

Development of an Improved Graduated Licensing System for Motorcyclists

Public Consultation Report



Table of Contents

1	Introduction	2
1.1	Background	2
1.2	About the review	2
1.3	Scope and purpose.....	2
2	Public consultation	4
2.1	Consultation summary, timeline and submissions.....	4
2.2	Survey structure	4
2.3	Respondent demographics.....	5
3	Responses to recommendations.....	6
3.1	Raise minimum age to obtain a learner motorcycle licence	6
3.2	Introduce a 6-month minimum learner period for non-novice motorcyclists	8
3.3	Introduce a computer-based hazard perception test.....	9
3.4	Introduce a complete ban on learners carrying pillion passengers (including instructors) ..	10
3.5	Introduce a curfew for learners under 25 between 12:00 am and 5:00 am	11
3.6	Introduce a curfew for P1 riders under 25 between 12:00 am and 5:00 am.....	13
3.7	Introduce a towing ban for learner and P1 riders.....	15
3.8	Introduce a full ban on mobile phone use for learner, P1 and P2 riders.....	16
3.9	Raise the maximum speed limit for learner riders from 80 km/h to 90 km/h	17
3.10	Raise the maximum speed limit for P1 riders from 80 km/h to 100 km/h.....	18
3.11	Extend the Learner Approved Motorcycle Scheme restriction to P2 riders	19
3.12	Additional suggestions to improve novice motorcyclist safety	20
4	Next steps.....	21
	Attachment 1 – survey questions	22

I Introduction

I.1 Background

The *Towards Zero Tasmanian Road Safety Strategy 2017–2026* (Strategy) sets out the Road Safety Advisory Council (RSAC) and Tasmanian Government's long-term goal of zero serious casualties on Tasmanian roads. The Strategy sets an ambitious short-term target of fewer than 200 serious casualties annually by 2026.

The *Towards Zero Action Plan 2020–2024* (Action Plan) is the second under the Strategy. It focuses on initiatives that will achieve the greatest reduction in serious injuries and deaths on our roads and was developed following significant analysis of Tasmanian crash data.

Developing an improved graduated licensing system (GLS) for motorcyclists is one of 42 key deliverables under the Action Plan.

Motorcyclists are extremely vulnerable road users because they have very little to protect them in the event of a crash. Approximately one-third of all serious casualties on Tasmanian roads during 2021 were motorcyclists, despite motorcycles only comprising approximately five per cent of the registered vehicles in Tasmania. A robust motorcyclist GLS is an effective way to ensure that motorcyclists are as safe as possible during the novice licensing stages, as well as to embed safe behaviours and attitudes for a lifetime of safe riding.

I.2 About the review

To deliver on the Tasmanian Government's commitment under the Action Plan, a review of the motorcyclist GLS commenced in 2021. The review seeks to identify potential enhancements to the motorcyclist GLS to keep young and novice riders safe.

In the absence of an agreed national policy framework for motorcycle licensing, the Department of State Growth engaged the University of Adelaide's Centre for Automotive Safety Research (CASR) to conduct a review of the Tasmanian motorcyclist GLS and provide independent expert advice.

Matthew Baldock, who led the review, has significant experience in the field of novice motorcyclist safety and graduated licensing arrangements for motorcyclists. Matthew led a 2018 review of the South Australian motorcyclist GLS that resulted in amendments to the South Australian motorcyclist GLS being introduced in 2021.

Engaging an independent expert ensured that the review is based on current evidence, Australian and international data and literature, and a strong understanding of the complex safety issues faced by motorcyclists.

This Public Consultation Report has been prepared on behalf of the Road Safety Advisory Council (RSAC) to present feedback on CASR's recommendations received through a public consultation process.

I.3 Scope and purpose

The scope of the motorcyclist GLS review includes the licensing requirements for the legal operation of motorcycles on Tasmanian roads (in particular, preconditions and minimum tenure for each novice licensing phase, and conditions or restrictions that apply during each novice licensing phase).

The following are not within the scope of the review:

- the requirement to pass the Motorcycle Driver Knowledge Test (DKT) before being eligible to apply for a learner motorcycle licence
- the content and structure of the motorcycle training and assessment curriculum introduced in Tasmania in 2017
- unlicensed motorcycle riding, and
- returning and non-novice rider safety.

2 Public consultation

2.1 Consultation summary, timeline and submissions

A public consultation process was held to seek community sentiment towards CASR's recommendations.

The public consultation process opened on 10 August 2022 and formally concluded on 21 September 2022. Due to a public holiday, the submission portal remained open until 23 September, allowing additional submissions to be lodged. These submissions were accepted. Two respondents contacted the Road Safety Branch to request additional time to provide written submissions. Both submissions were accepted.

The public consultation process was advertised as follows:

- a notice in the early general news sections of the Mercury, the Examiner and the Advocate on Saturday 13 August 2022
- a letter to 257 key road safety partners from the Chair of the RSAC, together with posters for display (key road safety partners included all Service Tasmania outlets, all RACT offices, the motorcycle training and assessment provider, each local government office, and all schools with students in years 10–12), and
- a boosted post on the RSAC Facebook page.

A total of 337 responses were received, including 20 written submissions. Written submissions were received from both individuals and organisations.

A Discussion Paper was released to guide the public consultation process, together with CASR's report setting out its recommendations. Both documents are available via the RSAC website: <https://www.rsac.tas.gov.au/mgls/>

2.2 Survey structure

Survey questions sought information about respondent demographics (including age and motorcycle licence status), and asked respondents to indicate their view regarding each of the changes to the Tasmanian motorcyclist GLS recommended by CASR. The survey invited respondents to select one of the following options with respect to each recommendation:

- strongly support
- somewhat support
- no view
- somewhat opposed, or
- strongly opposed.

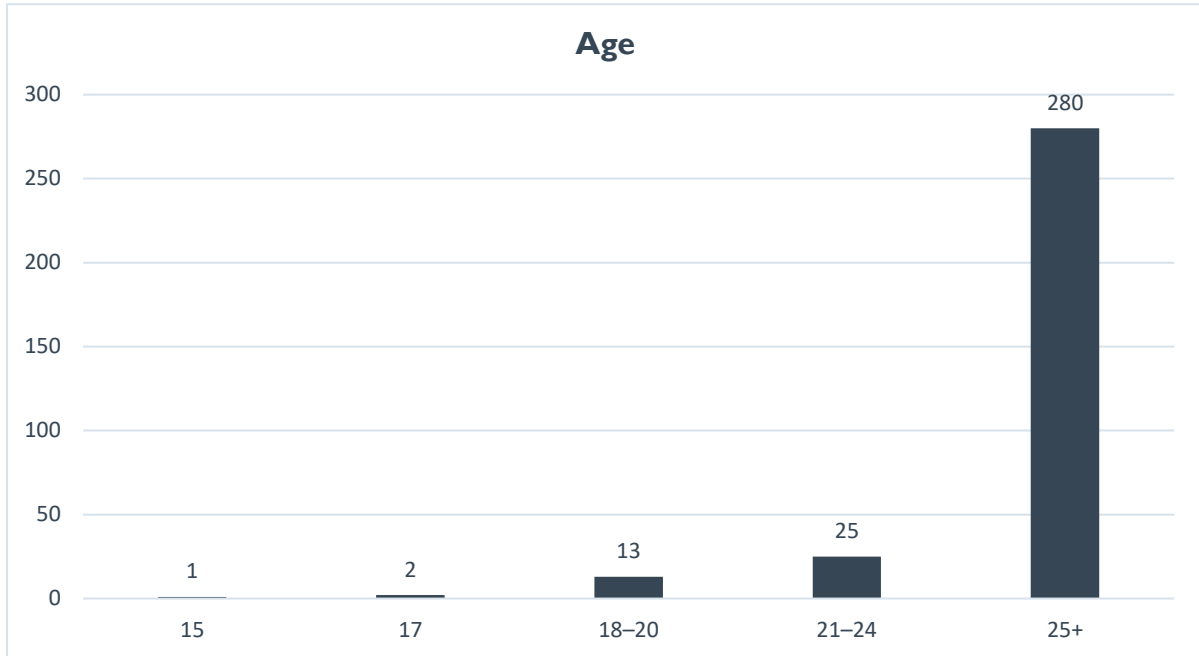
The survey questions are set out at Attachment I to this report.

For each recommendation, respondents were invited to provide additional comments. At the end of the survey, respondents were invited to suggest additional changes to the motorcyclist GLS to make novice motorcyclists safer.

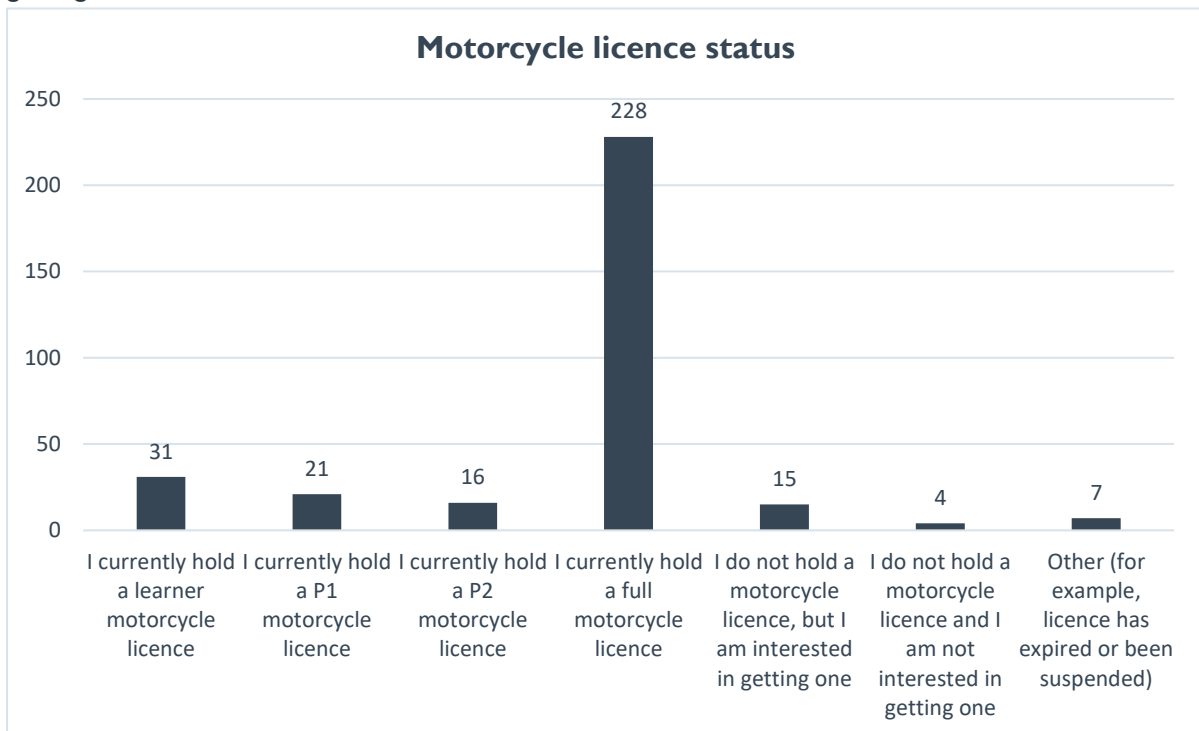
Survey questions were not mandatory. Many survey respondents did not respond to every question.

2.3 Respondent demographics

As set out below, a large majority of respondents identified as being 25 or older (280). Three responses were received from people under 18 (one response was received from a 15-year-old and two from 17-year-olds).



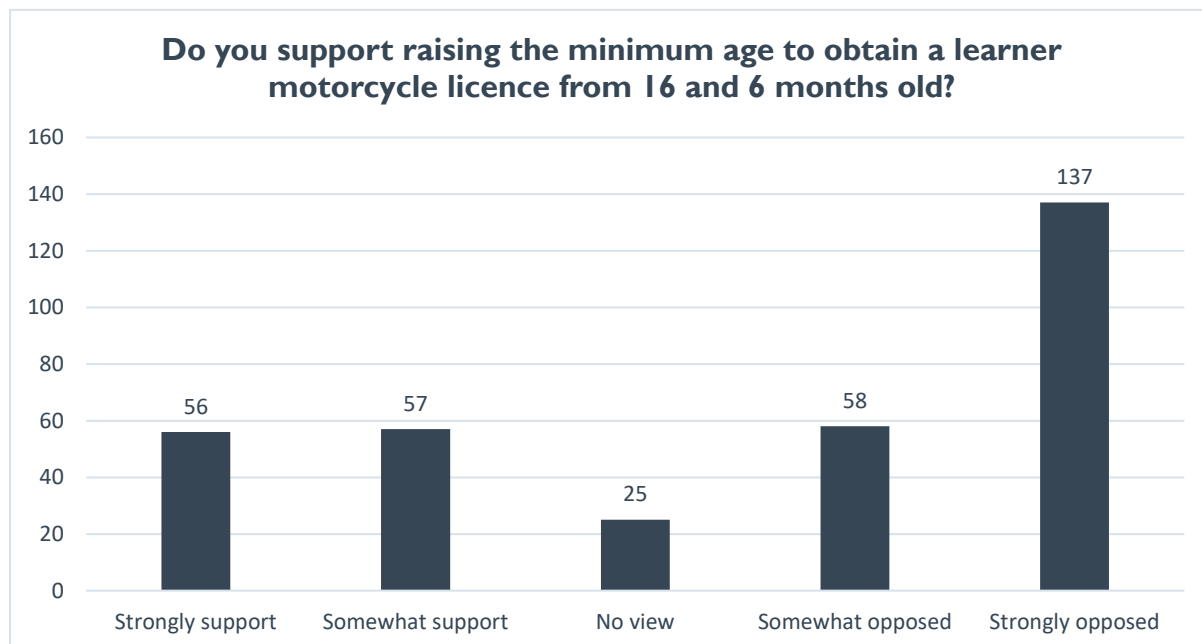
The majority of respondents identified as holding a full motorcycle licence (228). Responses were received from 15 people who do not currently hold a motorcycle licence but are interested in getting one, and from 31 current learners:



30.6% of respondents identified as being the parent or guardian of a young motorcycle rider or an aspiring rider.

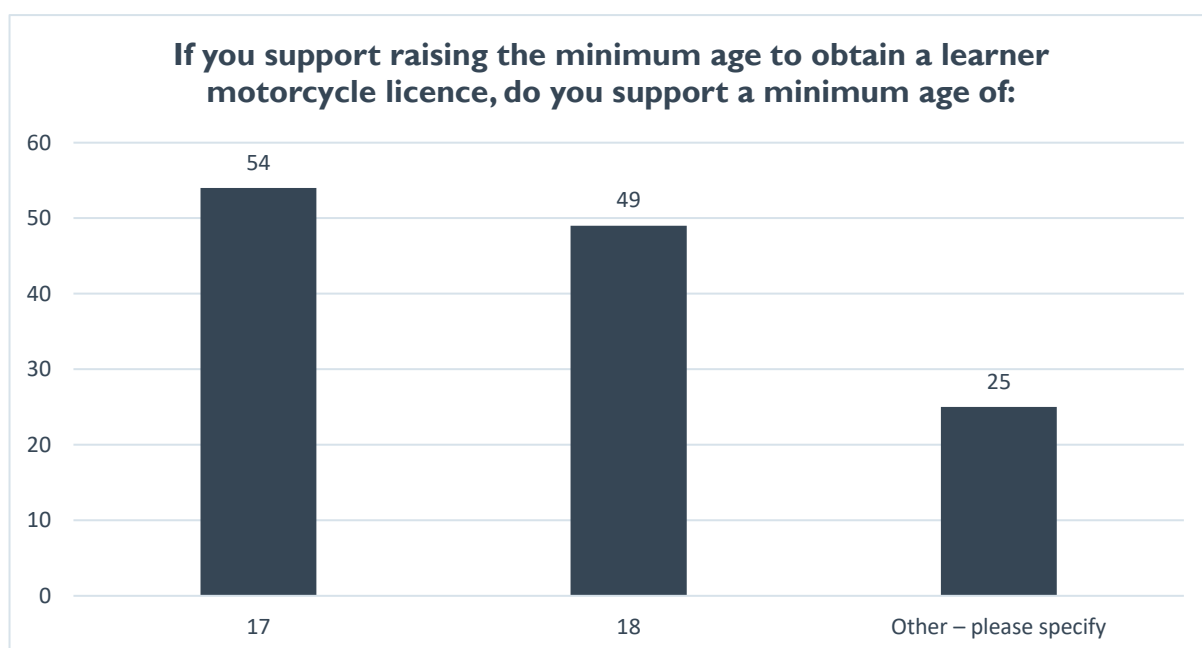
3 Responses to recommendations

3.1 Raise minimum age to obtain a learner motorcycle licence



333 respondents answered this question. Overall, 58.5% were opposed to raising the minimum age and 33.9% were supportive of raising the minimum age.

Of those respondents who were supportive of raising the minimum age to obtain a learner motorcycle licence, 48.2% supported raising the age to 17 and 43.8% supported raising the age to 18:



Respondents who selected 'Other' specified various minimum ages ranging between 16 and a half (the current minimum age) and 23. Two respondents felt that a full driver's licence should be a

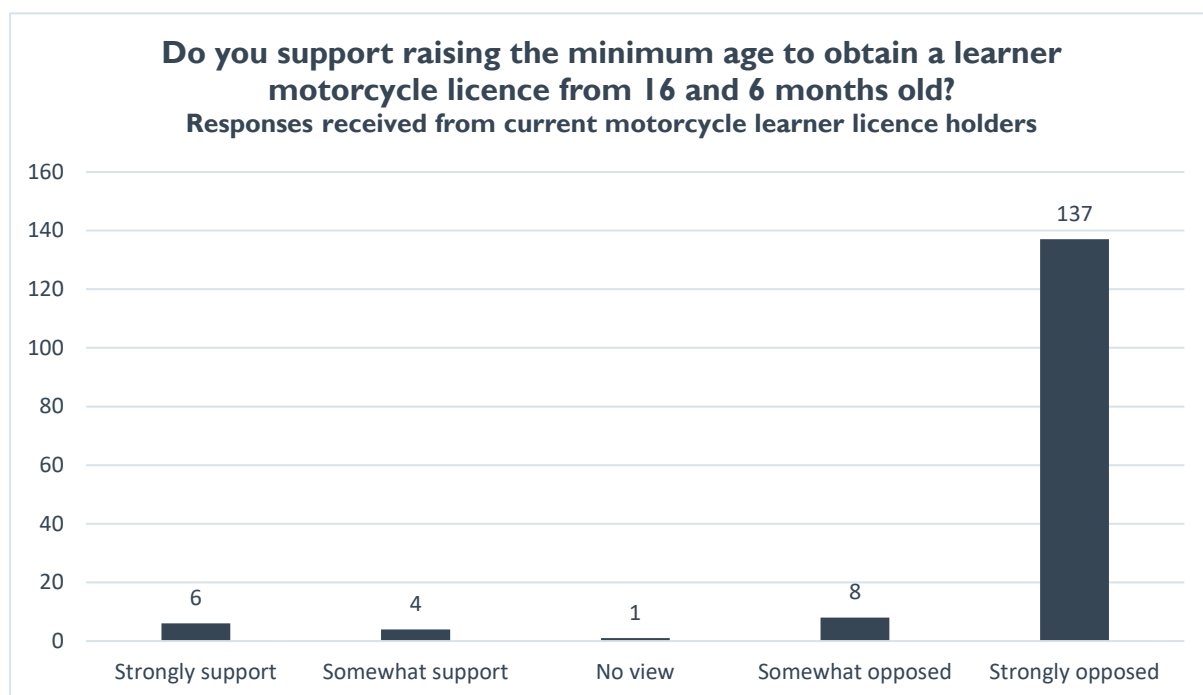
prerequisite to a motorcycle learner licence, and one commenter felt that the minimum age to obtain a motorcycle learner licence should align with the age to obtain a provisional driver’s licence.

Free text comments regarding the minimum age were varied but included the following.

- People should be required to drive on the road to learn the road rules before getting a motorcycle licence.
- Raising the age would restrict young people’s access to education and employment (especially in rural and remote areas).
- Young people are not mature enough to ride a motorcycle at 16 and six months.
- Training and experience are more important than age of licensure.
- Motorcycles offer a relatively affordable mode of transport for young people, and public transport options in Tasmania are limited.
- Raising the age would increase instances of unlicensed or illegal riding.

Learner licence holders:

Among current learners (all ages), 64.5% (20) were opposed to raising the age to obtain a learner licence, and 32.3% (10) were in support of raising the age. Among those learners supportive of raising the age, 30% supported a minimum age of 17 and 70% supported a minimum age of 18.

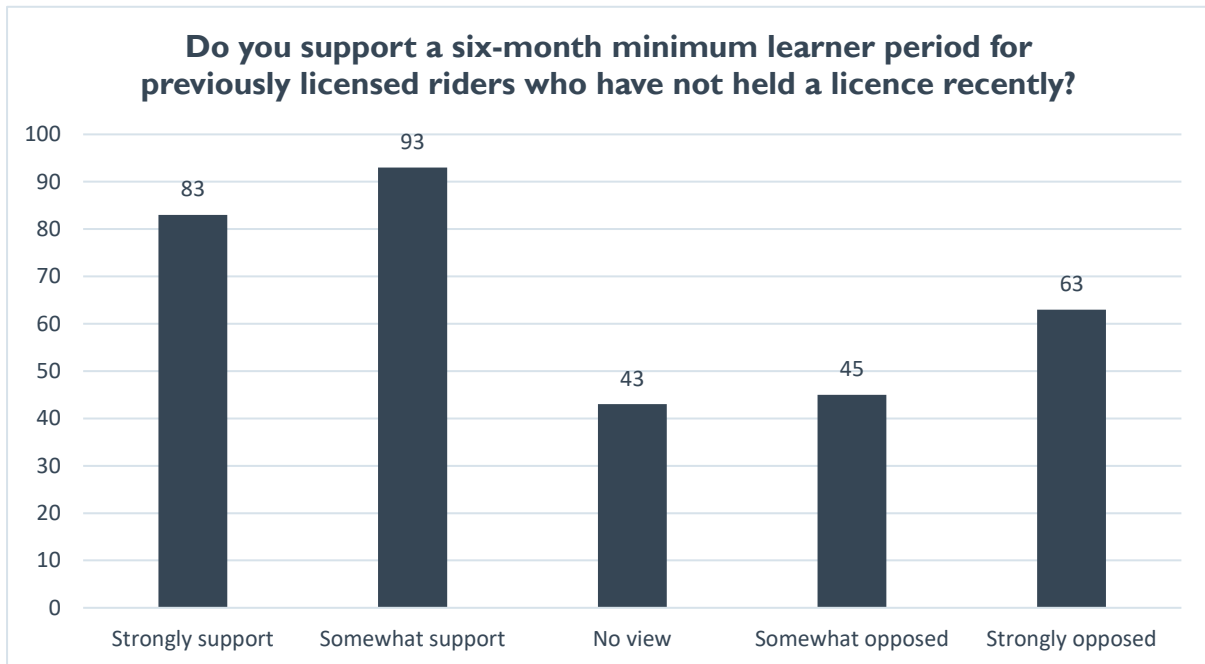


Young people:

Three survey respondents were aged 15-17. One currently holds a learner motorcycle licence and the other two do not currently hold a motorcycle licence but are interested in getting one.

All three opposed raising the minimum age to obtain a learner licence. Only one provided additional comments, expressing concern that raising the age will greatly impact young workers who don’t live close to their workplace. This respondent said they doubted their parents would drive 40 minutes each way at midnight to collect them after their night shift.

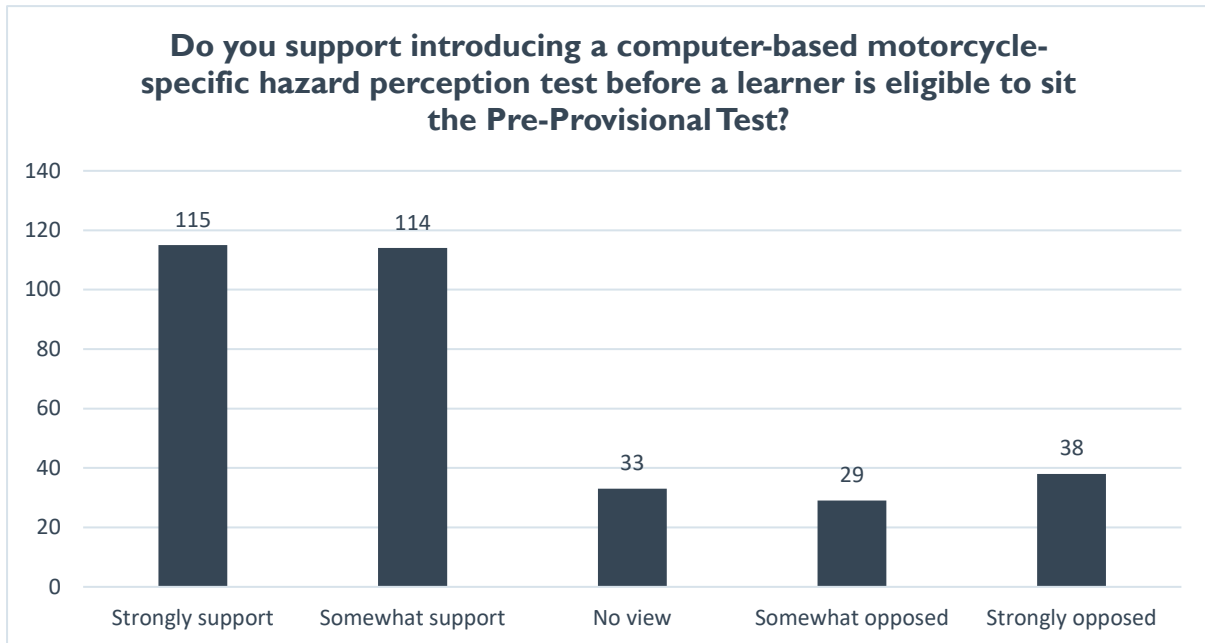
3.2 Introduce a 6-month minimum learner period for non-novice motorcyclists



Overall, 327 respondents answered this question. 53.8% were supportive of this recommendation and 33.1% were opposed.

In the comments, respondents expressed views that returning riders who haven't ridden recently may need to refresh as their skills may be 'rusty' and suggested additional training, refresher courses or assessments. Conversely, other respondents felt that this was unnecessary as skills aren't likely to be forgotten once a rider obtains a licence.

3.3 Introduce a computer-based hazard perception test



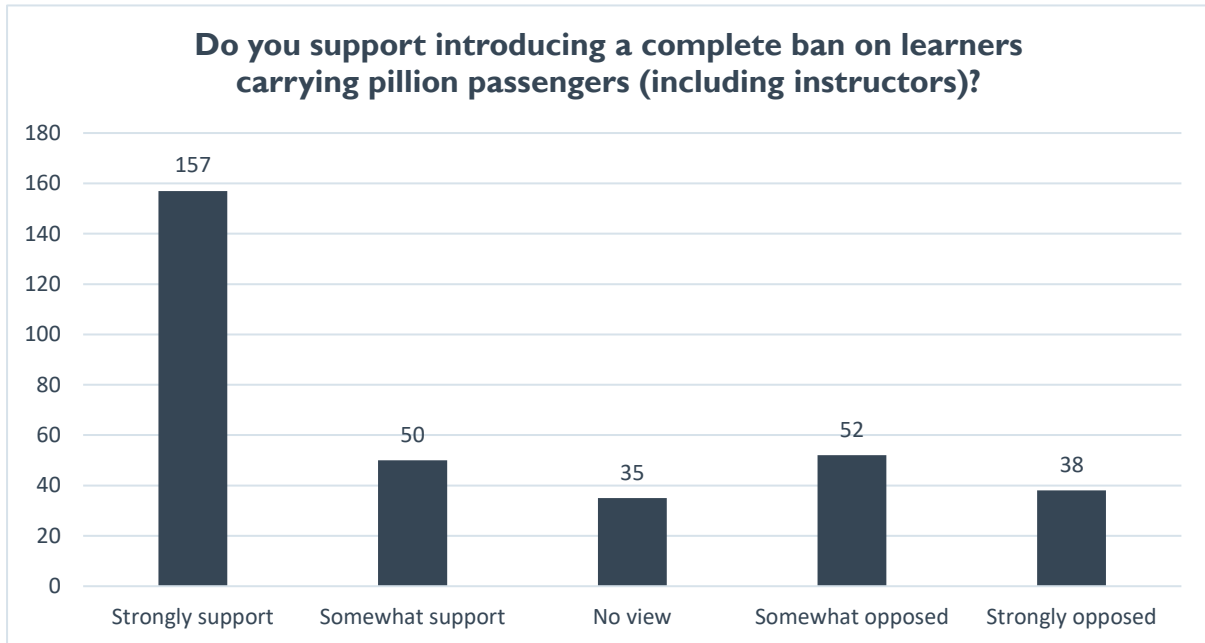
This recommendation was supported by 69.7% of respondents. It was opposed by 20.4%.

Comments included:

- general support for anything that might increase a novice rider’s ability to identify and respond to hazards on the road
- concerns about how realistic or suitable a computer-based test is, and that it is not a substitute for real-world experience.

Some comments referenced the driver hazard perception test launched in 2022. Among those comments, some felt that it is a useful component of the driver GLS useful while others felt that it did not assist novice drivers.

3.4 Introduce a complete ban on learners carrying pillion passengers (including instructors)

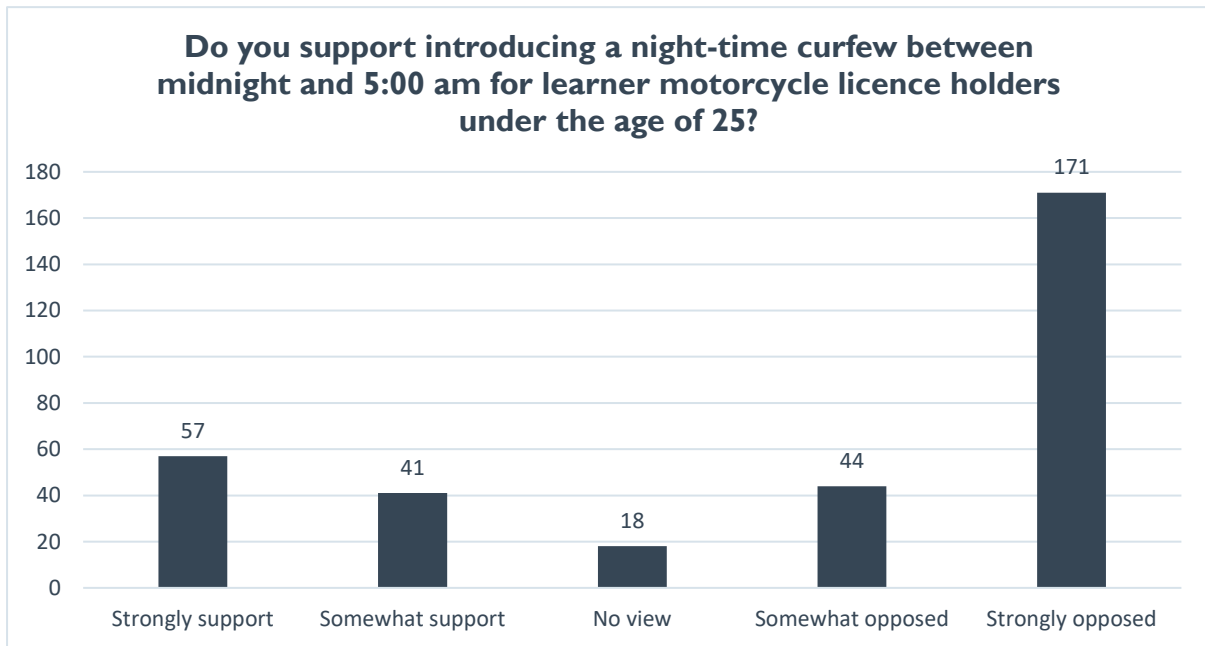


62.9% of respondents were either strongly or somewhat supportive of this recommendation. 26.4% were opposed.

Comments included the following:

- Carrying a pillion passenger adds complexity to the riding task (the extra weight affects balance and handling) and is therefore dangerous for inexperienced riders.
- Receiving real-time feedback on riding during the learner period is beneficial.
- Carrying another person (even an instructor) increases distraction.

3.5 Introduce a curfew for learners under 25 between 12:00 am and 5:00 am



This recommendation was opposed by 65% of respondents and supported by 29.6% of respondents. Most comments were focused on the impact that this recommendation would have on those learners who need to travel between the hours between 12:00 am and 5:00 am for the purposes of work or education. People noted that public transport options are limited during these hours, particularly in regional and rural areas.

Some respondents suggested that there should be an exemption for those who are travelling between the hours of 12:00 am and 5:00 am for work or educational purposes.

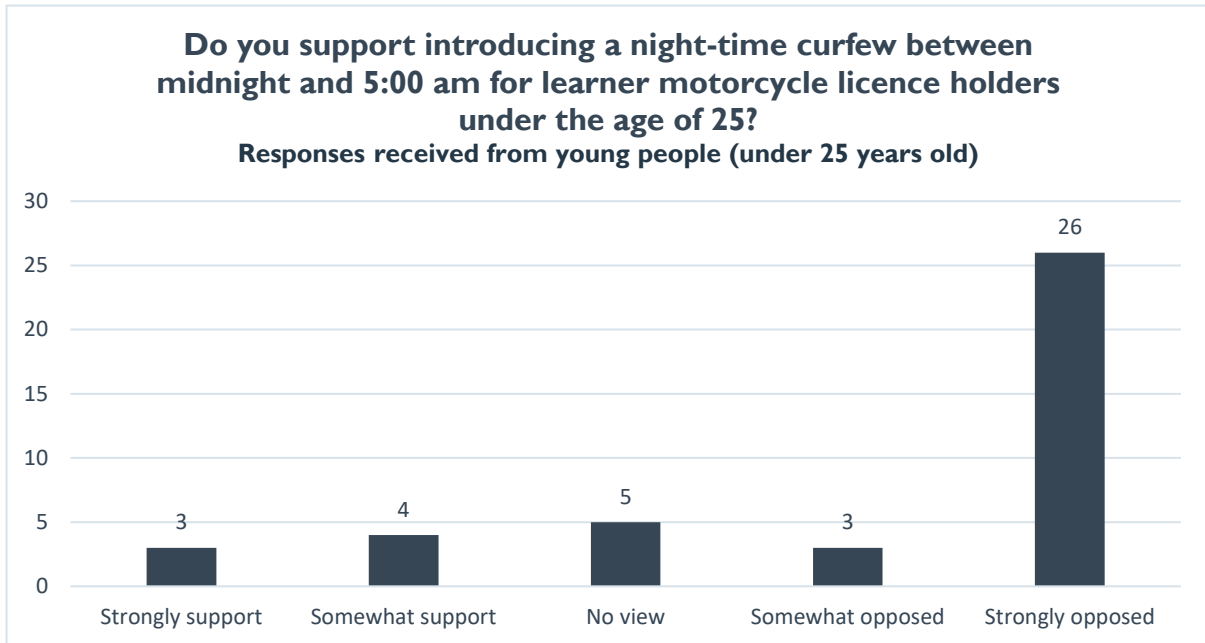
Some commenters also noted that learners need to gain experience in a variety of conditions, including at night. One noted that this recommendation seems contradictory to the requirement for car learners to complete 15 hours of night-time driving.

Learner licence holders:

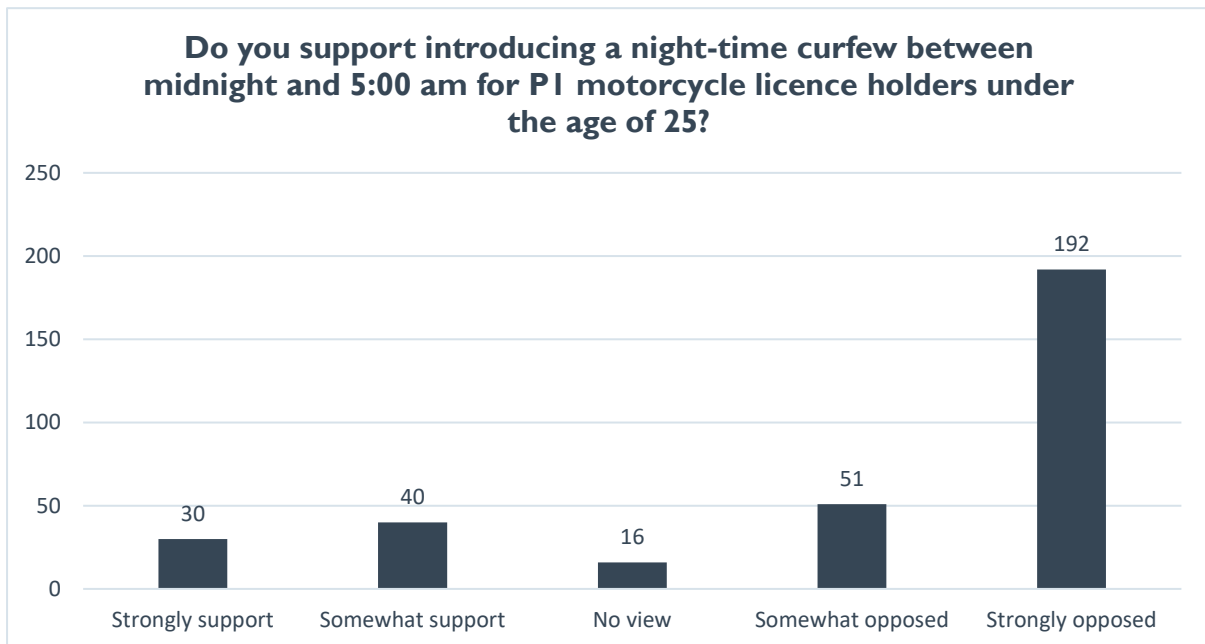
Of the 31 current learner licence holders, 23 (74.2%) were opposed to this recommendation, and seven (22.6%) were supportive. One had no view.

Young people:

41 respondents were under 25. 70.7% of this cohort were opposed to this recommendation and 17.1% were supportive. All three respondents under 18 were strongly opposed to this recommendation.



3.6 Introduce a curfew for PI riders under 25 between 12:00 am and 5:00 am



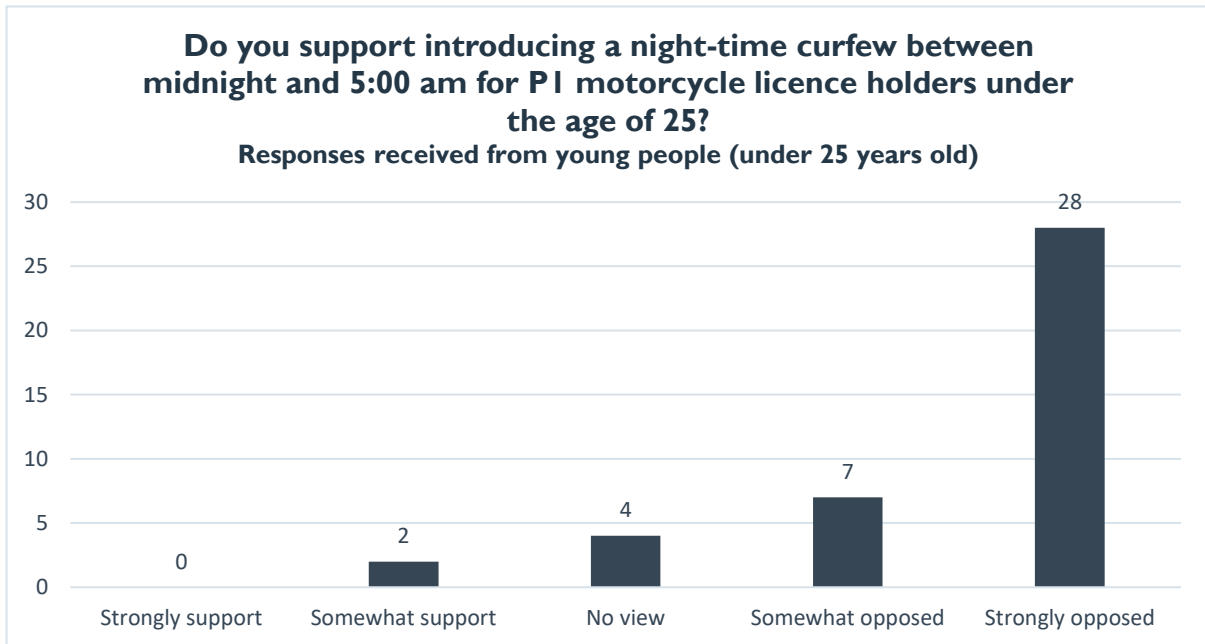
This recommendation was opposed by 73.9% of respondents and supported by 21.3% of respondents. Overall, respondents were less supportive of the recommended curfew for PI riders than they were for the recommended curfew for learners. Many respondents provided the same comments in respect of both recommendations. However, some noted that PI riders have more experience than learners and have passed their Pre-Provisional Test, so should be permitted to ride at all hours.

Like the responses to the recommended curfew for learners, the majority of comments opposed to this recommendation were focused on the impact this would have on those learners who need to travel between the hours of 12:00 am and 5:00 am for the purposes of work or education. People noted that public transport options are limited during these hours, particularly in regional and rural areas.

Some respondents suggested that there should be an exemption for those who are travelling between the hours of 12:00 am and 5:00 am for work or educational purposes.

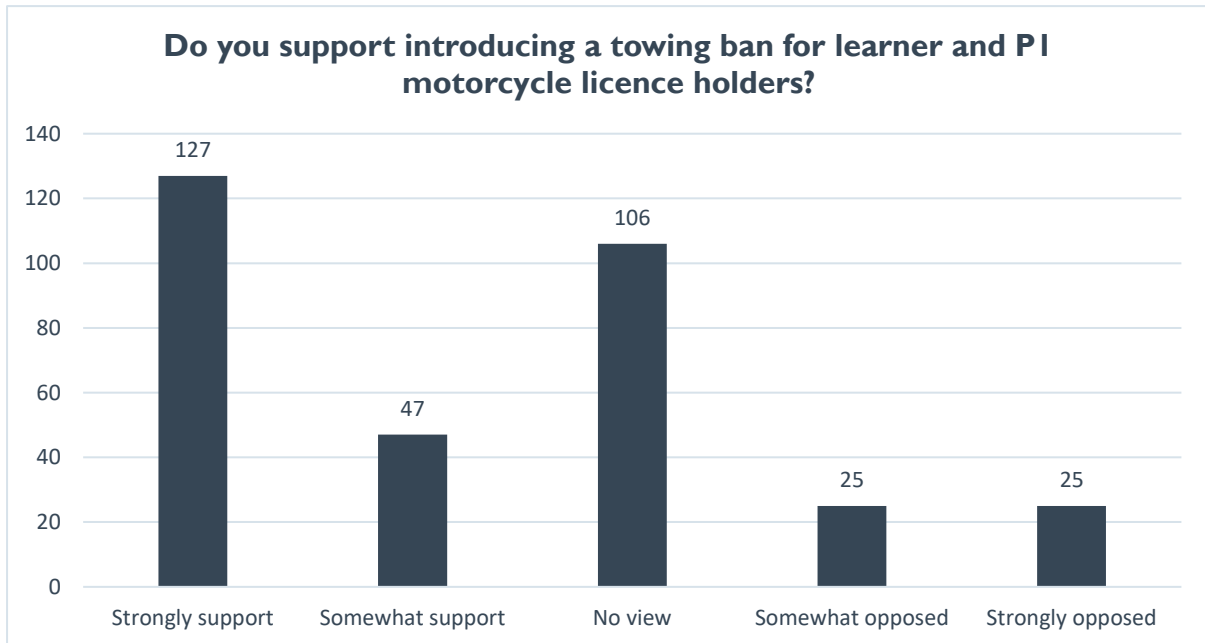
Young people:

Of the 41 survey respondents under the age of 25, 85.4% were opposed to this recommendation, and only 4.9% were somewhat supportive. None strongly supported this recommendation.



All three respondents aged under 18 were strongly opposed to this recommendation. None provided additional comments.

3.7 Introduce a towing ban for learner and P1 riders

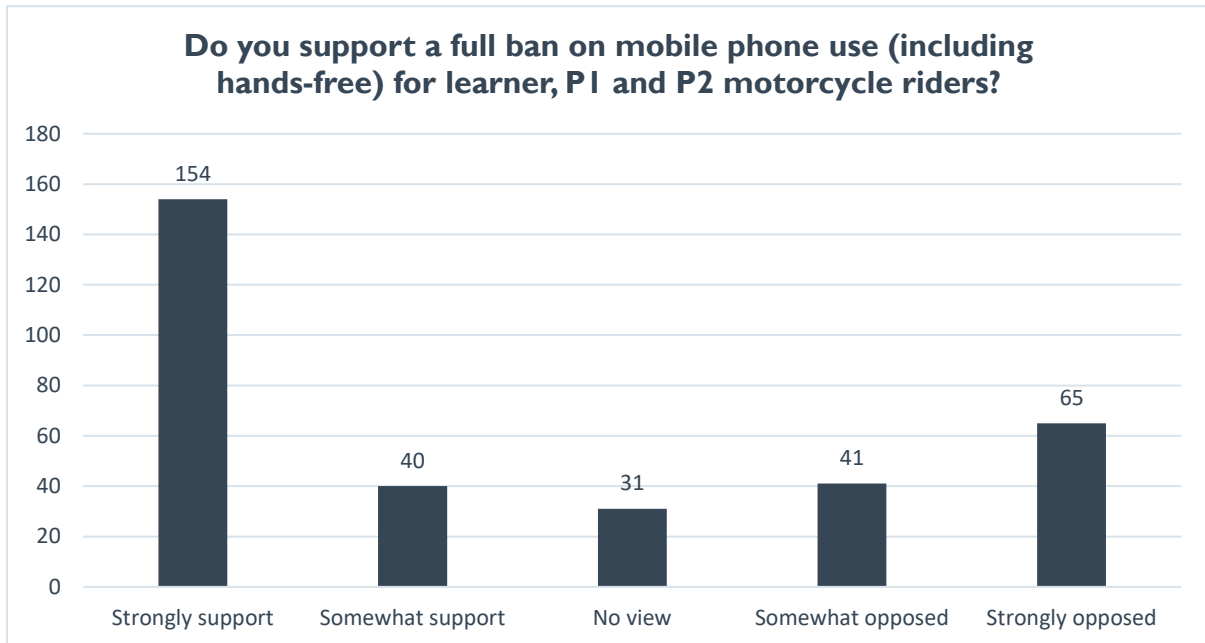


52% of respondents supported this recommendation. 15.2% opposed it.

The comments revealed that this question was not well understood and could have benefited from clearer phrasing. Many respondents seemed unaware that motorcycles are able to tow anything (for example, one respondent asked, “towing what?”). Other respondents noted that they had never seen a motorcycle towing or, if they had, it was rare and only ever an older rider on a large touring bike.

Nevertheless, many comments expressed that it would not be safe for inexperienced riders because towing requires greater skill, awareness, and control.

3.8 Introduce a full ban on mobile phone use for learner, P1 and P2 riders

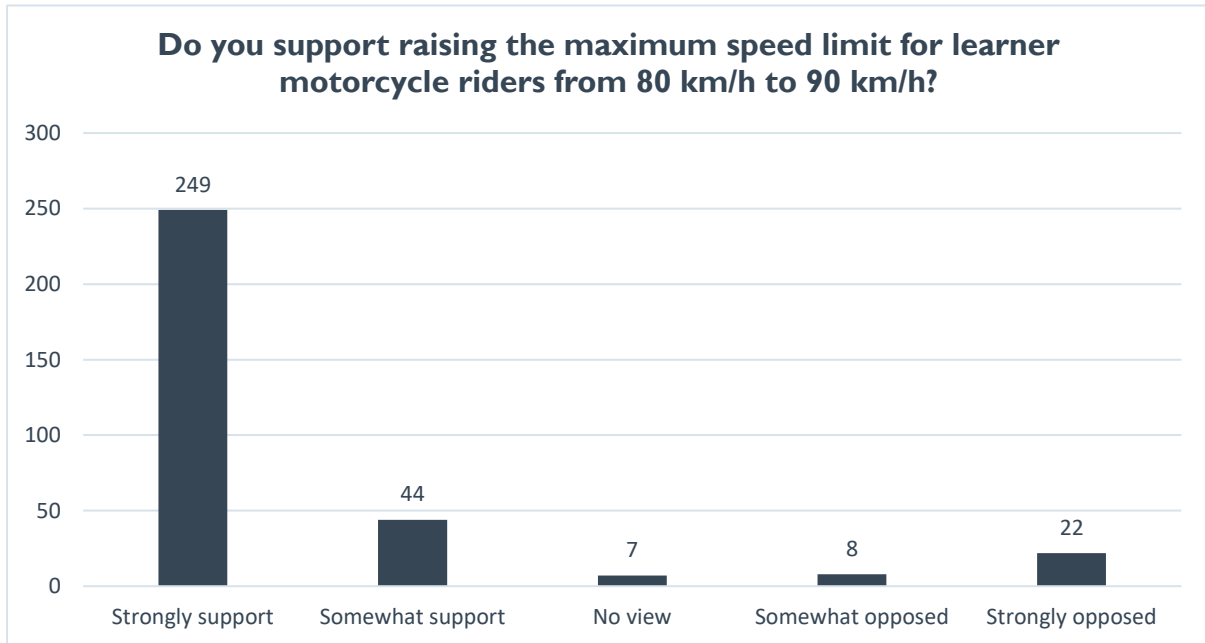


This recommendation was supported by 58.6% of respondents. It was opposed by 32% of respondents.

Comments from those who supported this recommendation generally focused on the potential for phones to be a distraction to novice riders. Some felt that this ban should apply to all vehicles, all the time.

Comments opposed to this recommendation felt that using a mobile phone to listen to music or for GPS purposes in handsfree mode does not pose a safety risk. Some felt there would be safety benefits if using a device to communicate with an accompanying rider for instruction or mentoring purposes. Some commenters also noted that this would be difficult to enforce when riders are using a helmet with an in-built Bluetooth system.

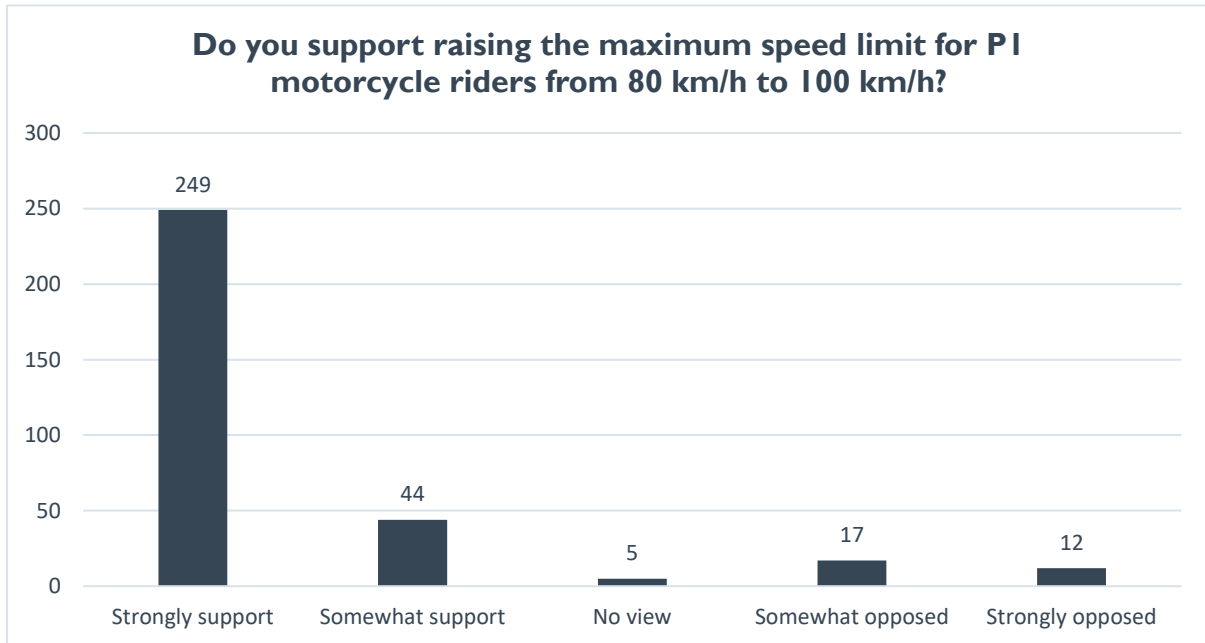
3.9 Raise the maximum speed limit for learner riders from 80 km/h to 90 km/h



This recommendation was well-supported, with 88.8% of respondents either strongly or somewhat supportive. 9.1% were opposed to the recommendation.

Comments noted that riding slower than the traffic around you is dangerous, with many citing aggressive and unsafe behaviour from other road users. Some commented that they feel the current disparity in speed limits between learner drivers and learner riders is unfair.

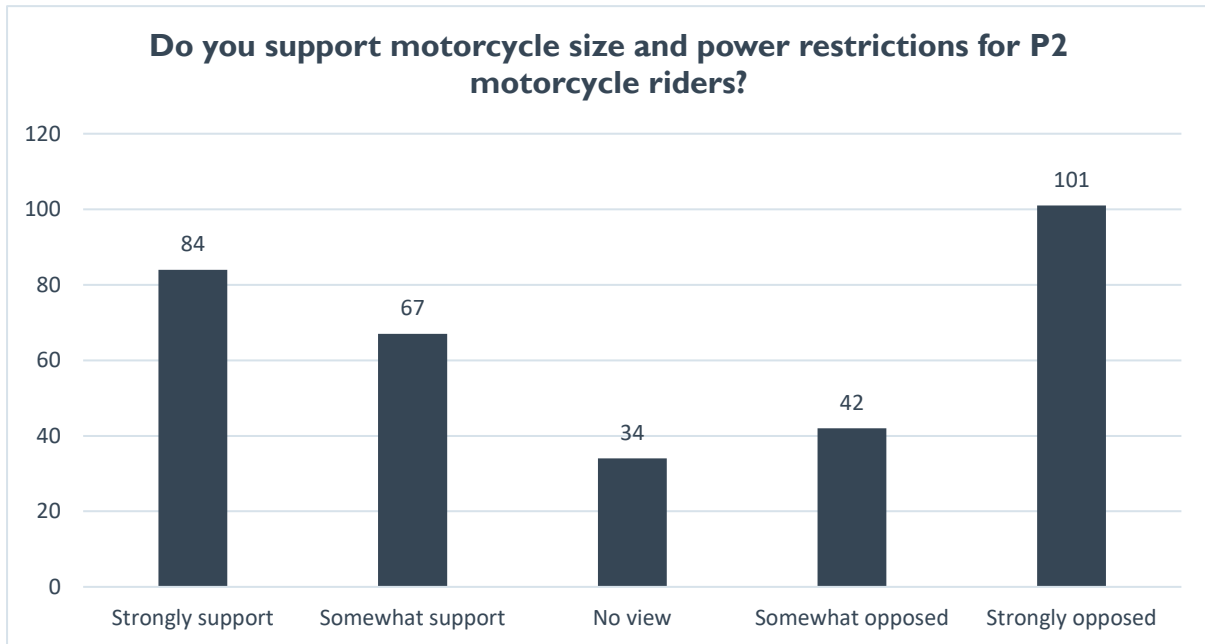
3.10 Raise the maximum speed limit for P1 riders from 80 km/h to 100 km/h



Like the recommendation to raise the speed limit applying to learner motorcyclists, this recommendation was well supported. 89.6% of respondents either strongly or somewhat supported this recommendation. 8.9% opposed this recommendation.

Many respondents left identical comments in relation to both this recommendation and the previous recommendation. Many noted the different travel speeds resulted in aggressive or dangerous behaviour from other drivers, which made novice riders feel unsafe.

3.11 Extend the Learner Approved Motorcycle Scheme restriction to P2 riders



46% of respondents were supportive of this recommendation, and 43.6% were opposed.

Comments received in response to this recommendation were generally more detailed. Some expressed concern that the Learner Approved Motorcycle Scheme (LAMS) arrangements require revision (some commenters were aware of the current review of the LAMS). Some felt that restrictions on motorcycle size and power are unnecessary for P2 riders. Conversely, others felt that the LAMS is an appropriate way for novice riders to develop skills and experience before having access to high-powered bikes, and that the limitations should be extended to P2 riders.

3.12 Additional suggestions to improve novice motorcyclist safety

Survey respondents were invited to suggest additional changes to the motorcyclist GLS to make novice motorcyclists safer. Comments were extremely varied and included the following suggestions, some of which fall beyond the scope of this review:

- recognising age, riding ability and tenure holding a driver's licence to fast track the motorcycle licensing pathway
- introducing a defensive rider course
- introducing education for drivers to increase driver awareness of motorcyclists
- mandating the wearing of high-visibility clothing
- providing additional training during the P2 stage covering skills specifically relevant to the P2 licensing stage
- incentivising training by offering discounts on insurance premiums or registration
- prohibiting learners from riding on highways
- providing financial support to assist with the purchase of safety gear
- increasing training for unlicensed riders
- subsidising training
- limiting the number of novice riders who can ride in a group to limit peer pressure
- linking insurance premiums and registration costs to a rider's crash history and offence history to incentivise safe and lawful riding.

4 Next steps

The RSAC will consider the feedback provided through this public consultation process, together with the recommendations made by CASR. The RSAC will then provide advice to the Tasmanian Government on whether changes should be made to the Tasmanian motorcyclist GLS to make young and novice riders safer.

Attachment I – survey questions



Motorcyclist Graduated Licensing System Review

Public Consultation

About you

1 Do you currently hold a motorcycle licence? Please select the option that best describes you:

- I currently hold a learner motorcycle licence
- I currently hold a P1 motorcycle licence
- I currently hold a P2 motorcycle licence
- I currently hold a full motorcycle licence
- I do not hold a motorcycle licence, but I am interested in getting one
- I do not hold a motorcycle licence and I am not interested in getting one

Other (for example, licence has expired or been suspended): [Free text comments invited].

2 Are you the parent or guardian of a young motorcycle rider or aspiring rider?

- Yes
- No

3 How old are you?

- Under 15
- 15
- 16
- 17
- 18 - 20
- 21 - 24
- 25+

4 Do you support raising the minimum age to obtain a learner motorcycle licence from 16 and 6 months old?

- Strongly support
- Somewhat support
- No view
- Somewhat opposed
- Strongly opposed

[Free text comments invited]

5 <<Logic: Hidden unless answered “strongly support” or “somewhat support” to question 4>> If you support raising the minimum age to obtain a learner motorcycle licence, do you support a minimum age of:

- 17
- 18
- Other - please specify: [Free text comments invited]

6 Do you support a six-month minimum learner period for previously licensed riders who have not held a licence recently?

- Strongly support
- Somewhat support
- No view
- Somewhat opposed
- Strongly opposed

[Free text comments invited]

7 Do you support introducing a computer-based motorcycle-specific hazard perception test before a learner is eligible to sit the Pre-Provisional Test?

- Strongly support
- Somewhat support
- No view
- Somewhat opposed
- Strongly opposed

[Free text comments invited]

8 Do you support introducing a complete ban on learners carrying pillion passengers (including instructors)?

- Strongly support
- Somewhat support
- No view
- Somewhat opposed
- Strongly opposed

[Free text comments invited]

9 Do you support introducing a night-time curfew between midnight and 5 am for learner motorcycle licence holders under the age of 25?

- Strongly support
- Somewhat support
- No view
- Somewhat opposed
- Strongly opposed

[Free text comments invited]

10 Do you support introducing a night-time curfew between midnight and 5 am for P1 motorcycle licence holders under the age of 25?

- Strongly support
- Somewhat support
- No view
- Somewhat opposed
- Strongly opposed

[Free text comments invited]

11 Do you support introducing a towing ban for learner and P1 motorcycle licence holders?

- Strongly support
- Somewhat support
- No view
- Somewhat opposed

- Strongly opposed

[Free text comments invited]

12 Do you support a full ban on mobile phone use (including hands-free) for learner, P1 and P2 motorcycle riders?

- Strongly support
- Somewhat support
- No view
- Somewhat opposed
- Strongly opposed

[Free text comments invited]

13 Do you support raising the maximum speed limit for learner motorcycle riders from 80 km/h to 90 km/h?

- Strongly support
- Somewhat support
- No view
- Somewhat opposed
- Strongly opposed

[Free text comments invited]

14 Do you support raising the maximum speed limit for P1 motorcycle riders from 80 km/h to 100 km/h?

- Strongly support
- Somewhat support
- No view
- Somewhat opposed
- Strongly opposed

[Free text comments invited]

15 Do you support motorcycle size and power restrictions for P2 motorcycle riders?

- Strongly support
- Somewhat support
- No view
- Somewhat opposed
- Strongly opposed

[Free text comments invited]

16 Do you have any other suggestions to change the motorcyclist graduated licensing system to make novice motorcyclists safer?

[Free text comments invited]

Please provide your email address:*

***denotes mandatory field.**



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