



VICTORIA POLICE

Transitioning to a non-driver

An important safety message from Road Safety Command

Road Safety for Older Pedestrians

A safety message from Victoria Police

“Hanging up the keys” is an unwelcome sacrifice for any member of our community let alone for those of us accustomed to the convenience of driving over many years.

There comes a time when experienced drivers realise that the risk to themselves and other road users has finally outweighed the convenience of continuing to drive.

When considering the prospect of becoming a non-driver, consultation with people who know you well and have your best interests at heart is always a sound option; your family, friends and doctor are obvious choices.

VicRoads Safe Driving Checklist encourages drivers to ask themselves the following:

- When driving, do you find it difficult to turn your head to see over your shoulder?
- Do any of your joints ache after you have been driving for an hour or more?
- Do you find it difficult to change your visual focus from the road ahead of you to the instrument panel or vice-versa?
- Do your family members, friends or doctor have concerns about your driving?
- Do you have trouble seeing pedestrians stepping off the pavement while you are concentrating on the road ahead?
- Do you have trouble telling how far away objects are?
- Is glare affecting you more than it used to?
- Do you have more difficulty driving at night than you used to?

Arriving at the conclusion that driving is no longer a safe option can often be upsetting. Driving a car supports our:

- Independence
- Convenience
- Self esteem
- Involvement in social activities
- Maintenance of an active life style

Ideally, the decision to transition to the status of “non-driver” is made by the driver themselves after consideration of issues such as deteriorating health or cognitive abilities.

Hopefully, the decision is not prompted after involvement in a collision. Statistics show that, based on fatalities per kilometre travelled, drivers aged 65 and over are seven times more likely to be killed than the lowest risk age group.

Whatever the reason for the decision, the challenge after surrendering a license is to maintain one’s mobility.

Public transport, (trains, trams, buses) taxis and the like are major considerations but local council courtesy bus programmes are a great way of getting from your door to a number of local community destinations. Participation in the programme is an excellent way of initiating and maintaining social interaction and most services are free of charge to those over 60-65 years of age.

Many local councils offer such services which can be accessed by telephone or via the relevant websites.

You can also visit the VicRoads website at www.vicroads.vic.gov.au which is a rich resource of alternative transport options.