)	3 & 6	6*	1, 3 & 6	3 & 6	1 & 3#	6	3 & 6	3 & 6
Take-up rate	60%	12%	72%	50%	55%	27%	26%	45%

Notes:

\* In NSW vehicles over 4.5 tonnes, light trailers, dealer registered and seasonally registered vehicles have the option between a 3 or 6 month registration term.

# 6 and 9 month options also available in SA for heavy vehicles.

In New Zealand, customers are able to choose any relicensing (registration) option from periods as brief as one day through to one year. The most common options chosen for periods less than 12 months are 1, 3 and 6 months, with the uptake rate being 60 per cent for all periods less than 12 months.

### 3.2.3 Motor vehicle register

Each jurisdiction maintains a register of motor vehicles. In Australia there is nationally agreed core vehicle and operator/owner information that all jurisdictions maintain on their own registers. Each jurisdiction also submits this core data to NEVDIS. New Zealand is not a participant in NEVDIS.

The following table shows the commonality in this core data across Australia and New Zealand.

**Table 3.5: Basic information stored in jurisdictional vehicle registration databases**

Data element	ACT	NSW	NT	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	NZ
Name and address of the registered operator or owner, as appropriate	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Vehicle registration number	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Make and model of vehicle	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Vehicle Identifiers	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Registration expiry date	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Any registration conditions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Vehicle charging category	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Vehicle inspection results/information	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Stolen vehicle status	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Written off vehicle information	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Odometer reading	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓

### 3.2.4 Concessions

Australian jurisdictions provide for concessions for a range of transactions fees, including the vehicle registration fee. Concessions are generally a partial reduction in the fee amount for owners and registered operators who meet specified criteria. Concessions and concession amounts vary between jurisdictions and can apply to the categories shown in Table 3.6.

**Table 3.6: Registration concessions by jurisdiction**

Concession category	ACT	NSW	NT	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	NZ
Alternate powered vehicle	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗
Apprentices	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗
Carers	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗
Charitable organisations	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗
Department of Veterans Affairs pensioner	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Consular	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗
Government	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗
Health care card holders	✗	✗	✗	TBA	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗
Pensioner concession card	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
People with serious disabilities or who are incapacitated*	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Primary producers	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Religious organisations	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗
People in rural areas*	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
Seniors	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗
Specific vehicles (car clubs, historic, etc.)*	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗

Notes: No concessions are available in New Zealand.

- \* Note that certain categories are unique to jurisdictions eg people in rural areas. People in jurisdictions without that category may fall under an alternative category eg concession card holders.
- \*\* NSW provides conditional registration to these vehicles in certain circumstances, which is cheaper than full registration.

### 3.2.5 Registration certificates

Australian jurisdictions and New Zealand issue a registration certificate to the registered operator or person responsible for the vehicle. This document contains vehicle identifiers (e.g., registration number, VIN, engine number) and other details such as name and address, and registration expiry date. There are challenges for jurisdictions where these identifiers are difficult to locate, or when duplicate numbers are issued by other manufacturers.

Some jurisdictions are planning to introduce digital registration certificates. Queensland offers a service in which customers can sign up to receive registration certificates and notices via email. SA provides 'EzyReg' Account holders with a PDF version of their certificates which can be downloaded.

### 3.2.6 Registration plates

Registration plates in Australia are manufactured in consultation with road agencies and police to ensure the production of more robust plates that are difficult to tamper with or counterfeit. Plate technologies are also developing globally to ensure that police-operated automated number plate recognition (ANPR) systems are able to more reliably read plate details in an operational setting.

In New Zealand all registration plates are manufactured to a standard that has been approved by NZ Police

Mobile and fixed ANPR cameras are increasingly used in Australia and New Zealand as part of road policing, and for operational compliance activities by road agencies. For example, in Victoria, VicRoads operates fixed ANPR cameras on all major highway approaches into Melbourne. Other units are specially designed to identify heavy vehicles and assess possible non-compliance with load, driver fatigue or speed regulations.

### 3.2.7 Registration labels and future identifiers

In New Zealand all vehicles are required to be continuously licensed and a current licence label must be displayed on the vehicle windscreen (unless the vehicle has formally been taken off the road, or is eligible for exemption)."

Australian jurisdictions have abolished the practice of issuing registration labels for vehicles.

**Table 3.7: Registration label usage in Australia and New Zealand**

Status	ACT	NSW	NT	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	NZ
Registration labels abolished# for most vehicles	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x

Note:

# Except specific purpose requirements as below

Specific purpose labels are still used for some purposes. In WA and NSW, vehicles fuelled with liquid petroleum gas or compressed natural gas must display a small label on their registration plate. Victoria requires club permit scheme vehicles to have an appropriate label. Club permits are issued at a lower registration fee for vehicles that are part of a car club and are only used for a limited number of days on the road network.

### 3.2.8 Future identifiers

Labels are no longer used as an identifier for most vehicles, but new technologies, such as radio frequency identification (RFID) chips, open up new possibilities. There is likely to be a convergence of these new electronic identifiers with the emergence of increasingly automated vehicle technologies.

Recent amendments to the Australian Light Vehicle Standards Rules — which can be accessed at <http://www.ntc.gov.au/roads/rules-compliance/australian-light-vehicle-standards-rules/> — will require vehicles to display labels indicating that they utilise an electric or hydrogen power source.

In the longer term, highly automated vehicles will require communications technologies that will open up new possibilities for vehicle identification.

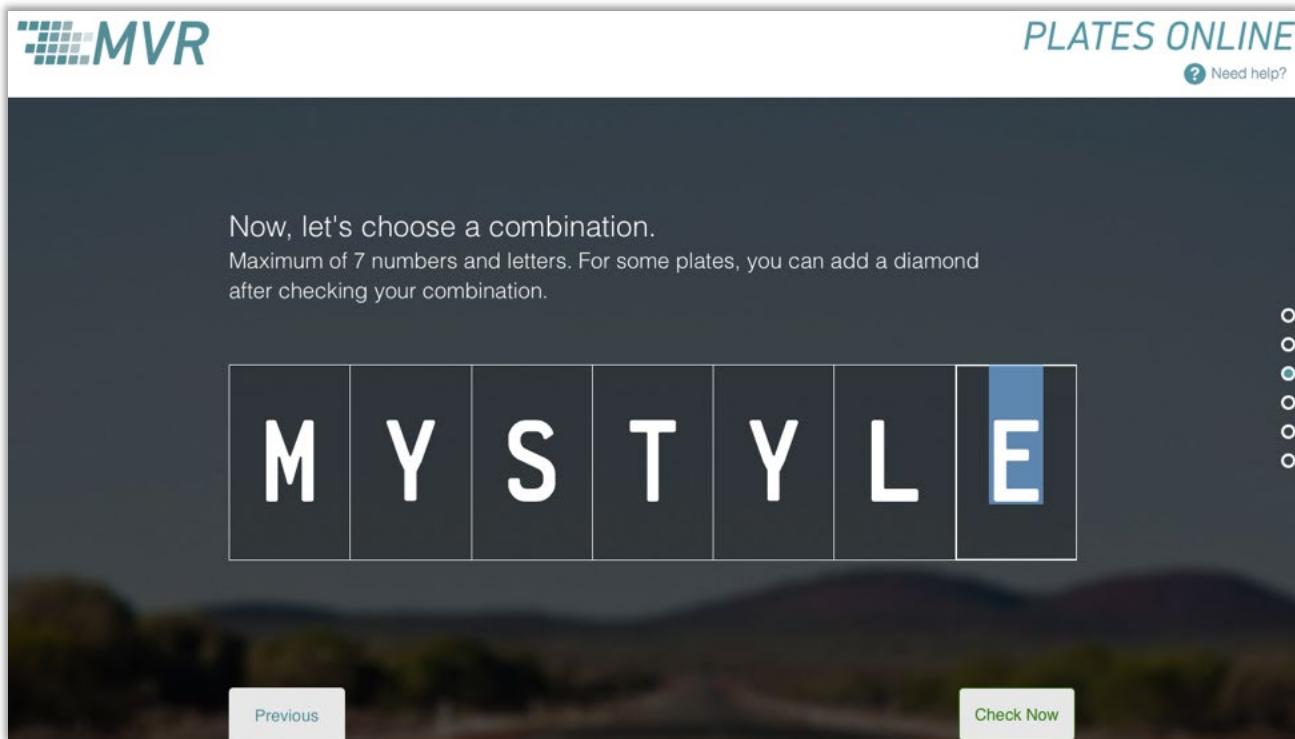
**Transport Certification Australia** has been established to support the appropriate adoption of telematics and related intelligent technologies across the surface-transport sector. This body aims to facilitate a national approach to the use of these technologies.

### 3.2.9 Personalised vehicle registration plates

Personalised registration plates are made available by all Australian jurisdictions and New Zealand, and meet a specific customer demand.

Typically, customers are able to select a letter and number combination online to see whether it is available, then pay a fee and receive or collect the plates. Individuals obtain the physical plate (which remains the property of the regulator) **and** the rights to that letter/number combination. They may sell this letter/number combination on the open market.

Figure 3.1: From the Northern Territory 'PLATES ONLINE' website



Personal plates are also available using the branding or livery of specific entities such as football clubs.

In all jurisdictions, personalised plates are transferrable between vehicles and can be bought and sold, provided that the road authority is notified of the plate (and registration number rights) transfer.

### 3.2.10 Taxation

In Australia and New Zealand there is no significant link between taxation and vehicle registration, unlike in some European countries.

All Australian jurisdictions impose stamp duty on new and used motor vehicle transfers. This fee is collected along with transfer fees when the vehicle's record is transferred from the former owner/registered operator to the new owner/ registered operator.

In Australia the federal government levies a range of fuel taxes on the sale of vehicle fuel, partly to help fund national road infrastructure projects. The sale of vehicles is also subject to the national Goods and Services Tax. Rebates are available in respect of clean fuels.

Road user charges are also imposed on certain heavy vehicles to fund the upkeep of major highways.

In New Zealand there are also fuel taxes and road user charges, and a Goods and Services Tax, but no stamp duty.

**Table 3.8: Imposition of vehicle related taxes**

Applicable taxes and duties	ACT	NSW	NT	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	NZ	Commonwealth Government (Australia)
Goods and Services Tax#									✓	✓
Stamp duties (charged on vehicle transfer and on any insurance premium)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Fuel taxes									✓	✓

Note:

# GST is not levied on sales of vehicles between private individuals in Australia or New Zealand.

### 3.3 Insurance

In Australia and New Zealand third party personal injury insurance is compulsory and in several jurisdictions is payable as a component of the vehicle registration charge.

**Table 3.9: Compulsory Third Party Personal Injury insurance**

Insurance Charging	ACT	NSW	NT	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	NZ
Included in annual registration charges	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Separately charged		✓		✓					✓

Consumers may choose their insurer, for this type of insurance, in some jurisdictions such as Queensland, but not, for example, in South Australia or Victoria.

Registered operators of vehicles will generally also obtain separate insurance from the private sector to cover property damage or theft.

In New Zealand the personal injury insurance arrangements are administered by the Accident Compensation Corporation and funded by levies included in the price of petrol in addition to levies separately included in the vehicle licensing (registration) charge.

## 3.4 Data sharing, compliance and enforcement

### 3.4.1 Data sharing

In Australia and New Zealand, privacy rights are strongly protected by law, and this correspondingly limits the ability of road agencies to share personal information about individuals and their vehicles. Exemptions allow for sharing between road agencies and for law enforcement purposes.

Jurisdictions allow customers to have access to their own vehicle and driver licence information through an online portal. In Western Australia, for example, citizens can set up a “DoT Direct” account which enables them to perform a range of transport-related activities, including looking up their own vehicle’s registration status and expiry date.

Some jurisdictions also provide a vehicle registration status service that can be used to check the basic identification and model details of a specific vehicle, not including the identity of its registered operator. This information is increasingly used by business and community organisations.

**Table 3.10: Online vehicle/customer information services**

Services Offered	ACT	NSW	NT	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	NZ
Online customer portal/account	TBA	✓		✓	✓	TBA	✓	✓	✓
Online Vehicle security (encumbrance) check (via the PPSR*)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	n/a
Online registration status check	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Online vehicle details check	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Stolen vehicle check	✓	✓	Via PPSR	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Note:

\* Australian federal government Personal Property and Securities Register

In Australia the federal government also operates the Personal Property and Securities Register (PPSR) at [www.ppsr.gov.au](http://www.ppsr.gov.au). This online register allows anyone to conduct a search on a motor vehicle (and other forms of private property) to find out whether it is encumbered by a security, such as a lease or hire purchase agreement. The PPSR interfaces with NEVDIS.

### 3.4.2 National Exchange of Vehicle & Driver Information System (NEVDIS)

The National Exchange of Vehicle & Driver Information System enables road authorities to interact across state borders and directly supports the transport and automotive industries. In addition to information supplied by road agencies, NEVDIS collects VIN data for compliance from vehicle wholesalers, stolen status information from police, written off vehicle records from insurance agencies (through road authorities). It also provides information to public and private sector organisations to facilitate provenance checking on vehicles, verification of Australian driver licences for client identification purposes, motor insurance underwriting and vehicle safety recalls.

NEVDIS currently services over 135 million transactions per year and is essential to the operations of jurisdictions and Australia’s \$162 billion automotive industry.



Road agencies also share certain registration and licence-related information with other government agencies and other organisations, subject to privacy-related legislation and data sharing agreements. All jurisdictions allow police to directly access information from the registration and licensing databases, subject to certain restrictions and agreements.

### 3.4.3 Enforcement

In all jurisdictions the police have the primary role in law enforcement in respect of registration and licensing. However, road agencies do conduct random inspections, for example targeting heavy vehicle non-compliance.

The detection of unregistered vehicles using the road network is a key priority for jurisdictions. Such vehicles are not insurable and are statistically more likely to be associated with unsafe driving practices. They are also more likely to be stolen vehicles, or vehicles with stolen or cloned number plates.

The number of unregistered vehicles detected on the road network per year is shown in Table 3.11.

**Table 3.11:** Detected unregistered vehicles

Unregistered Vehicles Detected <sup>#</sup>	ACT	NSW	NT	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	NZ
Total per annum	1,600	68,647*	7,500	83,787	60,000	1,343	n/a	n/a	98,569

Notes:

# Based on infringement notices issued

\* NSW data is for 2017-18

n/a data unavailable at time of publication

## 3.5 Inspections

In most jurisdictions there is no recurring inspection requirement for light vehicles used for private purposes. However, in New South Wales light vehicles more than five years old must have an inspection every twelve months, whilst in New Zealand an inspection is required at six-month, twelve-month and three-yearly intervals depending on the age and year of manufacture of the vehicle. In Queensland a safety certificate is required at the point of transfer, or when first registering a used vehicle for the first time in that state. This is consistent with most other jurisdictions, where the roadworthiness of a vehicle must be certified upon transfer or re-registration. In NT inspections are required every five years, and then every year after the tenth year.

**Table 3.12:** Vehicle inspection requirements

Inspection requirements	ACT	NSW	NT	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	NZ
Annual inspections for light vehicles > 5 years		✓							
6 month, 12 month, or 3-yearly inspections depending on vehicle age									✓
Upon transfer and re-registration only	✓			✓	✓*	✓	✓	✓	

Note:

\* Required for heavy vehicles only in SA

All jurisdictions have established a scheme for the accreditation of vehicle inspectors. In Victoria most certifications of light vehicles are conducted by a network of licensed vehicle testers. These are automotive garages, or vehicle dealerships, that are accredited to undertake roadworthiness assessments. Separate, more specialised schemes are in place for certain tasks that require higher level technical skills.

Specific rules apply to heavy vehicles. In Australia the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) has been established to regulate heavy vehicles over 4.5 tonnes. NHVR's vision is to have: A safe, efficient and productive heavy vehicle industry serving the needs of Australia.

## 3.6 Opportunities and challenges in registration

### 3.6.1 Digitising registration transactions

Traditionally registration transactions have been conducted over the counter in customer service centres, by mail or, less commonly, over the telephone. In recent years jurisdictions throughout Australasia have developed strategies to shift customers to more efficient digital service channels. While considerable progress has been made, jurisdictions face challenges in designing new processes allowing for full digital conversion of more complex transactions, such as the transfer of vehicles between private individuals, completion of inspections and the recording and clearance of vehicle defect notices.

The table below shows the composition of registration-related transactions by channel type, for the 2015/16 year.

**Table 3.13: Registration transactions by channel**

Channel	ACT	NSW	NT	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	NZ
Digital	56%	61%	26%	18%	69%	54%	60.5%	68%	41%
Email			7%						
Contact Centre (phone)	4%	1%				7%	8.5%	2%	
Customer Service Centre (Shop)	25%	37%	60%	12%	18%*	28%	15%	9%	59%
Mail	3%	< 1%		1%		< 1%	5%	< 1%	
System-to-system	4%		4%	69%		1%	11%	n/a	
Other (AusPost etc.)	8%		3%		13%	9%		19%	
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Notes:

\* Denotes Service SA

In some jurisdictions email and/or phone transactions have been counted under Customer Service Centre or Digital

### 3.6.2 Vehicle identity

Developing powerful capabilities to identify vehicles is an important compliance and policy-related priority. It can deter and detect vehicle theft and make it harder for criminals to 'rebirth' a stolen vehicle with a new identity.

All Australian jurisdictions have established a 'Written-Off Vehicle Register' (WOVR), for light vehicles, to ensure that vehicles are repaired to an acceptable standard before being re-registered. The WOVRS in each jurisdiction also help to prevent the rebirthing of stolen vehicles.

Difficulties continue for road agencies, inspectors and police where vehicle identification numbers (VINs) are difficult to locate in the engine compartment or are not unique numbers. Ongoing challenges also exist in remote identification of vehicles and in the security of registration plates. Automated number plate recognition technologies, improved plate technologies and, potentially, alternative vehicle identifiers, may all play a role in addressing this issue in future.

In mid-2017 the **Transport and Infrastructure Council** agreed that a national written-off register for heavy vehicles should also be established to mitigate the risk of un-roadworthy heavy vehicles operating on Australian roads. NSW will introduce a written off heavy vehicle register in late 2018 with other jurisdictions expected to follow NSW's lead shortly thereafter.

Austroads and the **National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council**, in consultation with states and territories and industry experts, has developed a set of national damage assessment criteria to determine whether or not a crashed heavy vehicle can be repaired to industry standard and be permitted to re-register.

Although New Zealand has not established a register for written off vehicles, the NZ Transport Agency has interfaces with NZ Police records, and insurance companies must cancel the registration of all written off vehicles.

### **3.6.3 Automated and electric vehicles**

Section 5 of this document briefly discusses the emergence of automated vehicles and clean fuel/electric vehicles, and their potential implications for registration and licensing arrangements in Australia and New Zealand. Addressing these challenges, and exploring the opportunities, will be a major priority for Austroads and the road agencies over the coming years.

## 4. Driver Licensing



Source: Getty Images.

Broadly, the tasks or elements in the driver licensing pathway can be categorised as:

- national regulation and the Graduated Licensing Scheme
- training and testing
- licensing and licence cards
- offences and infringements.

Basic licensing demographics are highlighted in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1:** Licensing demographics

Type	ACT	NSW	NT	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	NZ
New licences issued per annum—Class C motor vehicles (light)	7,720	97,269	4,064	70,386	20,000	14,498	152,578	31,389	80,576
New licences issued per annum—Motorcycles	45	14,128	622	25,691	1,800	1,340	7,967	5,049	6,636
New licences issued per annum—Heavy vehicles		4,173*	2,692	18,449	n/a	2,121	20,552	10,116	36,454
Total currently active licences	320,892	6,031,994#	157,620	3,617,936	1,137,973	383,527	4,064,731	1,821,818	3,096,180

Notes:

\* Indicates total number of persons who have passed the Heavy Vehicle Competency Based Assessment

# NSW data reflects that a licence holder may be issued a licence in one or more of the three licence categories

## 4.1 National regulation and the Graduated Licensing Scheme

In 1997, Australia implemented a National Driver Licensing Scheme (NDLS), establishing a single driver licence classification structure, eligibility criteria and a uniform set of requirements for key driver licensing transactions including the issue, variation, renewal, suspension and cancellation of licences.

Although Australia operates a federated licensing scheme (administered by the individual states and territories), the NDLS has been adopted by all Australian jurisdictions and, as a result, facilitates the mutual recognition between Australian jurisdictions of driver licences when transferring between jurisdictions.

**Table 4.2:** Compliance with NDLS

	ACT	NSW	NT	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA
National Driver Licensing Scheme Implemented	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

### 4.1.1 The Graduated Licensing Scheme

The Graduated Licensing Scheme helps new drivers gain experience and become safer drivers by spreading the learning process over a period of years.

All Australian jurisdictions operate a form of graduated licensing scheme (GLS). All jurisdictions meet or exceed the Australian standard for the GLS.

All Australian jurisdictions have introduced a GLS for novice drivers. The fundamental components of Australia's standard GLS policy framework are outlined below.

- learner permit at 16 years of age\*; supervised driving required
- 12 months minimum holding of learner permit

- requirement to undertake at least 50 hours supervised driving recorded in a log book
- practical on-road test to achieve solo unsupervised licence
- hazard perception test as part of GLS
- solo licensing from between 16.5–18 years of age
- zero blood alcohol content (BAC) and no hand-held mobiles during entire learner/provisional or probationary period
- lower demerit point threshold for novice drivers
- community education about risks associated with novice drivers, late-night driving, and carrying multiple passengers
- community education about young drivers and drink driving
- support programs to assist disadvantaged drivers to progress.

\*Note: In ACT persons can apply for a learner permit from 15.75 years of age.

**Table 4.3:** Compliance with national GLS standards

Compliance	ACT	NSW	NT	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA
Meet or exceed national standards for GLS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Novice drivers must commence as a learner driver and, upon obtaining their driver licence, progress through a two-stage provisional/probationary licence phase before being eligible for a full licence. The scheme requires compliance with certain restrictions during the provisional/probationary phase. These vary between jurisdictions and relate to carrying of passengers, zero alcohol, lower demerit point thresholds, special speed limits, and restrictions on certain powerful vehicles. The restrictions are eased as drivers pass through the scheme. More information is available on the Austroads website ([www.austroads.com.au](http://www.austroads.com.au))

**Table 4.4:** Graduated Licensing Scheme (GLS) restrictions

	ACT	NSW	NT	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	NZ
Zero alcohol limit	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fewer allowable demerit points	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Passenger restrictions		✓		✓	✓		✓		✓
Speed Limit Restrictions		✓	✓		✓	✓			
Vehicle type restrictions		✓		✓	✓		✓		

## 4.2 Minimum age, training and assessment

In Australia and New Zealand, individuals become eligible to apply for a learner permit for a light vehicle at 16 years of age (except in the ACT, where it is 15.75 years). They must hold the learner permit for a period of at least three months and meet any requirements specific to that jurisdiction. In all Australian jurisdictions, except for the NT and ACT, young people (under 21) must complete a set number of hours of supervised driving, including a night driving requirement. They must also wait till they are eligible to obtain a licence. The table below summarises the arrangements in each jurisdiction.

**Table 4.5: Minimum age, supervised driving and provisional/probationary licence**

Training and Examination for new drivers licensing					
Jurisdiction	Minimum learning age (years)	Hours of supervised day driving#	Hours of supervised night driving#	Minimum age of obtaining a licence (years)	Provisional/probationary period
ACT	15.75	0	0	17	3 years
NSW	16	100	20	17	3 years
NT	16	0	0	16.5	2 years, or 1 year if over 25
Qld	16	90	10	17	3 years, or 1 year if over 25
SA	16	60	15	17	3 years
Tas	16	50		17	3 years, or 2 years if over 25
Vic	16	100	20	18	4 years, or 3 years if over 21
WA	16	45	5	17	2 years
NZ	16	0	0	16.5	18 months, or 12 months with advanced driving course. If aged over 25 years: 6 months, or 3 months with advanced driving course.

Note:

# Applies to learner licences for cars only

Learner drivers must be supervised in the vehicle by a fully licensed driver and must drive with a zero-alcohol reading.

Learner drivers must pass a computer-based knowledge test to obtain a learner permit/learner licence.

#### 4.2.1 Driver licence testing

All jurisdictions require a first-time driver licence applicant to undertake a knowledge test of the road rules and to pass a practical driving test.

There are some minor differences between jurisdictions in testing requirements to obtain a driver licence, with Queensland and SA the only two jurisdictions not requiring an eyesight test (unless the client states they require glasses (in SA)). The ACT, NT, Tasmania and NZ do not include a hazard perception test. The NT is the only jurisdiction to include a first aid course in its diver training program. Nowhere in Australasia are hearing tests required to obtain a driver licence.

The practical on-road driving test is undertaken by the student under the supervision of a testing officer seated within the vehicle. This test follows one of several pre-set routes and is designed to test an applicant's practical skills and competencies in driving. It lasts approximately 40 minutes. Jurisdictions increasingly use in-car cameras to record the practical driving test.

Driver training/driving instructor services for both light and heavy vehicles are offered by private sector providers in all Australian jurisdictions and New Zealand. Driver testing services for all licence types are undertaken by the private sector only in New Zealand and South Australia. In other jurisdictions light vehicle driver testing is performed by a specialist trained staff employed by the regulator, or for heavy vehicles, training and assessment is offered through the regulator or an accredited registered training organisation.

**Table 4.6: Driver licence testing elements**

	ACT	NSW	NT	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	NZ
Knowledge Test	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Eyesight	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hazard Perception	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗
Practical (On-road)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
First Aid	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗

National medical standards set out in the publication ‘Assessing Fitness to Drive’ (<http://www.austroads.com.au/drivers-vehicles/assessing-fitness-to-drive>) also apply and are used to assess fitness to drive. These standards also determine the eyesight standards that all drivers must meet.

#### 4.2.2 Specialist driver licence testing

In a number of Australian states, heavy vehicle and motor cycle licence testing has been commissioned to the market. These testing services are undertaken at facilities provided by the private sector. A National Heavy Vehicle Driver Competency Framework has been established in Australia. This was developed at a national level with input from regulators and industry. Individuals must undertake the associated assessment process in order to obtain a heavy vehicle driver licence in their jurisdiction. To date, only three jurisdictions have adopted this framework.

In NSW older drivers must pass a practical driving assessment every two years from age 85 to retain their unrestricted car or motor cycle rider licence, or opt for a modified licence that limits the distance they are permitted to drive. These tests are conducted by Service NSW testing officers or by specialist ‘older driver’ assessors who are accredited for that purpose.

#### 4.2.3 Pre-learner and learner education and awareness programs

Road safety research has indicated that exposing young people to the principles of safe driving before they have the opportunity to drive can produce better road safety outcomes. The Australian Government therefore introduced the *Keys 2 Drive* program for Year 10 students (16-year olds), which provides information about safe driving to school students.

Figure 4.1: Website of the Australian Government's 'Keys 2 Drive' program

The screenshot shows the 'TEACHING SOMEONE 2 DRIVE' section of the Keys 2 Drive website. At the top, there are navigation links: 'ABOUT THE FREE LESSON', 'LEARNING 2 DRIVE', 'TEACHING SOMEONE 2 DRIVE' (which is highlighted in orange), 'DRIVING INSTRUCTORS', 'FIND AN INSTRUCTOR', 'CONTACT US', and 'NEWS'. Below these are several links: 'SUPERVISOR GUIDE', 'START TEACHING BEFORE L'S', 'IS LEARNER P PLATE READY', 'CHECK YOUR DRIVING HABITS', and 'EXTRA HELP'. A large blue sidebar on the left contains links: 'ABOUT THE FREE LESSON', 'LEARNING 2 DRIVE', 'TEACHING SOMEONE 2 DRIVE', 'DRIVING INSTRUCTORS', 'FIND AN INSTRUCTOR', 'CONTACT US', and 'NEWS'. A photo of two people in a car is also visible. On the right, there's a 'REQUIREMENTS' section with four bullet points about learner drivers, supervising drivers, overseas licence holders, and if a learner drivers supervising.

Individual jurisdictions in Australia have also commenced their own programs targeting pre-learners and learners. These programs include:

- **DriveSafeNT**—Northern Territory
- **Indigenous Licensing Program**—Queensland
- **PrepL**—Queensland (online learning and assessment program to replace written road rules test)
- **Keys for Life**—Western Australia
- **Practical Safe Driving Program**—Victoria
- **Road Risk Reduction**—Tasmania
- **Road Safety Education Program**—NSW

The NZ Transport Agency has developed two programmes to support young people learn about the principles of safe driving before they have begun to drive, the Education Portal and the Drive programme.

The **Education Portal** website ([education.nzta.govt.nz](http://education.nzta.govt.nz)) is free and makes available a broad collection of curriculum-based rich learning activities for ages 5-18..

The **Drive programme**, a joint partnership between NZTA and the Accident Compensation Commission, supports young people learning to drive from the pre-Learners stage through to gaining a full licence. This includes a website ([drive.govt.nz](http://drive.govt.nz)) featuring an interactive road code, which takes young people beyond learning the road rules and preparing for their theory test, to thinking deeper about their responsibilities on the road and supports them to develop as safe and skilled drivers.

## 4.2.4 Interpreter and Translation services

There is some variation in the provision of interpretation and translation services during the testing process. In New South Wales all computer-based tests are available in ten languages or with the assistance of an interpreter. Similar arrangements are available in most Australian jurisdictions and New Zealand.

## 4.3 Licence cards

### 4.3.1 Cards and identity

All Australian jurisdictions and New Zealand issue plastic licence cards, and there is general uniformity in features of the card.

**Table 4.7:** Licence card features

	ACT	NSW	NT	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	NZ
Embedded security features	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Photo image of the licence holder	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Signature of the licence holder	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Australian jurisdictions are increasingly interested in the concept of a digital driver licence. This table summarises the status of planning and implementation of digital driver licences.

**Table 4.8:** Digital driver licence implementation

	ACT	NSW	NT	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	NZ
Digital licence available		✓ (trial)			✓				
Plans to make available digitally	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		
No decision						✓		✓	

NSW is currently trialling its digital licence (in trial areas only) with plans to deploy statewide in 2019.

In late 2017 South Australia released a digital driver's licence through the **MySAGov** app. Digital driver licences allow the licence to be displayed (and verified by some parties) in secure form on a digital device, such as a mobile phone.

Figure 4.2: Screenshot of the website for South Australia's digital licence application

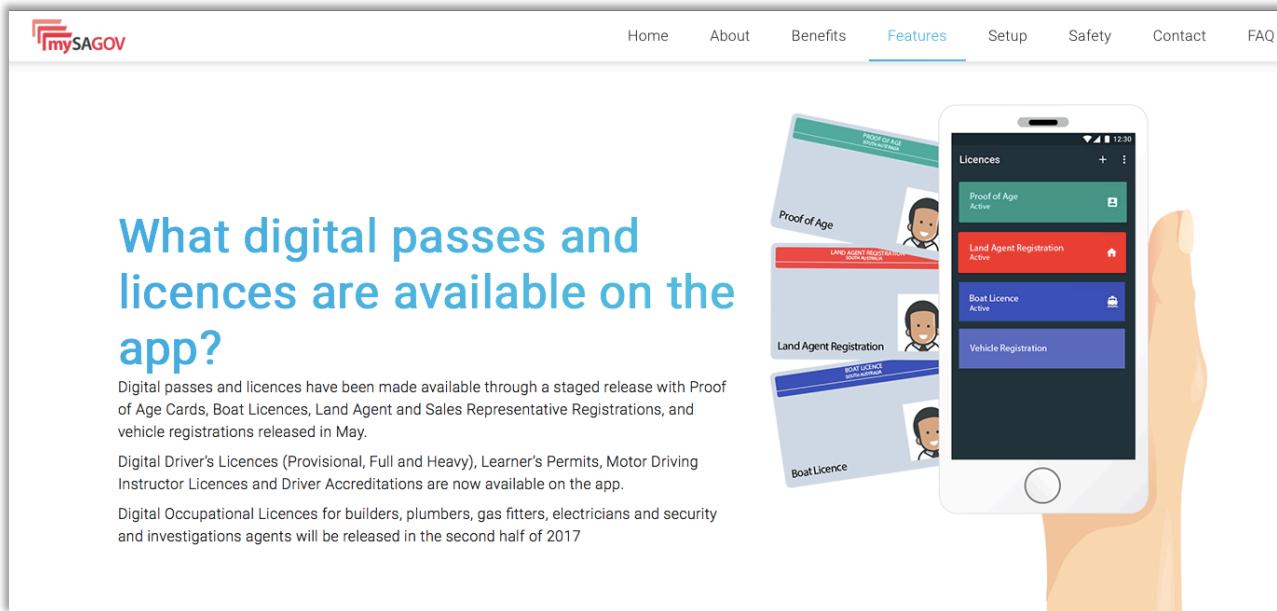


Figure 4.3: Screenshot of the website for South Australia's digital licence application



### 4.3.2 Identity crime

Identity management is increasingly regarded as both an issue and an opportunity, by road agencies and governments generally. Identity crime is conservatively estimated to cost the Australian community alone well over \$2.2 billion per year, and it is often perpetrated using fake or fraudulent driver licences. Road agencies and Austroads have collaborated with the Commonwealth Government in the implementation of:

- National identity proofing guidelines (<http://www.austroads.com.au/drivers-vehicles/identity/strengthening-identity-management>); and
- an online document verification service

- a National Facial Biometric Matching Capability which includes the National Driver Licence Facial Recognition System (NDLFRS). The NDLFRS will assist counter-terrorism, law enforcement and road safety measures through the identity matching services which will include the use of facial recognition technology.

These initiatives strengthen existing proof of identity processes in each road agency.

A number of Australian jurisdictions have already been utilising facial recognition technology to combat attempts by individuals to obtain multiple driver licences. Perpetrators often attempt to do this in order to unlawfully avoid the impact of excessive demerit points or other enforcement actions like driver disqualification. Criminals also seek out fake identity cards to perpetrate fraud or other serious crimes, and national security agencies are also concerned about the risk of terrorism being assisted by the holding of multiple identity cards.

At a national level Australia is implementing its National Identity Security Strategy, of which the online document verification service is one component. Another key element is the National Driver Licence Facial Recognition System, which will assist counter-terrorism, law enforcement and road safety measures through the creation of a National Facial Biometric Matching Capability.

#### 4.3.3 Proof of age cards

Australia and New Zealand do not issue national identification cards for citizens. Therefore, the driver licence has become a widely accepted form of identification for customers to obtain access to other government and private sector services. However, most jurisdictions also offer a proof-of-age card for customers without a driver licence.

**Table 4.9: Jurisdictions offering a proof of age card**

	ACT	NSW	NT	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	NZ
Proof of age card issued	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓**	✓*	✓	✓

*Notes:*

\* Offered by Department of Justice

\*\* Offered by Department of Premier and Cabinet

In New Zealand the proof of age card is issued by Hospitality NZ and in NSW a ‘Photo Card’ is available from Service NSW for persons aged over 16 years. A WA Photo Card is available from the Department of Transport for persons aged 16 years and over.

In all jurisdictions, the proof-of-age card is used by the holder as an identity document which can assist the holder to gain access to bars and other licensed premises.

#### 4.3.4 Delivery of licensing transactions

Licensing service delivery (e.g. licence renewals) is increasingly becoming more digital, and less reliant on over the counter, phone and mail channels. Digital transactions will continue to increase, improving customer experience, reducing costs and embracing innovation. A number of jurisdictions including QLD transact more than 45 per cent of driver licence renewals online.

Table 4.10 shows the large share of digital transactions across all licensing transactions in Australasian road agencies.

**Table 4.10: Licensing transactions by channel**

Channel	ACT	Qld	NSW	NT	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	NZ
Web/online/digital	40%	48%	15%	14%	52%		22%	27%	< 1%
Email									
Phone contact centre		3%	1%	8%		< 1%	15%	2%	
Customer service centre	59%	45%	84%	74%	25%	49%	52%	45%	99%
Mail	< 1%	< 1%					11%	3%	
System-to-system				1%		42%			
Other		5%		3%	23%	8%		23%	

Full digitisation of licensing issuance and renewals is constrained by the need to verify the identity of the licence holder. Some jurisdictions, including Victoria, are examining the possibility of introducing submission of licence renewal photographs digitally by the customer. This 'selfie' initiative would require implementation of facial recognition capabilities to ensure fraudulent licence detection.

### 4.3.5 Intra-jurisdictional and overseas driving licence recognition

All Australian jurisdictions and New Zealand provide mutual recognition of driver licences and permits. Individuals with a valid licence from one of these jurisdictions may therefore drive throughout the region without the need to obtain a local licence, until that exemption may be withdrawn.

Overseas licence holders from recognised countries (those with comparable licensing standards to Australia) may convert their overseas licence to a local licence without the need for a knowledge or driving test when applying for a Car or Rider licence. However, persons holding licences from non-recognised countries are required to undertake licence testing, including the practical component, in order to obtain a driver licence in an Australian jurisdiction.

Australasian jurisdictions experience difficulty in validating that some overseas licences are valid, which can result in approval delays and customer dissatisfaction. High quality fraudulent licences are increasingly available on the black market, creating additional problems for road agencies. As a result, most jurisdictions have procedures in place to confirm the details of an overseas licence through the relevant consulate or other diplomatic office where possible.

The key issues are the level of driver experience and verification of identity. These will continue to be issues of concern in a globalised economy characterised by high levels of human mobility.

## 4.4 Offences and infringements

Traffic infringement notices are mostly issued by police forces across Australia and New Zealand, and the offence data is matched against the relevant driver licence number and stored against the licence record.

### 4.4.1 Demerit points and other sanctions

All Australian jurisdictions and New Zealand impose a demerit (penalty) point system on individuals who commit certain offences, such as excessive speeding or using a mobile phone while driving. If the number of demerit points exceeds an allowable statutory threshold, the driver's licence is suspended for a period of time.

The exact type of offences, number of demerit points attached to specific offences, and the expiry period for demerit points varies between jurisdictions.

Demerit points are generally only imposed for breaches of road laws, however, in New South Wales a person parking a car unlawfully in a disability permit parking space receives 1 demerit point.

**Table 4.11:** Demerit point system features

Features	ACT	NSW	NT	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	NZ
Demerit Point system	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Number of Allowable Demerit points	12	13	12	12	12	12	12	12	100
Licence suspensions where allowance exceeded	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Minimum suspension (months)	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

*Notes: Table relates to full licences only. New drivers under the Graduated Licensing Scheme in Australia have a more stringent demerit point system. Allowances for professional drivers not shown. New Zealand has a different points allocation system, however the cumulative effect of traffic offending is similar to Australia.*

#### 4.4.2 Alcohol interlocks

Australian jurisdictions use alcohol interlocks and education/behaviour change programs in an effort to combat drink and drug-affected drivers. Interlocks require the driver to be ‘breathalysed’ by blowing air into a device before the vehicle will start. If the breath contains alcohol, the vehicle will not start and a violation of the interlock condition is recorded. Interlocks are currently mandated for certain drink driving offences across Australia, together with a licence suspension in some cases. Drink and drug-driving offenders may also be required to attend education or behaviour change programs before they can be re-issued with a licence.

**Table 4.12:** Alcohol interlock usage and requirements

	ACT	NSW	NT	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	NZ
Alcohol Interlocks in use	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Interlock imposed for all drink driving offences#	TBA	No	No	No	No	No	✓	✓	No

*Note:*

# From 30 April 2018

### 4.5 Opportunities and challenges in driver licensing

This overview has highlighted areas of harmonisation in driver licensing policy and practice, but specific areas offer future challenges. Austroads and individual jurisdictions are currently examining:

- smartphone applications to assist learner drivers (e.g. electronic logbooks)
- interoperability of digital driver licence schemes
- expansion of facial recognition capabilities nationally
- online driver knowledge testing environment.

Additional areas which may also be examined include

- greater collaboration between jurisdictions and national governments concerning identity management and authentication services
- greater uniformity in sanctions such as alcohol interlocks.
- review of overseas licence recognition arrangements.
- Licensing arrangements for conditionally automated vehicles

## 5. Looking to the Future: Automated Vehicles



*Source: Getty Images.*

Austroads is working with other bodies, such as Australia's National Transport Commission and research centres, to prepare and plan for increasingly automated vehicles becoming available commercially for on-road use in Australia and New Zealand.

SAE International (a globally active professional engineering standards association) has established an accepted scale to describe the increasing levels of vehicle automation that are expected to be developed.

This can be summarised as:

**Table 5.1: SAE International levels of driving automation for on-road vehicles**

Level	Description
Level 0	No automation
Level 1	Driver assistance
Level 2	Partial automation
Level 3	Conditional automation
Level 4	High automation
Level 5	Full automation

*Source: SAE International*

In November 2016, Australian transport ministers agreed to a phased reform program so that conditionally automated vehicles can operate safely and legally on public roads before 2020, and highly and fully automated vehicles from 2020.

Australia is currently developing a safety assurance system framework as part of that program. This framework is likely to require legislation.

Similarly, the NZ Transport Agency is working collaboratively with the NZ Ministry of Transport to scope and schedule the regulatory change requirements needed to accommodate the safe use of automated vehicles on New Zealand roads.

Austroads has established a Connected and Automated Vehicles program with a number of constituent projects. For details see: <https://austroads.com.au/drivers-and-vehicles/connected-and-automated-vehicles>

The location of automated vehicle trials in Australia can be found here: <https://austroads.com.au/drivers-and-vehicles/connected-and-automated-vehicles/trials>

Australia's National Transport Commission has responsibility to deliver the national reforms associated with automated vehicles. It has published a number of research and policy papers covering areas such as road rules, vehicle trials and insurance. More information is available here:  
<https://www.ntc.gov.au/roads/technology/automated-vehicles-in-australia/>

Australian road agencies are collaborating nationally on a range of associated issues including those outlined in Table 5.2 below.

**Table 5.2:** Some issues arising from automated vehicles

Vehicle registration	Driver licensing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How would automated vehicles be identified prior to full automation of vehicles?</li> <li>• How might vehicle ownership models change in response to greater automation, and what effect would this have on existing registration and revenue arrangements?</li> <li>• What types of vehicles would be allowed to access the road network?</li> <li>• Would unoccupied vehicles be allowed to access the road network, and would any restrictions on their usage be needed?</li> <li>• What would be the acceptable uses of the road network?</li> <li>• How would vehicle data be managed?</li> <li>• How would vehicle roadworthiness be assessed?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What would be the role of a fall-back driver in an automated vehicle (if any), and what licensing requirements would be necessary?</li> <li>• What are the impacts on driver licence testing and training?</li> <li>• Who would be liable for any breach of road rules by an automated vehicle?</li> <li>• What rules regarding intoxication and capacity to drive would be required?</li> </ul>

Road agencies, together with **Austroads** and the **National Transport Commission** in Australia, will continue to work collaboratively with other regulators, technology providers and vehicle manufacturers, globally and locally, to examine and address the challenges arising from the commercial deployment of automated vehicles. They will also work to harness the benefits and opportunities that increasing vehicle automation will bring through innovation that will deliver increased road safety, productivity and improved transport outcomes.



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