



## Play your part

### YOUNG DRIVER SAFETY

**Bruce McIntosh**  
TACC State Manager



According to research from Monash University, a first-time P-plater is 33 times more likely to have an accident than a learner driver.

That number halves six months after getting their license.

Clearly, experience counts when young people get out on the road.

However, there are other disturbing numbers.

Let's dig deeper.

Forty-five per cent of all young Australian injury deaths are caused by road accidents, and almost half of all hospitalisations are drivers involved in a road traffic accident – another quarter are pedestrians.

Young drivers – aged between 17 and 25 – represent one-quarter of all Australian road deaths, yet they only represent 10 to 15 per cent of drivers.

I could go on, but I'm sure you get the picture – young drivers are at risk of serious injury or death.

As a parent – and Tasmanian motorist – I reckon this is simply not good enough.

We all need to play a part.

Here are some things we can do:

- Set a good example when driving
- Teach children to drive safely
- Invest in driver training courses.

There's something else you can do – give your children the safest vehicle possible to drive during their formative years.

That might mean letting them drive your car or, if you can, buy them the safest vehicle possible.

By that, I mean a vehicle with a five-star ANCAP safety rating, with plenty of airbags and other safety gear that will keep them alive if they get into strife.

It's the best investment you could ever make.

If you want some guidance, look for the orange sign. TACC new and used car dealers are here to help.

Prepared by Tasmanian Automotive Chamber of Commerce

## ROADSIDE ASSIST



# SPORTING CHOICE

### IAIN CURRY GETS ANSWERS

WRITE TO MOTORING AT  
CARS@NEWS.COM.AU OR  
PO BOX 2808, GPO SYDNEY, 2001

**I'm considering a new Suzuki Swift and wonder is the Sport model worth the extra money? About 80 per cent of my drives are in the city. Is a new model coming out soon meaning end-of-model run-out deals?**  
Malcolm Gardner, email

I'd only buy a Swift Sport with a manual gearbox, which isn't great for mainly city driving. It's still a joy-bringing little hatchback with an auto gearbox, but if you're going to spend most of your drive in traffic, save \$5000 a buy a GL S Plus – it's still a fun city car. If the remaining 20 per cent of your drives are on twisty roads, it's worth going the Sport. Cabin materials aren't a great leap over lesser Swifts, but the handling and engine are. The Swift range has just had a price jump and although a new generation is imminent don't count on deals in the short term – most new cars are in high demand.

### CAR ON TOW

**We own a motorhome and want to tow a car behind. What method is best and what cars are suitable?**  
Jan Elliott, email

Flat towing is your best bet, where a car is towed with four wheels on the ground attached to an A-frame. Basically, most manual cars can be towed in this way, but very few automatics. The most common exception is the Suzuki Grand Vitara that was on sale until a few years ago. Auto transmission variants could be flat towed with 'neutral' position in the transfer case. If you want a manual car, the lighter the better. Check out a Suzuki Swift, Suzuki Ignis, Hyundai Venue or little Fiat 500. The ultimate setup, allowing serious off-roading where you stop, is with a manual Suzuki Jimny. But they're so desirable one may cost more than your motorhome!

### DOT POINT

**How often should brake fluid be replaced on my 2019 Hyundai i30? The dealer says every two years but the maintenance schedule states it should be inspected up to 96**

**months/120,000km and only replaced if necessary. My car has only travelled 16,000km.**

Andrew Bolton, email

It's not wise to skip on something as important as brake fluid, but you're right, why replace it if it's in tip top shape? You can buy a brake fluid tester from auto stores – a pen-style tool that tests the percentage of water in brake fluid – or ask the Hyundai dealer to use its tool to determine if it really needs replacing. While you've done very few kilometres, fluids break down over time as well as distance.

### RESCUE SERVICE

**Re: Holden Cruze transmissions, we had a 30,000km 2010 model with gearbox problems. I contacted Holden to see if they'd help with repair and they paid the whole \$8000. This was only 18 months ago. Happy days.**

Max Bell, email

Great result. Your case is exceptional with such tiny kilometres travelled, but shows others similarly suffering there's no harm in asking Holden for help.



### HIGH PRAISE

**Re: Cruze transmissions, owners should take their car to a Holden dealer. Holden know they're faulty and have a stock of modified new transmissions they'll be happy to fit for the price of the labour, depending on kilometres. I found Holden fantastic to deal with, still backing its products.**

Andre Stoffels, email

For suffering owners it's worth a shot. I failed to get hold of anyone at Holden who'd take a media

inquiry, so I can't verify they'd potentially pay for a new transmission if the owner pays labour. There are no more dealers but there are more than 200 Holden Certified Service Outlets across Australia. Holden's website lets you search for your nearest on a map. Good luck, Cruzers.

### P PLATE PERSECUTION?

**Re: using GPS on a cradle-mounted phone when driving, this does not apply to P plate drivers. While I agree phones shouldn't be used for other things when driving, my daughter (on her Ps) should be allowed to use GPS to get to work. It doesn't seem fair.**

Mark Steel, email



You're spot on, I should have replied more comprehensively last time. While fully licensed drivers may use a phone's GPS if it's mounted in a cradle, Learner, P1 and P2 drivers cannot. I accept this is to reduce distractions, but the rule appears contradictory as provisional drivers are legally allowed to use dash-mounted GPS systems such as a Garmin or Navman.

### TACHO HACK

**Re: tachometers, if manufacturers stop fitting them, there's a range of phone apps that connect to a plug-in adaptor for your car's On-Board Diagnostics (OBD) point. This sends a whole range of engine data to your phone. You could repurpose an old phone and leave it connected in the car.**

Peter Williams, email

Indeed. I've seen these used at the racetrack to monitor and record speed, rpm, power, temperatures, fuel economy and more. Securely mounting an old phone displaying the app (or fitting a screen that could do so) is a solution.

### LOYALTY REWARDED



**Your advice to contact head offices of car manufacturers when seeking goodwill repairs was correct. I've just had the CVT transmission replaced on my 119,000km 2014 Subaru Outback as a goodwill gesture. I proved it had been serviced correctly and I think it helped I stated it was my fourth Subaru over the last 30 years. I waited three weeks for the new transmission, they gave me a loan car for that time, and handled it all very efficiently.**

Tim Wheaton, email

Well done Subaru. It's really good to see a brand acknowledging this was a far too-early failure, despite it being a long time out of warranty. I'd imagine you'll keep buying Subarus for the next 30 years on the back of this customer care.