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Research Report:
**An Investigation of Aboriginal Driver
Licencing Issues**

Prepared for:
**Roads & Traffic Authority
of NSW**

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1. Executive Summary

1.1 Research Objectives & Methodology

The fundamental objectives of this research were:

1. Identify and quantify licencing issues amongst Aboriginal people;
2. Direct the development of policy, program and service responses to driver licencing issues amongst Aboriginal people; and
3. Establish benchmark measures for the future monitoring of effectiveness of policy, programs and services to address driver licencing issues amongst Aboriginal people.

The study consisted of two phases. This first phase was qualitative in nature and consisted of a series of fifteen (15) mini-group discussion sessions amongst the Aboriginal Community in NSW and a presentation/workshop with Aboriginal Program Advisors and Liaison Officers. Communities from a total of twelve (12) urban, regional and remote locations were included (Mt Druitt; Campbelltown; Kempsey; Karuah; Shoalhaven; Griffith; Toronto; Wellington; Tabulum; Wallaga Lake; Balranald; and Wilcannia).

The second phase consisted of N=300 face to face interviews, conducted across fourteen (14) urban, regional and remote locations. The initial intention was to visit the twelve (12) locations used in the qualitative phase, however, due to difficulties achieving desired numbers in some remote locations, an additional two (2) locations were added (Wreck Bay and Baryugil).

1.2 Key Findings

In an overall sense, the **key findings** to emerge from this study were as follows:

- **Unlicensed driving is prevalent** in the Aboriginal Community. For many it is a necessity as they have limited access to licenced drivers, are unable to obtain or maintain a licence themselves, and have limited access to public transport. Yet they have busy lives that require them to be mobile;
- The quantitative phase revealed that **29%** of those who have **never held a licence had driven** on NSW roads in the **past 12 months**, with 40% of these respondents driving on a weekly basis. Further, 46% of those respondents who were past licence holders (ie, they no longer have a valid licence) were driving on a daily basis;
- **Many** in the Aboriginal **Community find it difficult to maintain a licence** once they have obtained one. Just under three quarters (74%) of past licence holders and 43% of current licence holders indicated their licence had been suspended or cancelled at some point, with 21% of past licence holders having lost their licence on more than one occasion;
- **A significant proportion of the Aboriginal Community (40%) have outstanding debt with the State Debt Recovery Office (SDRO)**, whilst others suggest they have limited financial capacity and the costs of licencing and registration are beyond them. In the qualitative study many suggested they struggled to afford their licence renewal and therefore opted for a single year renewal. The costs of car registration and insurance were also beyond the reach of many;
- The quantitative study revealed the **significant impact** of the Community's **limited financial capacity and outstanding SDRO debt**:
 - Unpaid fines (31%) and outstanding SDRO debt (28%) were the most common reasons given for licence suspension or cancellation.

- 25% of those unlikely to try for a licence can't pay off their debt, while 15% said they simply can't afford a licence. Just under two in ten (19%) past licence holders didn't renew their licence because they couldn't afford it.
- 42% of respondents owned a vehicle, with 72% of owners having a vehicle that was 6 or more years old. Two in ten (19%) vehicles were unregistered.
- As learners, 25% of current licence holders had problems accessing a registered vehicle, 23% 'couldn't afford a driving instructor', 15% 'sometimes couldn't afford the petrol money to go driving as a learner', and 15% found the log book requirements difficult.
- Debt (13%) and affordability (38%) were also preventing some vehicle owners from getting their vehicle registered;
- **Literacy problems were the other key issue** that emerged. In the qualitative study most group sessions identified literacy as a key barrier to the Aboriginal Community gaining a licence. The RTA's written materials (such as the Road User's Handbook) and the testing procedure were thought to be quite daunting for those with reading difficulties. Many therefore had difficulties passing the Computer Based Driver Knowledge Test (CBDKT) or simply avoided licencing, as failure was considered embarrassing, particularly in small communities;
- **Many participants** in the qualitative phase also referred to feeling **uncomfortable in RTA Motor Registries** often because of a lack of Aboriginal staff or their being the only Aboriginal person in the Motor Registry; their lack of confidence in their own reading and writing abilities; and/or that they may have been identified as someone with debt problems or someone who had failed the CBDKT previously. Dealing with the RTA could therefore be quite daunting, particularly as most were unaware of the help available to them, such as help for those with literacy difficulties;
- **They were not however suggesting they were badly treated.** In fact, **84%** of those who had visited an RTA Motor Registry (or outlet) maintained that they **were treated 'very well/well'** on their last visit;

- Given that the key issues to emerge in this study related to **financial capacity (and debt), literacy difficulties, and the Motor Registry experience**, it was not surprising that the **Community’s suggestions for improving licencing amongst Aboriginal people** tended to focus on these issues. The most common suggestions for improvement were:
 - “assistance with reading & writing for learning/testing” (23%);
 - “more/free driving lessons” (20%);
 - “run courses/programs/training around licencing” (19%);
 - “financial assistance/help with fines/costs of tests/lessons” (19%);
 - “more indigenous RTA service staff” (18%);
 - “provide vehicles for Learner drivers to use/practice/do test” (11%);
 - “RTA advisors to visit communities/RTA information sessions” (11%); and
 - “Indigenous instructors” (10%).

1.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings from both the qualitative and quantitative phases of this project we would make the following recommendations:

1. There is a need for the RTA (and other relevant Government bodies) to provide the community with some **help in understanding and learning the Driver’s Handbook and in practicing the Computer Based Driver Knowledge Test**;
2. **Consider whether SDRO debt should be linked to licencing** as it has a significant impact on the Aboriginal Community’s ability to obtain and maintain a licence. If it must, the **RTA and SDRO** need to **work more closely to help the community deal with that debt** and minimise its impact on licencing;
3. **Dealing with the Community’s debt will have flow on effects on licencing and registration.** It can increase the number of licenced drivers, which will help learner drivers; and it can help improve the Community’s employment prospects, which can, in turn, improve an their ability to pay off debt, afford licence costs, and own and maintain a registered vehicle;

4. **Consideration should also be given to what can be done at a Motor Registry level to increase the Community's level of comfort in dealing with the RTA and increase their awareness of help available to them.** Ideas for improvement include more Aboriginal staff, a liaison officer to provide an interface between the Aboriginal Community and mainstream RTA staff, and designated days to visit Motor Registries;
5. Ultimately the RTA (along with other Government agencies) need to **continue to consult and work with the Aboriginal Community** to improve licencing, vehicle registration, and road safety.

2. Introduction

2.1 Background

The Roads and Traffic Authority's (RTA) *Aboriginal Action Plan (AAP) 2006-2010* guides its initiatives regarding the Aboriginal Community in NSW as it “*influences research and planning to improve policy, services and programs in the areas of road safety, driver licencing, customer service, and heritage management for the Aboriginal Community*”¹.

In an overall sense, the AAP identifies the need for:

- the development of culturally appropriate public education resources;
- strategies to improve access to various RTA services;
- strategies to reduce offence and motor vehicle related incarceration rates amongst Aboriginal people; and
- strategies to improve awareness of issues to be considered when purchasing a vehicle.

The AAP is based on a number of key principles – community consultation, best practice, and linkage to RTA strategic frameworks. As part of its consultation with the Aboriginal Community, the RTA, through the AAP, has identified the need for research to understand licencing issues amongst Aboriginal people.

Elliott & Shanahan (E&S) Research was subsequently commissioned to conduct this important research into driver licencing issues amongst the Aboriginal Community in NSW.

¹ RTA Brief: Aboriginal Driver Licencing Issues Survey

2.2 Research Aims

The fundamental objectives of this research were:

1. Identify and quantify licencing issues amongst Aboriginal people;
2. Direct the development of policy, program and service responses to driver licencing issues amongst Aboriginal people; and
3. Establish benchmark measures for the future monitoring of effectiveness of policy, programs and services to address driver licencing issues amongst Aboriginal people.

Within these broad aims the following issues were examined:

- Identification of **barriers to obtaining a licence** and whether those barriers were external or internal in regards to the RTA;
- Overall **perceptions of the RTA** and the extent to which those perceptions encourage or inhibit driver licencing;
- Identification of external and internal **barriers to registering a vehicle**;
- **Identification** of possible **solutions to the barriers** to licencing and vehicle registration; and
- **Reactions to** existing licencing and registration **communication materials**.

It should be noted that while the above areas of enquiry were the focus of the study, the approach adopted in the qualitative phase was group participant directed, encouraging them to raise the issues they considered important in terms of licencing and vehicle registration. Further, group members were asked to relate personal stories about their experiences and those around them, as in our experience this is the best way to encourage group discussion with the Aboriginal Community.

3. Methodology

3.1 Initial Qualitative Phase

3.1.1 Qualitative Research Technique

The qualitative phase consisted of a series of **mini-group discussions** conducted with the Aboriginal Community. The group discussion technique enables both emotional issues as well as rational considerations to be explored. The benefits of the technique are that:

- it provides participants with a relaxed and friendly atmosphere, in which they can discuss their attitudes and opinions in their own terms;
- it allows them to reveal those aspects of the topic which are of interest or importance to them;
- it permits a deeper and more thorough exploration of attitudes and reactions than do traditional question and answer techniques;
- it is an extremely flexible technique allowing for the input of stimulus material in the most appropriate manner for any particular group; and,
- it permits the group moderator to focus the attention of participants on those specific areas in the objectives, which require detailed probing.

This qualitative phase was conducted in conjunction with Origin Communications, one of Australia's most respected consultancy agencies specialising in Indigenous communications and consultation.

3.1.2 Qualitative Research Scope

This initial qualitative phase consisted of a series of **fifteen (15) mini-group discussion** sessions across **twelve (12) locations** and a **presentation/workshop** with Aboriginal Program Advisors and Liaison Officers.

The groups amongst the Aboriginal Community were structured as follows:

Location	Urban	Regional	Remote
Kempsey		1x Disqualified ² Females	
Tabulum			1x Females 30-50 yrs
Toronto	1x Males 30-50 yrs		
Karuah		1x Females 45+ yrs	
Campbelltown	1x Disqualified Males		
Mt Druitt	1x Males 16-17 yrs 1x Female Students ³		
Shoalhaven		1x Unemployed ⁴ Males 1x Females 18-25 yrs	
Wallaga Lake			1x Males 18-25 yrs
Griffith		1x Male Students	
Balranald			1x Unemployed Females
Wellington		1x Males 55+ yrs 1x Females 18-25 yrs	
Wilcannia			1x Disqualified Males
Total Groups	4	7	4

All groups other than those with disqualified drivers included a mixture of licenced and unlicenced drivers (including lapsed and disqualified licence drivers), as well as a mixture of licence types.

The Aboriginal community groups were conducted between 4th - 25th July, although no groups were held during NAIDOC⁵ week, which was the week of 6th-13th July. The workshop was conducted on 15th August, 2008.

3.1.3 Qualitative Rationale

Mini-groups: Based on our and Origin's extensive experience, the use of a mini-group format works extremely well with diverse Aboriginal communities and cohort groups drawn from within these communities. For this particular project it offered the following significant advantages:

² Disqualified drivers could be aged 20-50 years

³ Students could be aged 18-40 years

⁴ Unemployed participants could be aged 18-50 years

⁵ NAIDOC Week involves events all over Australia to celebrate the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

- High levels of engagement (significantly greater engagement than with a larger group discussion);
- Increased likelihood of comment/contribution by the whole group;
- Maximum range and representation of respondent sample (through ability to develop targeted mini-group recruitment across regions); and
- Greater flexibility for group recruitment.

Age: We included a wide range of age groups, from the age at which people become eligible for a Learner’s licence through to older drivers, with a skew towards those under 25 years, in order to reflect Aboriginal population statistics.

Gender: There was a relatively even mix of male and female groups, with genders being kept separate to ensure participant comfort and cultural appropriateness.

Location: These were chosen in consultation with the RTA to ensure coverage of all RTA regions, and towns with, and without, an RTA Motor Registry.

3.1.4 Discussion Procedure

The approach to each discussion session was as non-directive as possible, allowing freedom of discussion, intervening when and where necessary, for elaboration or to introduce a new aspect of the topic.

The discussion guides were developed in consultation with the RTA and are appended as Appendix “A”. The discussion guide for the disqualified drivers was slightly different as there were additional discussion points relating to their disqualification.

The moderator’s role was to ensure that there was coverage of all relevant issues, and where points were not raised spontaneously to put them forward for consideration. Participants were encouraged to raise those issues most salient to them, and to discuss in their own terms of reference.

3.2 Follow-Up Quantitative Research

3.2.1 Quantitative Research Technique & Scope

This second phase of the study consisted of a series of **n=300 face-to-face interviews** amongst Aboriginal communities throughout NSW.

Our original intention was to conduct n=25 interviews at each of the twelve (12) communities visited in the qualitative phase. However, due to the remoteness of some locations and circumstances beyond our control (eg: funerals, community meetings, etc) we were unable to reach our target in all remote locations. An additional two remote locations were therefore included (Wreck Bay and Baryugil) to ensure we reached our desired number of interviews in remote areas. A table detailing the number of interviews per location is appended as Appendix “C”.

Aside from a quota of n=25 interviews per locations, a number of other **broad quotas were set**. In essence, there were no accurate figures in regards to the NSW Aboriginal Community and licencing; consequently we set broad quotas to ensure that the sample provided **a good range of the Aboriginal Community in terms of age, gender, and those who were licenced and unlicenced**.

The final sample achieved in this phase of the research was as follows:

Segment	Total	Urban ⁶	Regional ^{7,8}	Remote ⁹
16-17 years	30	8	13	9
18-24 years	67	15	35	17
(16-24 years)	97	23	48	26
25-44 years	140	39	50	51
45 years and over	62	6	38	18
Male	142	33	64	45
Females	158	35	72	51
Current Licence Holder	139	26	84	29
Past Licence Holder	53	12	22	19
Never Held a Licence	108	30	30	48
TOTAL	300	68	136	96

⁶ Urban locations were Mt Druitt & Campbelltown

⁷ Regional locations were Kempsey, Karuah, Shoalhaven, Griffith, Wellington and Toronto.

⁸ Toronto was classified as a regional centre for the quantitative phase, as the qualitative phase revealed issues more in line with other regional centres than the urban locations of Campbelltown and Mt Druitt.

⁹ Remote locations were Tabulum, Wallaga Lake, Balranald, Wilcannia, Baryugil, and Wreck Bay.

Prior to interviewing, a series of ten (10) pilot interviews were conducted to check question wording, respondent comprehension, overall questionnaire length and flow. No changes were made following the pilot interviews.

Interviewing was conducted by Origin Communications' field team between October 12th and November 5th 2008. Respondents were sourced through various local contacts and organisations in each location. Respondents were also screened to ensure that they had not participated in the qualitative phase and that we only interviewed one person per household.

3.2.2 Quantitative Rationale

The key benefits of revisiting the communities involved in the qualitative phase were as follows:

- It allowed an action research approach whereby **communities received follow-up** on the initial phase of research;
- It **prevented the “fly-in/fly-out” issues** which are prevalent within Aboriginal research;
- **Regional and cultural issues** could be investigated rigorously;
- A sample was drawn from **urban, regional and rural areas**;
- Fieldwork could be conducted within **a reasonable time frame** (which would not have been possible with a truly random sample); and
- It was a **cost effective** methodology that met the RTA's objectives.

The main drawbacks of this approach were the time required to co-ordinate and conduct the interviews and the need for rigorous recruiting practices to ensure samples from each area represented a cross section of the community.

3.2.3 Quantitative Analysis & Interpretation

To aid the process of analysis, the data was subjected to significance testing via the Z test at the 95% confidence level. However, it should be noted that this test is designed for random samples, and as our sample was not a true random sample, the results of the significance testing should be used as a guide only.

Throughout this report tables and figures feature a superscript letter (eg: ^B) to indicate a significant difference within segments¹⁰. An example of this and how this should be read is provided below:

Driven on NSW Roads in the Past 12 months	Total A %	Current Holder B %	Past Holder C %	Never Held D %
Yes	63	97 ^{CD}	42	29
No	37	3	59 ^B	71 ^B
BASE: All Respondents	300	139	53*	108

The above table indicates that current licence holders (97%) are more likely than past licence holders (42%) and those who have never held a licence (29%) to have driven on NSW roads in the past 12 months. However, the difference between past licence holders (42%) and those who have never held a licence (29%) is unlikely to be statistically significant (as indicated by the absence of a 'D').

3.3 Reporting

Following completion of the qualitative fieldwork an analysis of the comments made in the discussion groups was undertaken.

It should be noted that the nature of the qualitative phase was exploratory and diagnostic, no attempt has been made to attach numbers to the findings; rather, they are indicative of the target groups' attitudes to the issue of licencing and vehicle registration. Verbatim quotes from the group discussions are included to illustrate and support the findings. Some quotes refer to more than one person speaking.

¹⁰ Letters have been assigned to particular segments within the data tables (a separate document) and these letters have been used throughout this report for consistency.

Quantitative responses were tabulated by computer and cross analysed by relevant demographics (e.g. location, gender, age, etc). These data tables are provided in a separate volume.

The quantitative section of the following report consists of a written summary of the key results with charts and some tables.

This written report therefore consists of a summary of the key findings including charts and tables, together with an analysis and interpretation of those key findings.

4. Qualitative Findings

4.1 Vehicle Ownership & Driving Behaviour

4.1.1 Vehicle Ownership & Registration

Vehicle ownership amongst qualitative participants **varied greatly**. Some group discussion sessions included four or five vehicle/car owners, while other group sessions contained only one or two vehicle/car owners. In an overall sense this initial qualitative phase revealed that:

- those under the age of 35 years were most likely to own a vehicle/car, particularly tertiary students and those in steady employment;
- tertiary students and those in steady employment were also more likely to have newer and more expensive vehicles; and
- females were less likely to own a vehicle/car.

While we found variation in the level of car ownership, the levels of vehicle registration were more consistent. To that end, the incidence of vehicle registration was much lower than that of vehicle ownership, with many owners suggesting their vehicle/car was not registered and others suggesting the car or cars they drove were not registered. In essence, **many had poor cash reserves and consequently, struggled to afford car registration costs**, particularly as registration and Compulsory Third Party (CTP) insurance costs required a large lump sum.

4.1.2 General Driving Patterns

Regardless of whether they had a valid licence or not, **the majority of the Aboriginal Community was said to drive**. In fact, many claimed it was simply **part of their everyday or weekly routine** as they drove to:

- do the shopping or pick up particular items such as cigarettes, alcohol, and food;
- medical appointments;

- get to and from work, and for some, driving was part of their work (although these people tended to hold a valid licence);
- drop children off, and pick them up from school;
- socialise, attend social and cultural events (such as funerals, the knockout Rugby League competition on the October long weekend) and sporting events (eg: regular weekend sporting competitions); and
- attend to family and/or personal business.

Most driving occasions therefore involved more than one person in the vehicle, with local short trips being more regular than longer intra or interstate trips.

Longer trips were most likely to be associated with **special occasions and cultural events** such as the knockout Rugby League competition on the October long weekend, family gatherings and events, and funerals. These longer distance trips were considered very important and, as such, were not delayed or cancelled due to the absence of a licenced driver and/or a registered vehicle. Driving duties were therefore shared by those available, capable and willing to drive, regardless of whether they were licenced or not.

“If it’s a football trip, it comes down to seniority. Either an Elder does the driving or an Elder nominates the driver.”
(Male, 24 years, Regional)

“If it was a long trip, say to Sydney, then a safe driver. Someone who wouldn’t go to sleep.” (Male, 19 years, Regional)

“The majority of the time the one who drove the car was whoever owned it, even if they were full [intoxicated].” (Male, 57 years, Remote).

4.1.3 Unlicenced Driving

In most communities unlicenced driving was considered the norm. In fact, only one of the communities (regional) that we visited suggested there was very little unlicenced driving, their reasoning being that the Elders frowned upon unlicenced driving in their community.

For most, **unlicenced driving was a necessity**; they were unable to obtain or hold onto a licence, there were limited licenced drivers in their community, and they were often living in relatively isolated communities. Therefore, not only were private vehicles the only convenient or regularly available form of transport, but it was necessary to drive unlicenced.

“I’d say there’s only three people with a licence here in this community. And two of them are on their P’s.” (Female, 36 years, Remote)

Clearly, **age was no barrier to driving** with many of the 16-17 year olds claiming they were relatively regular drivers, particularly males. To that end, both this age group and older age groups referred to having driven when they were even younger, with some claiming to have started driving when they were as young as 13 years of age.

There were also a number of stories of younger people being convinced to drive older, licenced, intoxicated people around, with the licence holders telling the unlicenced drivers that if they got caught by the police it was better to be unlicenced than it was to be intoxicated.

“It doesn’t matter [if you don’t have a licence]. If I’m the one who’s had only a little [of] course I’ll drive. What’d you do?” (Female, 42 years, Regional)

Unlicenced driving patterns did however appear to differ according to age, with middle age and older drivers arguing that they usually drove out of necessity – to do the shopping, to go to a medical or hospital appointment, to attend to family business or funerals. Further, they also claimed to be somewhat cautious, and where possible, limit their driving to the back roads and at times when they considered detection by the police least likely.

Younger drivers, on the other hand, were driving unlicenced more regularly. While they also drove out of necessity, they were just as likely to drive in order to socialise or *“hang out”*. As with all young people, being able to drive provides much greater opportunities for freedom and socialising, and as such, driving becomes an essential part of what they do to *“pass the time”*. Clearly, young people were driving unlicenced on a more frequent basis and expressed less concern about where and when they drove.

Irrespective of age **most expressed little concern in regards to driving unlicenced and being caught**. To that end, the arguments for driving unlicenced far outweighed the arguments against driving unlicenced.

The **arguments for driving unlicenced** were as follows:

- In many cases it was a **necessity** due to the need to achieve day to day tasks with little access to licenced drivers (and registered vehicles). This is compounded in regional and remote communities where access to regular public transport is limited;
- **Local knowledge of where and when to drive**. Many claimed to know which roads to use and at which times to drive to lessen the chance of being detected by the police. This was particularly the case in regional and remote locations where “*back roads*” could be used;
- There were a number of references to **tacit approval** of unlicenced driving **from police**. On occasions, police were thought to ‘turn a blind eye’ when drivers were considered to be driving locally and safely, particularly if the reason for driving was to attend a medical appointment; and
- The **consequences of being caught** driving unlicenced were **considered relatively minor**. For most it was just another fine and for those with considerable outstanding debt with the State Debt Recovery Office (SDRO) it was small in comparison to what they already owed (and were unlikely to ever eliminate).

“Yeah, I just take the back roads, plus the cops are like clockwork. I drive when I think they aren’t patrolling.”
(Female, 22 years, Regional)

“People drive disqualified but you just have to stay away from main roads. The cops out here are stupid.” (Female, 30 years, Urban)

“You really only get caught if there is a breath test.”
(Female, 22 years, Urban)

“Yes if I knew there was a raid on in town, as they [the police] don’t bother us then, they just let us go because they are too busy.” (Female, 41 years, Remote)

“If you’re not driving like an idiot they’ll leave you alone. But you never know when some other bastard slams into you at the lights.” (Male, 36 years, Urban)

“They know we’s alright. [the police] Just waves at us in town.” (Female, 43 years, Remote)

“The gunjies are real dumb. I got picked up three times on one day and they just kept givin’ me a fine.” (Male, 17 years, Regional)

In contrast there was only really **one argument against driving unlicensed** which was the **belief that some police**, particularly the Highway Patrol, **target Aboriginal drivers and vehicles**. But as mentioned above, the consequences of this were not considered to be particularly bad.

“A black fella behind the wheel and the police see them they will pull him over straight away, just to check the car to see if they can give you a fine.” (Male, 25 years, Remote)

However, it should be noted that there was **general agreement that sooner or later they would get caught driving unlicensed**.

4.2 Driver Licencing

4.2.1 Barriers to Obtaining and Maintaining A Driver’s Licence

In an overall sense, there are **two key barriers to Aboriginal people obtaining and maintaining a driver’s licence**.

Firstly, there is the issue of **financial difficulties** with **many** participants admitting to **debt problems with the SDRO** and/or **finding it difficult to pay for testing and renewals**. Those wishing to learn to drive and progress through the graduated licencing system, therefore have limited access to licenced drivers to teach and guide them, and/or suitable registered vehicles in which they can learn and accumulate the required number of driving hours. For the vast majority, paying for formal lessons from a driving instructor was well beyond their reach.

“They used to have a program on that RTA computer for people to test their knowledge and stuff. But no-one uses it because they think it’s a waste of time and money because they can’t afford to go through the L’s and green P’s and red P’s.” (Male, 39 years, Urban)

The **other key issue** related to the Aboriginal Community’s **literacy levels** and therefore their ability to:

- read the handbook and other RTA information;
- fill in forms; and
- do the Computer Based Driver Knowledge Test (CBDKT).

Financial Difficulties

The **majority of licence holders** with whom we spoke suggested that it was very **difficult** for them **to afford their licence renewal each year**; while **those without a licence** suggested they **could not afford to get a licence or to pay off their existing debt** in order to get their licence back.

Amongst those who had never had a licence there was reference to:

- their inability to afford multiple tests, which was not uncommon. Many of those we spoke to referred to their own, or others’, multiple test attempts and the cost of doing so. They often therefore gave up or put it off until they had sufficient funds to be able to afford the test;
- a lack of licenced drivers to teach and guide them, which meant they would like, but cannot afford, formal driving lessons from a qualified driving instructor; and
- a lack of appropriate registered vehicles in which they are able to learn.

“Yeah right! How many Kooris you know who got a licence and will let ya drive it. Unless you drive ‘em home when they’re pissed you never get a run.” (Male, 17 years, Urban)

“My daughter wants to get her licence but doesn’t want to learn in my old van. That’s all I got, don’t know what she’ll do.” (Male, 40 years, Regional)

Those who had once held a licence suggested that they used to struggle to scrape together the cost of the renewal each year and that if they couldn't afford it at the time they were forced to let their licence expire. Others suggested that outstanding SDRO debts had meant they either could not afford to renew their licence or they had been unable to renew it, due to the outstanding debt.

Many current licence holders also referred to the extent to which they struggled to pay for their licence renewal each year and as a result simply opted for a 12 month renewal. While a three year licence was thought to be an ideal way to overcome the difficulties of finding the money for a renewal each year, most agreed that they were unlikely to ever have the spare funds to afford a three year licence.

Both current licence holders and those without a licence believed that the **new graduated licencing system and the log book requirement had made it even more difficult for Aboriginal people to be able to afford a licence.** As mentioned, learners had limited access to licenced drivers and appropriate registered vehicles, particularly as licenced drivers tended to be employed and therefore have limited available time for helping learners. They therefore claimed it would be very difficult to accumulate the required hours.

The rising cost of petrol has compounded the problem with many suggesting that it would now be significantly more expensive to accumulate the required hours. In fact, communities often suggested that car owners are now asking those who borrow their car for driving lessons, to provide petrol money, whereas previously this was not always the case.

Many therefore believed that the costs associated with obtaining a licence meant that it was **out of the reach of many young Aboriginal people.**

“You need 150 hours for P1. It makes better drivers but it's too unrealistic and expensive. [It] stops people trying to get a licence” (Female, 35 years, Urban)

Outstanding debt was a major issue with study participants; in fact it was preventing many from renewing or obtaining their licence. We found a wide cross section of the Aboriginal community in this qualitative phase had outstanding debts with the SDRO, with many young people having accrued debts of \$5000 or more. In fact, in our discussions with Aboriginal Program Advisor's and Liaison Officers there were references to young people who had accumulated upwards of \$15,000 debt. Interestingly, many claimed to be unaware of their debts until they had applied for or went to renew their licence.

“That lady who came here and had a yarn to us about licences, she checked for me and they said I owed \$260, it was left over from 1993. I didn't even know ... I spoke to that State Debt mob and I'm paying it off.” (Male, 39 years, Regional)

“That State Debt mob are arseholes. I got me licence cancelled 'cause I got meself some sort of fine for not votin'. Not votin' what a joke! So I went up to do me licence and what do youse reckon but 'Sorry sir, you've got a fine'. Bunch of arseholes. [They] couldn't even tell what it was for. [I] Had to call that State Debt mob and they were no f--in' use. [They] Had wrong address and all, but it was still my fault.” (Male, 35 years, Urban)

Debts had been accumulated through a variety of channels and unpaid fines for:

- riding a bike without a helmet (younger people);
- not having a ticket on public transport;
- pet-related infringements;
- assaults and minor law infringements; and
- traffic infringements such as speed and Driving Under the Influence (DUI) offences.

A number of debts were also accumulated through unpaid bills and unpaid rent.

While SDRO debt was prevalent amongst study participants there was a **lack of understanding** of the options available to them **in terms of addressing their debt**. A small number of study participants had contacted the SDRO and had agreed on a payment plan in order to eliminate their debt. Those who had been unable to obtain or renew their licence due to this outstanding debt were therefore able to do so as a result of their payment plan.

“Is it really true that you can pay off a third of your fines and get your licence back? (Female, 26 years, Regional)

“I started paying off me fines and got me licence back for a while. Then I got sacked an’ didn’t keep paying them. So they cancelled me all over again. Don’t matter if you try an’ do the right thing.” (Male, 42 years, Urban)

Others had avoided contact with the SDRO assuming that they would have to clear all of their debt before they were able to obtain or renew their licence.

Clearly, **most had serious difficulties in eliminating their outstanding debt** and in fact, had little hope of ever paying their debt off. Driving without a licence was therefore seen as their only option. For example, one 60 year old woman with whom we spoke told us how she had been fined because her dog bit a neighbour, but was unable to pay the fine and as a result was unable to renew her licence. She therefore resigned herself to driving unlicensed and was later caught by the police and fined for unlicensed driving. This second fine therefore simply added to her debt and therefore the likelihood that she would have to again drive unlicensed.

“I got \$5000 in fines! How’re I ever gonna pay that c--t off?” (Male, 17 years, Urban)

“Like him, I got a shitload of fines. I’m only 17 but they say I owe more than \$5000. So what’s the point?” (Male, 17 years, Urban)

Literacy Difficulties

A **large proportion** of study participants admitted to having **poor reading and writing abilities**. While most had sufficient ability to function with everyday tasks involving reading and writing, they struggled with more complex information and tasks involving reading and writing. As such, many mentioned they had difficulties with:

- written RTA materials such as the Road User's Handbook;
- understanding and filling in forms; and
- difficulties with, and fear of, the RTA's computer based testing.

"The young people have trouble getting their licence. They have trouble reading and understanding the questions."
(Male, 35 years, Regional)

"I'd get one [a licence] but I can't read. I can drive good but that test is shit." (Male, 17 years, Urban)

"...but a lot of this mob here can't read and write." (Male, 52 years, Remote)

"I can't read or nothin'. Talk to me. If you tell me I'll know but I'm not reading this crap." (Male, 17 years, Urban)

The difficulty with the computer testing, was in part a result of many Aboriginal people's discomfort with the RTA Motor Registry surrounds. That is, **many found RTA Registries somewhat intimidating**, particularly when they felt they were the only Aboriginal person in the Motor Registry at the time; had at some point been into a Motor Registry and been told they had outstanding debts; or were repeatedly taking the CBDKT. The later two were associated with a degree of shame for Aboriginal people, particularly if they lived in a small community.

Given their literacy difficulties and overall discomfort with the RTA Motor Registry environment, it was not surprising that many expressed a **lack of confidence in their ability to pass the test** and/or a **lack of confidence to ask for help** within an RTA Motor Registry. To that end, we found very few were aware of the types of assistance they could ask for, particularly for the testing of those with literacy difficulties. Interestingly, one of the Aboriginal Liaison Officers mentioned that he had run sessions with young Aboriginal people and that they were able to pass the test in these sessions, but would fail whenever they took the test in an RTA Motor Registry.

This lack of confidence in their ability to pass the required test simply added to their pessimism about their ability to ever get a licence, which in turn further reinforced their belief that the only option was to drive without a licence.

Most communities were therefore **looking for** some kind of **help to aid them in obtaining a driver's licence**. In essence they were looking for services and help to guide them through the handbook in a visual and oral sense, thus overcoming their literacy difficulties. Many also suggested that young Aboriginal people, young males in particular, were more likely to learn in an interactive group environment, where they could help and encourage each other, rather than if they were left to read the Road User's Handbook on their own. In fact, a number of groups referred to different services that had helped them in obtaining their licence, such as past school based programs, Youlo-e-ta who had run a course in Toronto, and a course that was run in Richmond (mentioned by Mt Druitt group participants).

As many expressed a degree of discomfort in regards to being in RTA Registries, there was also some **requests for more help for Aboriginal people within RTA Registries**. To that end, they would like to be able to deal directly with another Aboriginal person, or at least a dedicated Aboriginal customer service person, as is often the case with many other Government services with whom they have dealings.

“Having a black fella comin’ out would make it a lot easier and that and they explain it good” (Male, 52 years, Remote)

Other Minor Barriers

Aside from the two key barriers discussed above there were a small number of other barriers to Aboriginal people obtaining and maintaining a driver's licence:

- Some expressed a **reluctance to visit an RTA Motor Registry** because of its **location**. In smaller communities RTA Registries are often located in, or combined with other services, with the choice of some of these being viewed very negatively by many in the Aboriginal Community. For example, one community we spoke with had their RTA Motor Registry located in a bank, while another had their Motor Registry located in the local Police Station;
- The **'shame' of failure** was often mentioned in smaller communities where everyone seemed to know *"everyone else's business"*. Those with literacy problems also mentioned the shame and embarrassment of taking a test in a RTA Motor Registry as they felt it was very open and public. This shame factor was compounded if they asked for, or wanted to ask for, assistance from someone within the Motor Registry;
- **Driving infringements** were also a common reason for licence disqualification, with many having lost their licence for DUI and/or repeated speeding offences; and
- The **actions of others** were also a **cause of multiple infringements and disqualification**, with many group participants referring to **family members who had used their name** or another person's identity **when pulled over by the police**.

"Someone used my name in Walgett for a DUI and unlicensed driver offence. I have already been done for DUI in Broken Hill so it was my second offence, even though it wasn't me." (Male, 46 years, Remote)

Interestingly, there was **little evidence to suggest that their ability to supply official identification, such as a Birth Certificate, was a barrier** to those in the Aboriginal Community obtaining a licence. Most claimed they had a Birth Certificate and were used to satisfying the ‘100 point check’ that was required for other services, such as banks. Amongst most groups the only issue regarding Birth Certificates was in relation to the process of applying for one and the cost of doing so. To that end, Government service road-shows/visits, where a number of different Departments and organisations visit a town and set up stalls for a day, were thought to be very helpful for those wishing to obtain a new Birth Certificate, for instance.

One remote community did however, express difficulties with their ability to obtain Birth Certificates and, as such, were keen to be able to use some other form of identification for dealings with the RTA, such as a Confirmation of Aboriginality.

Interestingly, most other communities rejected the idea that a Confirmation of Aboriginality might be used in place of Birth Certificates. They felt they were often too easy to obtain, were an inaccurate reflection of Aboriginality, and could be open to abuse. There was also some suggestion that it could take too long to obtain one. In an overall sense, it therefore seemed that Confirmation of Aboriginality was often viewed as being quite “*political*” and therefore, not a solution to the community’s difficulties with identification when dealing with the RTA.

“We don’t need one [Certificate of Aboriginality]. Also, it could be used by people who aren’t accepted by the community [as being Aboriginal].” (Male, 26 years, Regional)

“If you’re getting’ your licence you want it there and then. Not in three months when the committee says ‘Oh yes, we agree you’re black’.” (Male, 34 years, Urban)

However, in small, more remote communities, where “*everyone knows each other*” Certification of Aboriginality was thought to be less political or open to abuse, and as such, a good alternative to a Birth Certificate when one was not available.

4.2.2 Current Licence Holders

While unlicensed driving was prevalent, we did have a number of current licence holders represented in the groups. These **licence holders** (including P-Plate holders) **shared a number of characteristics that enabled them to obtain and maintain their licence:**

- The **family and/or household placed a high value on a driver's licence**. As such, one or two other family members tended to have their licence;
- **Parents and carers provided a great deal of support** to those going through the licencing process to ensure that they firstly obtained, then secondly, maintained, their licence. To that end, they ensured there was help available throughout the licencing process, in terms of help with the RTA handbooks and information; help with testing; access to a suitable vehicle in which to learn; and in-car instruction. For current P-platers, access to a vehicle and licenced driver was crucial to their ability to fulfil the log book requirements, although some suggested the log book was easily manipulated. Interestingly, most of the P-plate holders in this study were female;
- Current licence holders tended to have **steady or consistent employment** (except perhaps some tertiary students), and in fact, maintaining a licence was often a requirement of their employment.

Employment and licencing was somewhat of an overlapping issue with those who had a licence often being the ones in employment, while those without a licence were often unable to get work, and as such, could not afford to get a licence. There were also stories of Aboriginal people who had lost their jobs as a result of losing their licence;

- **Some middle aged licence holders** suggested they simply “woke up” **and realised the importance of a licence and its impact on their family and lifestyle**. Again, having a licence was said to have improved their employment prospects; and

- Some **older licence holders suggested** that it was much **easier to get a licence when they got theirs**, particularly if it was obtained in a remote community many years ago.

4.3 Car Registration

Financial difficulty was also the key barrier to the registration of vehicles amongst the Aboriginal community as it affected their ability to afford repairs to vehicles, registration, and insurance (both CTP and car insurance).

Most vehicle owners in this study **had older model vehicles** and suggested they could not **register their vehicle** because it required **a large lump sum** that was well **beyond their means**. Those who did have a registered vehicle suggested that it was very very difficult to *“find the money at rego time each year”* again because of the large lump sum for:

- repairs and/or maintenance costs for their vehicle to pass inspection;
- the registration of the vehicle; and
- Compulsory Third Party insurance (CTP).

Interestingly, a number of group participants suggested that many first time car owners were often shocked at the costs involved in vehicle registration. Whether they were saving money, or organising finance, to purchase a vehicle most simply thought about the purchase price, rather than the on-going costs and were often surprised by the costs involved in registration and CTP. It was therefore not uncommon for new vehicle owners to let their registration lapse within a year or two of having first acquired it.

Many group participants **suggested** that **once their vehicle registration lapsed it was unlikely to be reregistered**, unless their financial circumstances changed dramatically. As mentioned, they struggled to afford registration costs from one year to the next, so the costs involved in re-registering a vehicle were considered well beyond them, particularly as the process involved a more thorough inspection of the vehicle and therefore a long list of things that needed to be repaired. Most therefore considered it important to do all they could to maintain their registration if possible.

A number of group **participants** therefore called for the RTA to make changes that would **allow the costs of registration to be spread over a longer period**, either by allowing for a **shorter registration period** (eg: three – six months), or some form of **direct debit system**.

“In Victoria and Canberra you can register for 3 months. Here you have to register for 12 months. It’s too much.”
(Male, 18 years, Regional)

“Cause so many of the mob here are on Centrelink there should be a direct debit plan to help people keep their car rego’d.” (Male, 57 years, Remote)

As these basic expenses of car registration were beyond many, it was not surprising that car insurance such as comprehensive car insurance or third party property damage were never spontaneously mentioned. To that end, **car insurance per se was virtually non-existent**, even amongst those who had financed the purchase of a more expensive or later model vehicle.

“The finance people call me and say ‘the car’s not insured, you have to get it insured’. I can’t afford to insure my car. It must be about \$2000 every year to register and insure a car. I haven’t got that kind of money.” (Male, 40 years, Regional)

“My son smashed two of my cars up and they weren’t insured, so we learnt the hard way. I just won’t let him drive my car anymore.” (Male, 35 years, Regional)

To some extent the **lack of car insurance is reinforcing the community’s acceptance of unlicensed driving**, as owners of uninsured vehicles do not have any concerns (from an insurance point of view) about being unlicensed or allowing unlicensed drivers to use their car.

In an overall sense, the registration process was considered quite simple and straightforward. Even those with literacy difficulties suggested that they could always find someone in the community to help them if need be.

“Everyone’s got a cousin who can tell you what to do.”
(Female, 22 years, Regional)

4.4 Perceptions of RTA Materials, the RTA and NSW Police

In the last 15 minutes or so of each group discussion session, group participants were asked to discuss their perceptions of the RTA and NSW Police and to review a number of different RTA materials, namely:

- the Road User’s Handbook;
- the ‘How to prove who your are to the RTA’ pamphlet; and
- materials from the ‘Bring the Mob Home Safely’ campaign.

4.4.1 Reactions to Mainstream Materials

As mentioned previously, many study participants mentioned their own or others’ literacy difficulties. It was therefore not surprising that **reactions to the Road User’s Handbook and the ‘How to prove who your are to the RTA’ pamphlet were overwhelmingly negative.**

In an overall sense, these materials were seen as very text/information heavy and *“too wordy”*. Most therefore saw them as rather daunting and something that would be somewhat *“hard work” to read and comprehend.*

However, those currently on their P’s felt the Road User’s Handbook had been a useful, but long read, although they were quick to add that it was something that they had to read to get their licence. Similarly, a small number of younger people who hoped to get their licence one day also suggested that it looked as though it would be quite helpful, although again they mentioned it looked long and was something they would need to read in order to pass the test. It should be noted that both these sets of participants seemed more comfortable with written materials than many other study participants.

Again, **the majority of group participants expressed a preference for an oral or personal presentation of the Road User’s Handbook** to simply reading it on their own. They did not feel comfortable reading that much information and would rather a friend, relative, RTA staff member, instructor, etc, take the time to go through it and ensure they understood it.

4.4.2 Reactions to ‘Bring the Mob Home Safely’ Campaign Materials

Reactions to these campaign materials were overwhelmingly positive. In an overall sense, study participants **liked the look and feel** of these materials, and in particular, that they targeted and **represented the Aboriginal community**.

“I’d look at this. It’s our own mob, you know?” (Male, 32 years, Regional)

“...better, ‘cause it’s more relevant and more to the point.” (Female, 25 years, Regional)

“Any Koori would pick them up at the RTA.” (Male, 25 years, Remote)

“It’s great having black faces in ads.” (Female, 43 years, Remote)

“This is more like it. It’s talking to me like.” (Male, 19 years, Regional)

Interestingly, a number of group participants recognised many of the Aboriginal people featured in the materials, which enhanced reactions to the campaign. This recognition was not restricted to those groups in and around the area in which the people featured in the materials lived, but was relatively widespread, reflecting the degree of connectedness of the Aboriginal community throughout NSW. However, there was some comment that perhaps the way in which these people were pictured or portrayed was somewhat unrealistic and a little “*too flash*”.

“I really like this, it was done here you know.” (Female, 42 years, Regional)

“They look like they’re going to church.” (Female, 43 years, Remote)

The **‘Drink and Don’t Drive’ pamphlet was positively received** for a number of reasons:

- it was **based around sport** (football) which therefore grabbed study participants’ attention;
- it had a **good mix of photos, headings and main body text** and as such did not feel, or appear, ‘too wordy’;
- the pamphlet itself was very **relevant** as it centred around the notion of **a sporting event or a group outing/party**.

While reactions to the materials were generally positive, familiarity with them was quite low, and some of the pamphlets were considered too text heavy or “too wordy”, again making them seem a little daunting to those with literacy difficulties.

“Why am I seeing this in the AMS? It should be up at the RTA.” (Female, 42 years, Urban)

4.4.3 Perceptions of the RTA

Perceptions of the RTA and RTA staff were generally quite positive, and in fact, were far more positive than perceptions of other Government Agencies or services.

RTA staff were often described as:

- helpful;
- willing to help with testing issues and problems, with a number of participants providing stories of staff who were very patient with learners or those with literacy difficulties;
- happy to answer questions; and
- generally treating Aboriginal people with respect.

In smaller communities a number of study participants suggested they had got to know some of the RTA staff individually. This was thought to be a very positive thing as it helped alleviate some of the anxiety and discomfort many felt when inside a Motor Registry. Importantly, those who felt they knew RTA staff would often accompany other community members to the Motor Registry, particularly younger people who were going for a test.

There were very few reports of bad experiences with RTA staff, although one young male (Urban) suggested that after failing the Learner's test, the staff member said to him "*well that was a waste of time wasn't it*". He then replied aggressively before being asked to leave the Motor Registry.

While overall perceptions of the RTA and RTA staff were quite positive, the RTA was not viewed as a Government Agency that has gone to any extra effort to genuinely help the Aboriginal community with licencing or registration. This perception was driven by a number of factors:

- RTA materials such as the Road User's Handbook were generally seen as very text and information heavy, and therefore not designed for those with literacy difficulties;
- there was little awareness of the type of assistance available to those with literacy difficulties;
- the graduated licencing system was viewed as making it extremely difficult for Aboriginal people to obtain a licence; and
- the Aboriginal Program Advisors & Liaison Officers were not well known amongst study participants, although the concept was viewed very positively. As mentioned, the communities are keen to get help with licencing and ideally would like some point of contact in Registries.

4.4.4 Perceptions of NSW Police

Perceptions of the police were not as nearly as positive as those of the RTA. In an overall sense, **most study participants had a negative view of the NSW Police as a whole.**

“The cops’ll just go ya for no reason ‘round here. Even when I stopped [stealing cars], they just hound ya.” (Male, 17 years, Urban)

“When I was in Menindee, they tried to do me unlicenced when I was sitting in the car, even though the keys weren’t even in the ignition. They always harass people, especially them highway patrol.” (Male, 52 years, Remote)

However, juxtaposed to this overall negative view were numerous positive stories, such as those in Section 4.1.3 of this report, where local police had turned a blind eye to unlicenced driving (under certain circumstances). There was even one very old story of a local policeman having given an Aboriginal man his licence.

“My cousin was told by the police to jump into the car and the copper told him to drive here and there. After this he thought he’d get a fine but the police officer gave him a licence and said ‘Get out. I don’t want to see you driving without a licence anymore’.” (Male, 18 years, regional)

5. Quantitative Findings

5.1 Driving & Licencing

5.1.1 Licence Holding

While the proportion of current licence holders, past licence holders and those who have never held a licence was determined via our quota system, there was some variation in licence holding according to age and gender (Table 1). Respondents aged 45 years and over (60%) were more likely than those aged 16-17 years (37%) and those aged 18-24 years (42%) to currently hold a licence (current holders), while all of those aged 18 years and over were more likely to be past licence holders (past holders) than those aged 16-17 years. Further, 16-17 year olds (63%) were most likely to have never held a licence ('never held'), while both 18-24 year olds (43%) and 25-44 year olds (36%) were more likely to have never held a licence than those aged 45 years and over (16%).

In terms of gender, females were more likely to be current holders (54% vs 38% of males), while males were more likely to be past holders (23% vs 13% of females).

Table 1: Licence Holding by Age & Gender

Licence Holding	Total A %	16-17 yrs B %	18-24 yrs C %	25-44 yrs E %	45 + yrs F %	Male G %	Female H %
Current Holder	46	37	42	45	60 ^{BC}	38	54 ^G
Past Holder	18	-	15 ^B	19 ^B	24 ^B	23 ^H	13
Never Held	36	63 ^{EF}	43 ^F	36 ^F	16	39	34
BASE: All Respondents	300	30*	67*	140	62*	142	158

*CAUTION: Small Bases

Licence holding by location reveals that those in regional locations (62%) were more likely to be current holders than both those in urban (38%) and remote (30%) locations. Conversely, those in urban (44%) and remote (50%) locations were more likely than those in regional locations (22%) to have never held a licence, as can be seen in Table 2 over the page.

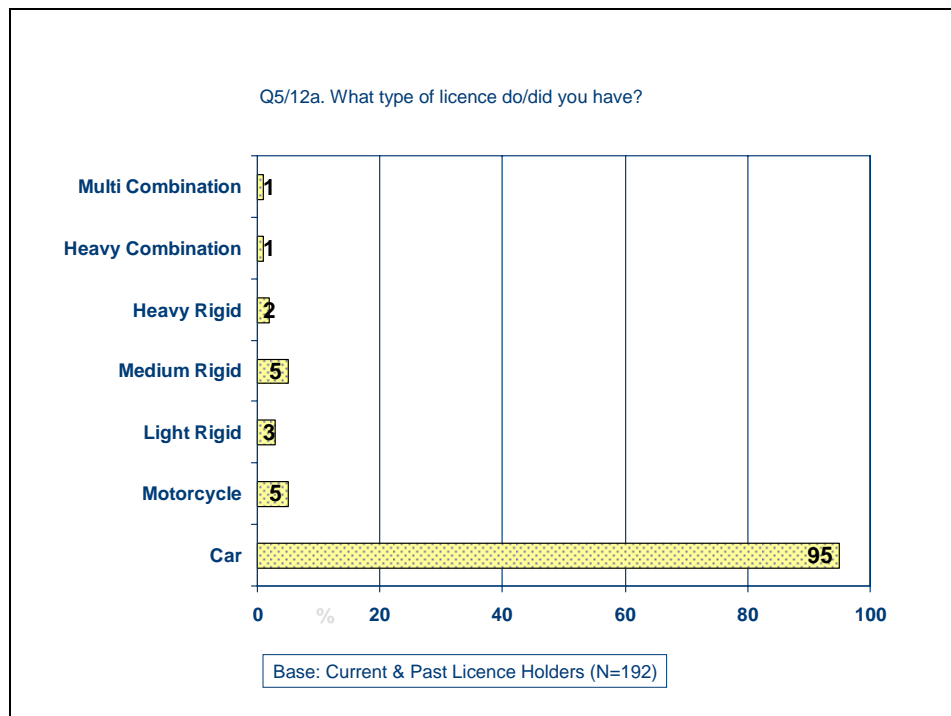
Table 2: Licence Holding by Location

Licence Holding	Total A %	Urban W %	Regional X %	Remote Y %
Current Holder	46	38	62 ^{WY}	30
Past Holder	18	18	16	20
Never Held	36	44 ^X	22	50 ^X
BASE: All Respondents	300	68*	136	96

*CAUTION: Small Bases

As Figure 1 below shows, the majority of licence holders (current and past) had a car licence (95%), with 5% having a motorcycle licence, 5% a medium rigid licence, 3% a light rigid licence, 2% a heavy rigid licence, 1% a heavy combination, and 1% a multi combination licence. It should be noted that some respondents (11% of current and past holders) held multiple licences.

Figure 1: Category of Licence Held by Current & Past Licence Holders



The majority of licences held by respondents (current and past licence holders) were full licences (60%), with 18% having a learner licence, 15% a P1/Red licence, and 8% a P2/Green licence (Table 3 over the page). Interestingly, three in ten past holders (30%) held a learner licence, whereas only 13% of current holders had a learner licence.

Table 3: Type of Licence Held by Current & Past Licence Holders

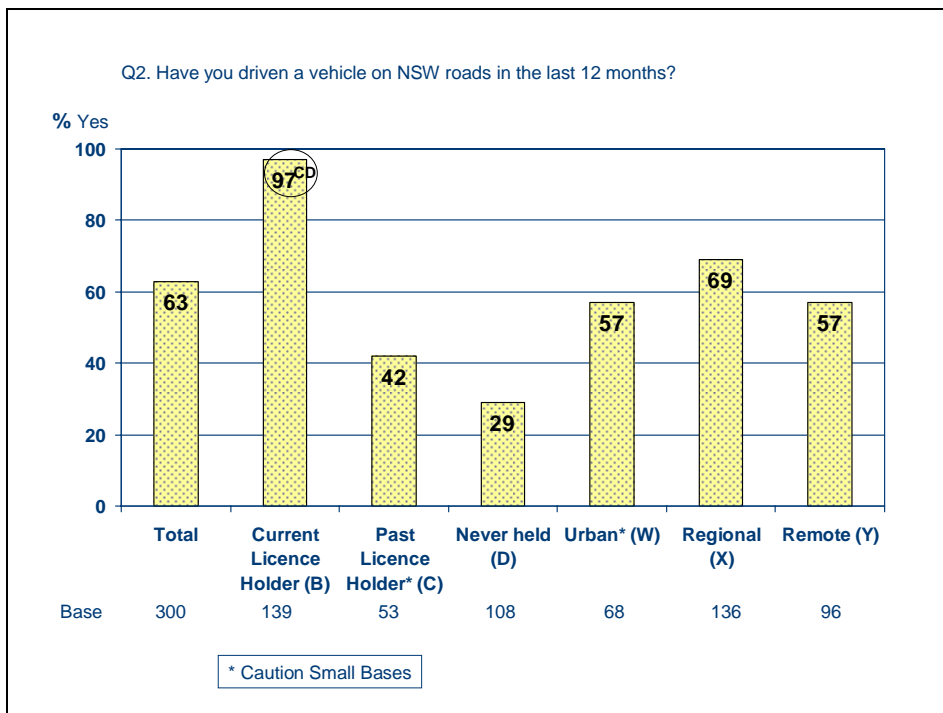
Licence Type	Total A %	Current Holder B %	Past Holder C %
Learner	18	13	30 ^B
P1/Red	15	15	15
P2/Green	8	11	-
Full Licence	60	63	53
BASE: Current & Past Licence Holders[^]	192	139	53*

[^] Some respondents held multiple licences *CAUTION: Small Bases

5.1.2 Driving Behaviour

As Figure 2 shows, 63% of the total sample indicated that they had driven on NSW roads in the past 12 months. More importantly, **there is an issue with unlicensed driving amongst the Aboriginal community as almost three in ten (29%) of those without a licence had driven on NSW roads in the past 12 months.** In an overall sense, current holders (97%) were more likely than both past holders (42%) and those who've never held a licence (29%) to have driven on NSW roads in the past 12 months.

Figure 2: Incidence of Driving by Licence Holding & Location



In an overall sense (or total sample sense), four in ten respondents (40%) were driving ‘every day’, 8% were driving ‘every 2-3 days’, 3% were ‘driving weekly’, 4% ‘every 2-3 weeks’, 7% were driving ‘one a month or less often’, and 37% had not driven in the last 12 months (Table 4). The key differences according to age and gender were as follows:

- those aged 45 years and over (52%) were more likely than 16-17 year olds (13%) and 18-24 year olds (34%) to drive ‘everyday’;
- 25-44 year olds (44%) and 18-24 year olds (34%) were also more likely than 16-17 year olds (13%) to drive ‘everyday’;
- 18-24 year olds (21%) were more likely than 25-44 year olds (4%) and 45+ year olds (2%) to drive ‘once a month or less’; and
- males (6%) were more likely than females (1%) to drive ‘once every 2-3 weeks’.

Table 4: Frequency of Driving by Age & Gender

Frequency of Driving	Total A %	16-17yrs B %	18-24 yrs C %	25-44 yrs E %	45+ yrs F %	Male G %	Femal e H %
Everyday	40	13	34 ^B	44 ^B	52 ^{BC}	39	41
Every 2-3 days	8	10	6	9	8	6	10
Once a week	3	7	3	3	2	1	4
Once every 2-3 weeks	4	10	2	4	2	6 ^H	1
Once a month or less	7	7	21 ^{EF}	4	2	11	4
Not driven in last 12 months	37	53	33	36	36	36	39
BASE: All Respondents	300	30*	67*	140	62*	142	158

*CAUTION: Small Bases

Table 5 (over the page) shows that respondents in regional areas (50%) were more likely than those in both urban (29%) and remote (33%) locations to drive ‘everyday’, while those in remote locations (9%) were more likely to drive ‘every 2-3 weeks’.

Table 5: Frequency of Driving by Location

Frequency of Driving	Total A %	Urban W %	Regional X %	Remote Y %
Everyday	40	29	50 ^{WY}	33
Every 2-3 days	8	9	9	6
Once a week	3	4	2	3
Once every 2-3 weeks	4	-	2	9 ^{XW}
Once a month or less	7	12	7	5
Not Driven in last 12 months	37	43	31	43
BASE: All Respondents	300	68*	136	96*

*CAUTION: Small Bases

As might be expected, current holders (74%) were most likely to be driving ‘everyday’, while past holders (19%) were, in turn, more likely to drive ‘every day’ than those who’ve never held a licence (7%). Current holders (12%) were also more likely to drive ‘every 2-3 days’ than those who have never held a licence (3%), while the ‘never held’s’ were most likely to drive ‘every 2-3 weeks’ (8%), as can be seen in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Frequency of Driving by Licence Holding

Frequency of Driving	Total A %	Current Holder B %	Past Holder C %	Never Held D %
Everyday	40	74 ^{CD}	19 ^D	7
Every 2-3 days	8	12 ^D	9	3
Once a week	3	5	-	2
Once Every 2-3 weeks	4	1	-	8 ^{BC}
Once a month or less	7	4	13	7
Not Driven in last 12 months	37	3	59 ^B	71 ^B
BASE: All Respondents	300	139	53*	108

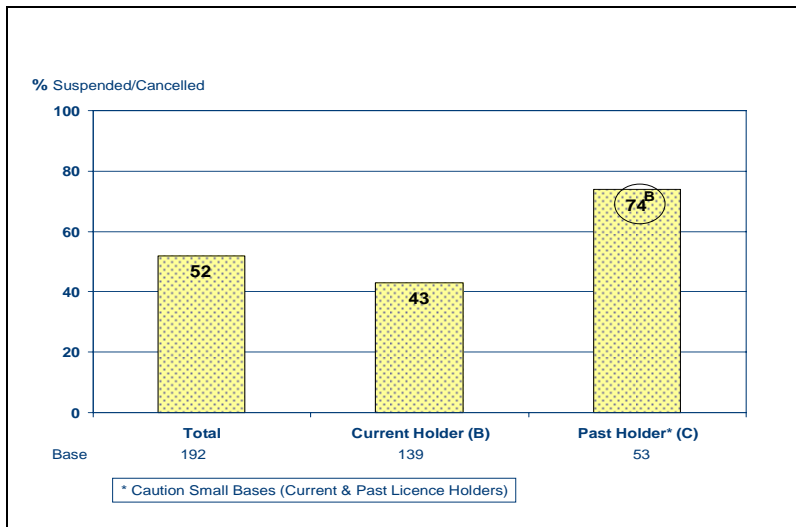
*CAUTION: Small Bases

5.1.3 Licence Suspension & Cancellation

A little over half (52%) of all licence holders (current and past) indicated that their licence had been suspended and/or cancelled at some point in the past. As shown in Figure 3 (over the page), past holders (74%) were more likely than current holders (43%) to have had their licence suspended or cancelled.

There were no differences according to age, gender or location in regards to licence suspension/cancellation.

Figure 3: Licence Suspension/Cancellation by Licence Holding



The main reasons for licence suspension/cancellation were “unpaid RTA/traffic fines” (31%), “outstanding debt with SDRO” (28%), “DUI offence” (26%), and “demerit points” (12%). As shown in Table 7 below, those in urban locations (50%) were more likely than those in remote locations (17%) to have been affected by “outstanding debt with SDRO”; remote respondents were most likely to be affected by a “DUI offence” (48%); and urban based respondents (30%) were most likely to have had their licence suspended/cancelled because of “demerit points”.

Table 7: Reason for Licence Suspension/Cancellation by Location

Reason for Suspension/Cancellation	Total A %	Urban W %	Regional X %	Remote Y %
Unpaid RTA/traffic fines	31	30	34	28
Outstanding debt with SDRO	28	50 ^Y	26	17
DUI offence	26	10	20	48 ^{WX}
Demerit points	12	30 ^{XY}	8	7
police suspension	4	5	6	-
Driving unregistered car	4	5	4	3
Speeding	2	-	2	3
Learner driver without licenced driver	2	-	4	-
Medical/health problems	1	-	2	-
Other	5	-	4	10
Refused	2	-	4	-
BASE: Current & Past Licence Holders	99	20*	50*	29*

*CAUTION: Small Bases

In terms of licence holding the key difference was that past holders (39%) were more likely than current holders (18%) to have had their licence suspended/cancelled because of a “DUI offence”.

Past licence holders were also asked how many times their licence had been suspended or cancelled. In an overall sense, 29% had not had their licence cancelled or suspended, 47% had lost their licence once, 9% had lost it twice, and the remaining 12% had lost it 3 or more times (6% refused to answer the question).

5.1.4 Licence Non-Renewal

Three in ten (30%) past holders indicated they had decided not to renew their licence. As shown in Table 8, **the main reasons for non-renewal were those of “health problems” (31%), not wanting or needing to renew (19%), and being unable to “afford it” (19%).**

Table 8: Reason for Not Renewing Licence

Reason For Non-Renewal	Total %
Health Problems	31
Didn't Want/Need to Renew	19
Couldn't Afford it	19
Too Old	6
Applied for Victorian Licence Instead	6
Other	31
BASE: Past Holders who did not renew their licence	16*

*CAUTION: Small Base

5.1.5 Learning to Drive

When current licence holders were asked about the types of **problems they experienced whilst learning to drive, the key issues that arose were access to licenced drivers and registered vehicles, and capacity to pay/afford to learn to drive.** As can be seen in Table 9 (over the page), the most common problems experienced as learner drivers were:

- ‘the licenced driver helping often didn't have time to help me go driving’ (33%);

- ‘sometimes I couldn’t find a licenced driver to teach/help me’ (27%); and
- ‘I couldn’t afford a driving instructor’ (23%).

Other common issues included being unable to ‘afford the petrol money to go driving’ (16%), difficulty achieving the ‘120 hours driving for my log book’ (15%), ‘problems finding a registered car to learn in’ (14%), and ‘the car owners I knew would not let me learn in their car’ (11%).

The key differences according to age in terms of issues that current licence holders faced when learning to drive were as follows:

- 16-24 year olds and 25-44 year olds were more likely than those aged 45 years and over to have had a licenced driver who ‘didn’t have time to help’ them (49%, 35% and 14% respectively) and to have found it ‘difficult to do 120 hours driving’ for their log book (26%, 16%, and 3% respectively);
- 16-24 year olds (39%) were more likely than those aged 45 years and over (14%) to have had trouble finding ‘a licenced driver to teach/help’ them; and
- those aged 45 years and over (70%) were more likely than both 25-44 year olds (44%) and 16-17 year olds (8%) to not have experienced any problems when learning to drive. The difference between 25-44 year olds and 16-17 year olds was also significant.

There were no significant differences according to gender.

Table 9: Problems Experienced When Learning to Drive by Age & Gender

Problems Experienced when Learning	Total A %	16-24 yrs D %	25-44 yrs E %	45+ yrs F %	Male G %	Female H %
The licenced driver helping often didn't have time to help me go driving	33	49 ^F	35 ^F	14	28	37
Sometimes I couldn't find a licenced driver to teach/help me	27	39 ^F	27	14	33	22
I couldn't afford a driving instructor	23	23	27	16	24	22
Sometimes I couldn't afford the petrol money to go driving as a learner	16	23	14	11	11	19
I found it very difficult to do 120 hours driving for my log book	15	26 ^F	16 ^F	3	17	14
Sometimes I had problems finding a registered car to learn in	14	18	14	8	11	15
The car owners I knew would not let me learn in their car	11	10	11	11	9	12
Sometimes the licenced driver who was helping me had been drinking so we couldn't go driving	7	5	8	8	6	8
No access to car (NFI)	3	3	3	3	7	-
Lack of driving instructors in local area	2	5	2	-	2	2
Cost of re-sitting test after failing	1	3	-	-	-	1
Other	4	5	2	5	4	4
None	41	8	44 ^D	70 ^{DE}	39	42
BASE: Current Licence Holders	139	39*	63*	37*	54*	85*

*CAUTION: Small Bases

In an overall sense, current licence holders in urban areas were less likely to have experienced problems when learning to drive than were those in regional locations, with 69% of those in urban areas suggesting they had no problems versus 31% of those in regional areas. Further, both those in regional (38%) and remote (38%) locations were more likely to have problems with the licenced driver helping them having the time to do so (12% in urban locations), while those in regional locations were more likely to be unable to 'afford a driving instructor' (31%) than those in urban (12%) and remote (10%) locations (Table 10 – over the page).

Table 10: Problems Experienced When Learning to Drive by Location

Problems Experienced when Learning	Total A %	Urban W %	Regional X %	Remote Y %
The licenced driver helping often didn't have time to help me go driving	33	12	38 ^W	38 ^W
Sometimes I couldn't find a licenced driver to teach/help me	27	23	29	24
I couldn't afford a driving instructor	23	12	31 ^{WY}	10
Sometimes I couldn't afford the petrol money to go driving as a learner	16	8	20	20
I found it very difficult to do 120 hours driving for my log book	15	15	16	14
Sometimes I had problems finding a registered car to learn in	14	12	18 ^Y	3
The car owners I knew would not let me learn in their car	11	8	16	-
Sometimes the licenced driver who was helping me had been drinking so we couldn't go driving	7	-	11	3
No access to car (NFI)	3	-	2	7
Lack of driving instructors in local area	2	4	-	7
Cost of re-sitting test after failing	1	-	1	-
Other	4	-	6	-
None	41	69 ^X	31	45
BASE: Current Licence Holders	139	26*	84*	29*

*CAUTION: Small Bases

When current licence holders were asked whether they had ever helped a learner driver obtain some or all of the 120 hours driving required for their log book, 42% suggested they had. Whilst there were no significant difference according to gender or location, Table 11 shows that as might be expected, those aged 45 years and over (65%) and those aged 25-44 years (52%) were more likely than 16-24 year olds (3%) to have helped a learner achieve some of their required 120 hours driving.

Table 11: Helped Learner Driver Obtain 120 Hours by Age & Gender

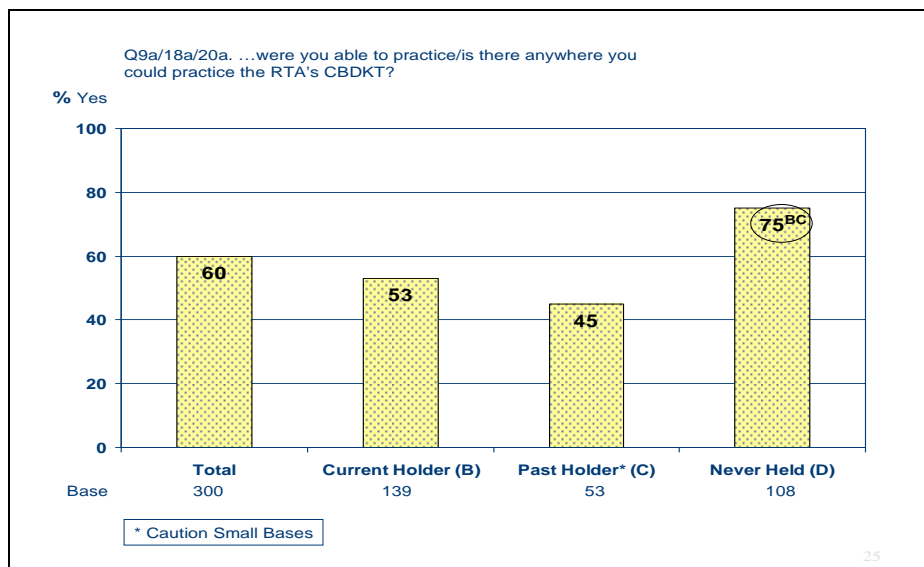
Helped a Learner with 120 Hours	Total A %	16-24 yrs D %	25-44 yrs E %	45+ yrs F %	Male G %	Female H %
Yes	42	3	52 ^D	65 ^D	37	45
No	55	97 ^{EF}	46	27	61	52
BASE: Current Holders	139	39*	63*	37*	54*	85*

*CAUTION: Small Bases

Access to the Computer Based Driver Knowledge Test (CBDKT)

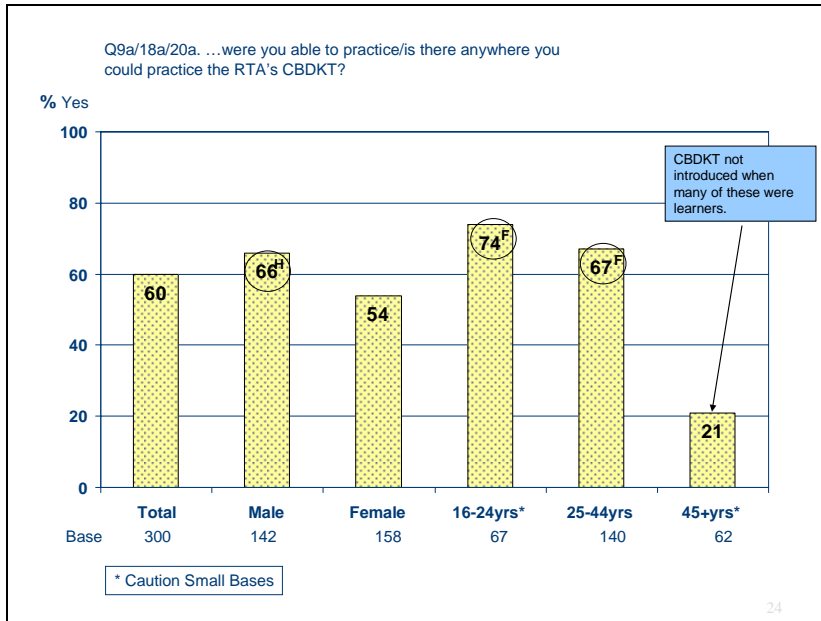
All respondents were also asked about their access to the CBDKT. Current and past licence holders were asked if they were able to practice on the CBDKT while those who had never held a licence were asked if there was anywhere they could practice on the CBDKT. As Figure 4 below demonstrates, **60% of all respondents indicated they had access to the CBDKT**, with 75% of ‘never held’s’ believing they would be able to practice on the CBDKT, whereas around half of current (53%) and past (45%) licence holders actually practiced on the CBDKT.

Figure 4: Access to the CDKT to Practice by Licence Holding



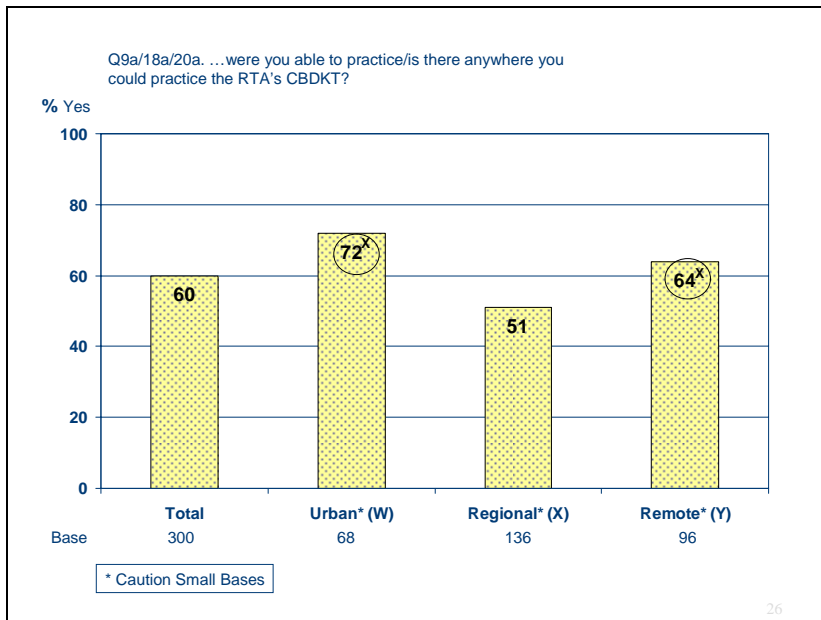
Whilst current and past holders were less likely to have accessed the CBDKT, it is important to note that in part these two groups included a **number of older licence holders who had not used the CBDKT as it was not available when they were applying for their learners permit**. To that end, Figure 5 (over the page) shows that access to/use of the CBDKT differed dramatically with age. Both 16-24 year olds (74%) and 25-44 year olds (67%) were more likely than those aged 45 years and over (21%) to have used or suggest they had access to the CBDKT. Males (66%) were also more likely than females (54%) to have to have used or believe they had access to the CBDKT.

Figure 5: Access to the CBDKT to Practice by Age & Gender



Interestingly, both urban based respondents (72%) and those in remote (64%) locations were more likely than those in regional locations (51%) to have used or believe they have access to the CBDKT, as shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Access to CBDKT to Practice by Location



The most common sites at which the CBDKT was or could be accessed by respondents were an “RTA branch” (40%), followed by the “Land Council (11%), a “Local Job Network Centre” (10%), “home” (10%), and an “Aboriginal Community Centre/Training Centre” (9%) as detailed in Table 12 (over the page).

Table 12 also shows that the key differences according to location were as follows:

- regional based respondents were more likely than those in remote locations to access the CBDKT via an “RTA branch” (57% and 31% respectively) or a “library” (12% and 2% respectively);
- those in remote locations (28%) were more likely than those in urban (4%) and regional (1%) locations to have access via the “Land Council” (28%); and
- urban based respondents were more likely than those in remote locations to have access via “home” (18% and 3% respectively) or an “Aboriginal Community Centre/Training Centre” (18% and 3% respectively).

Table 12: Points of Access to CBDKT by Location

Where Did/Would You Practice on CBDKT	Total A %	Urban W %	Regional X %	Remote Y %
RTA Branch or Office	44	43	57 ^Y	31
Land Council	11	4	1	28 ^{WX}
Local Job Network Centre	10	6	12	10
Home	10	18 ^Y	9	3
Aboriginal Community Centre/Training Centre	9	18 ^Y	7	3
Library	6	4	12 ^Y	2
TAFE/School	6	4	7	5
Friends/relatives	3	4	-	5
Internet	2	2	3	-
Admin Office	1	-	-	3
AMS	1	4	-	-
Other	6	8	3	7
BASE: All Respondents with access to CBDKT	179	49*	69*	61*

*CAUTION: Small Bases

5.1.6 Likelihood to Try For a Licence

Both **past licence holders and those who have never held a licence** were asked how likely they would be to try for a licence (or in the case of past holders, another licence). As shown in Table 13 (over the page), just under **four in ten (39%) said they were ‘very likely’, 24% were ‘likely’,** 11% were unsure, 8 ‘unlikely’, and 13% said they were ‘very unlikely’ to try for a licence. An additional 1% said their licence would be automatically returned to them.

Whilst there were no differences according to gender or licence holding, there were some key differences according to age:

- 16-24 year olds (48%) were more likely than those aged 45 years and over (24%) to say they were ‘very likely’ to try for a licence;
- 25-44 year olds (18%) were more likely to be ‘unsure’; and
- those aged 45 years and over (48%) were more likely to be ‘very unlikely’ to try for another licence.

Table 13: Likelihood to Try For a Licence by Age & Gender

Likelihood to Try for Licence	Total A %	16-24 yrs D %	25-44 yrs E %	45+ yrs F %	Male G %	Female H %
Very Likely	39	48 ^F	36	24	42	34
Likely	24	24	27	16	27	21
Unsure	11	5	18 ^{DF}	-	8	15
Unlikely	8	10	7	8	7	10
Very Unlikely	13	5	8	48 ^{DE}	11	15
Licence Return Automatic	1	-	1	-	-	1
BASE: Past Licence Holders & Never Held a Licence	161	58*	77*	15*	88*	73*

*CAUTION: Small Bases

Interestingly, those in regional (50%) and urban (48%) locations were more likely than those in remote locations to be ‘very likely’ to try for a licence, while those in remote locations were more likely (16%) to say they were ‘unlikely’ to try for a licence (Table 14).

Table 14: Likelihood to Try For a Licence by Location

Likelihood to Try for Licence	Total A %	Urban W %	Regional X %	Remote Y %
Very Likely	39	48 ^Y	50 ^Y	24
Likely	24	29	21	24
Unsure	11	10	8	15
Unlikely	8	2	2	16 ^{WX}
Very Unlikely	13	10	17	12
Licence Return Automatic	1	2	-	-
BASE: Past Licence Holders & Never Held a Licence	161	42*	52*	67*

*CAUTION: Small Bases

The main reasons for being unlikely to try for a licence were those of “SDRO debt” (25%), “health problems” (17%), being unable to “afford to get/maintain a licence” (15%), “too old” (12%), being “banned from driving for a long time” (10%), “reluctant to do test” (10%), “difficulty reading booklet” (8%), and “no access to registered vehicle” (8%), as shown in Table 15.

Interestingly, those in urban (44%) and regional (29%) locations were more likely than those in remote locations (3%) to be unlikely to try for a licence because of their health.

Table 15: Reason Unlikely to Try For Licence

Reason Unlikely to Try For Licence	Total A %	Urban W %	Regional X %	Remote Y %
Can't pay off SDRO debt	25	33	21	24
Health problems	17	44 ^Y	29 ^Y	3
Can't afford to get/maintain a licence	15	-	21	17
Too old	12	11	21	7
Banned from driving for a long time	10	11	7	10
Reluctant to do test	10	11	14	7
Difficulty reading booklet	8	11	7	7
No access to registered vehicle	8	33	7	-
Difficulty doing computer based test	6	11	-	7
Difficulty getting proof of identity	6	-	21	-
Have interstate licence	6	-	-	10
Graduated licencing scheme too hard to get through	2	11	-	-
No access to licenced driver to teach/help me	2	11	-	-
Shame	2	-	-	3
Difficulty accessing RTA office	2	-	-	3
Prefer to drink than drive	2	-	7	-
Paying fines/waiting for SDRO response	2	-	-	3
Can't Drive	2	-	-	3
Other	6	-	-	10
BASE: Past Licence Holders & Never Held a Licence	52*	9*	14*	29*

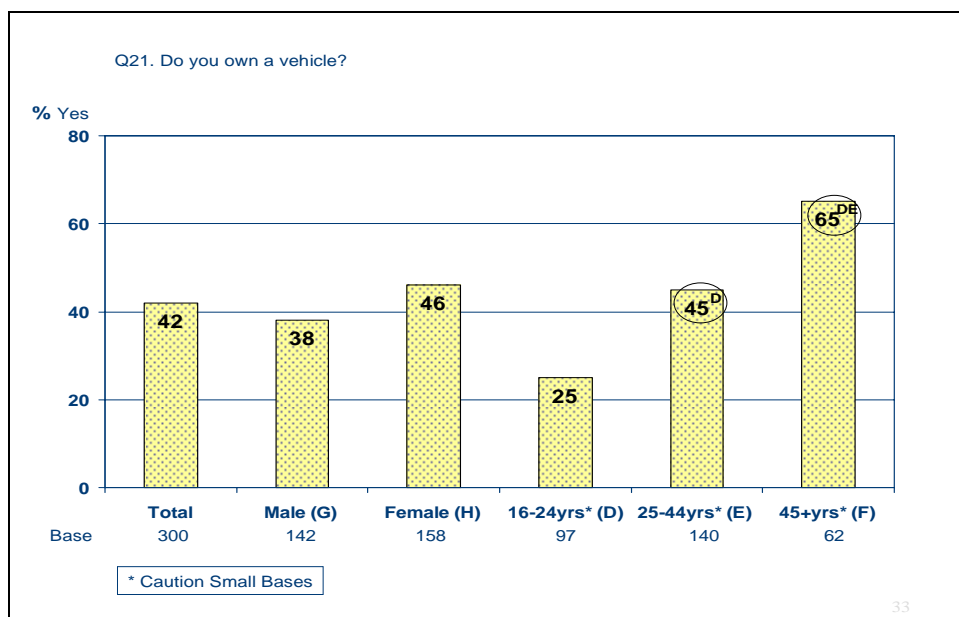
*CAUTION: Small Base

5.2 Vehicle Ownership & Registration

5.2.1 Vehicle Ownership

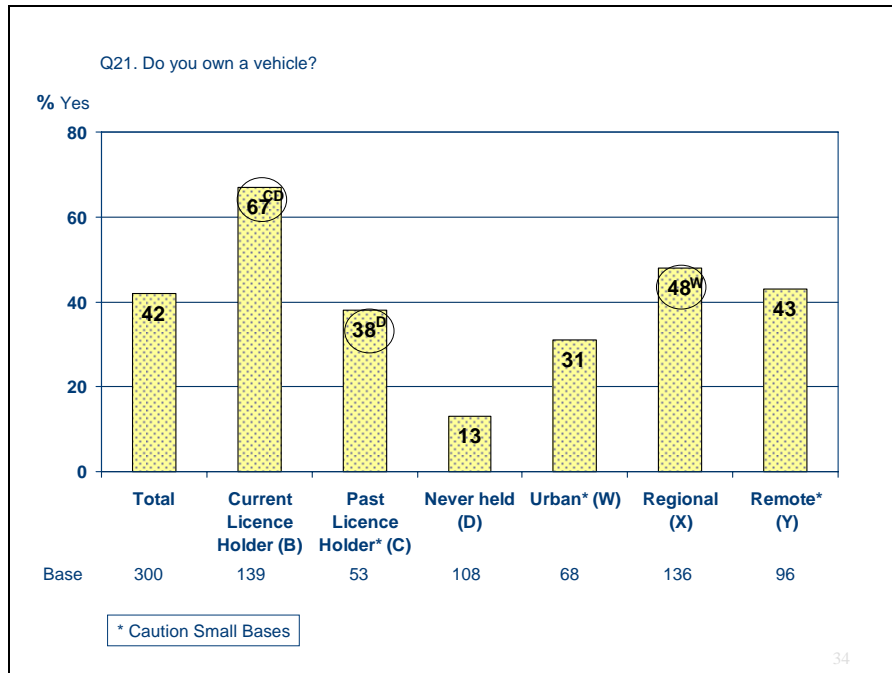
A little over **four in ten respondents (42%) owned a vehicle**, with those aged 45 years and over (65%) being more likely than 25-44 year olds (45%) and 16-24 year olds (25%) to own a vehicle (Figure 7). The difference between the 25-44 year olds and the 16-17 year olds was also significant.

Figure 7: Vehicle Ownership by Age & Gender



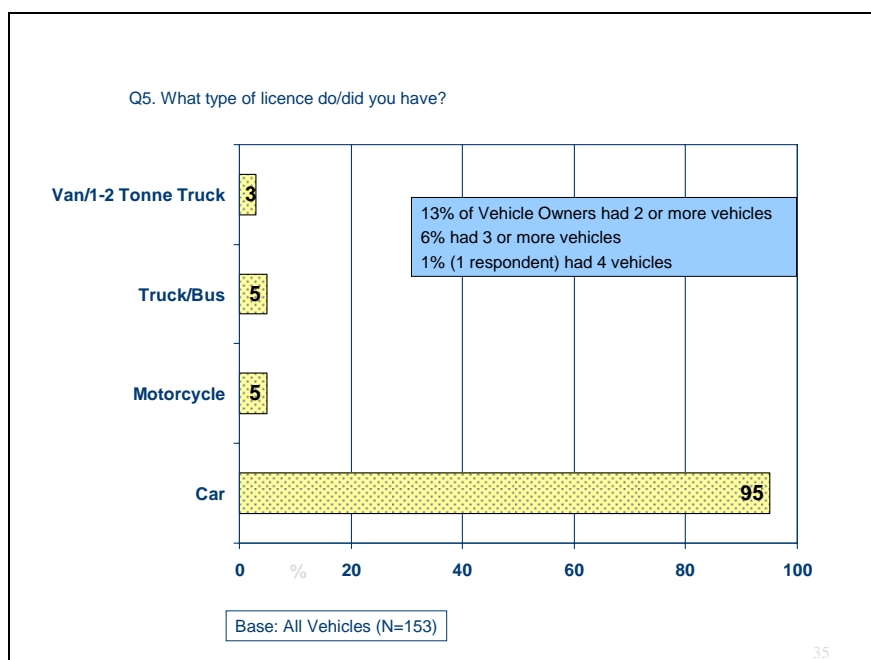
Current holders (67%) were more likely than past holders (38%) and those who have never held a licence (13%) to own a car, with the difference between past holders and the ‘never held’s’ also being significant. Respondents in regional locations (48%) were more likely than those in urban locations (31%) to own a vehicle, as can be seen in Figure 8 over the page.

Figure 8: Vehicle Ownership by Licence Holding & Location



Interestingly, **13% of vehicle owners (or 6% of the total sample) owned two or more vehicles**, 6% had three or more vehicles, and 1% (one respondent) owned four vehicles. In an overall sense, 95% of vehicles owned by respondents were cars, 5% were motorcycles, 5% were trucks/buses, and 3% of all the vehicles owned were vans/1-2 tonne trucks, as can be seen in Figure 9.

Figure 9: Types of Vehicles Owned



5.2.2 Vehicle Age

Vehicle owners were asked about the age of their vehicle, or in the case of those with multiple vehicles, the age of their main vehicle. As can be seen in Table 16, just under **four in ten owners (39%) had a vehicle more than 10 years old, one third (33%) had a vehicle that was 6-10 years old**, 14% had a vehicle 3-5 years old, and 13% had a vehicle that was less than 3 years old.

Males (54%) were more likely than females (29%) to own a vehicle more than 10 years old (Table 16). There was no significant difference according to respondent age.

Table 16: Vehicle Age by Age & Gender

Main Vehicle Age	Total A %	16-24 yrs D %	25-44 yrs E %	45+ yrs F %	Male G %	Female H %
Less than 3 years old	13	21	11	10	9	15
3-5 years old	14	8	16	15	11	16
6-10 years old	33	42	32	30	26	38
10+ years old	39	29	40	45	54 ^H	29
BASE: Vehicle Owners	127*	24*	63*	40*	54*	73*

*CAUTION: Small Bases

5.2.3 Vehicle Purchase & Maintenance

The most common methods for vehicle purchase were via a dealership (57%) and from a friend or relative (33%) as detailed in Table 17 (over the page). Others obtained their vehicle through the Newspaper/Trading Post (2%), work (2%), had it given to them (2%), or some 'other' method (2%).

Interestingly, females (67%) were more likely than males (43%) to purchase their vehicle from a dealership, whereas males (50%) were more likely than females (21%) to have obtained their vehicle from a friend or relative (Table 17). There were no significant differences according to age.

Table 17: Place of Vehicle Purchase by Age & Gender

Where Main Vehicle Obtained	Total A %	16-24 yrs D %	25-44 yrs E %	45+ yrs F %	Male G %	Female H %
Dealership	57	46	57	63	43	67 ^G
Friend/relative	33	42	32	30	50 ^H	21
Trading Post/Newspaper	2	8	2	-	2	3
Was given to me	2	-	5	-	4	1
Work	2	4	2	-	-	3
Other	2	-	3	3	2	3
BASE: Vehicle Owners	127*	24*	63*	40*	54*	73*

*CAUTION: Small Bases

Vehicle owners in urban locations (81%) were more likely than those in regional (55%) and remote (46%) locations to have purchased their vehicle from a dealership (Table 18). Those in remote locations (46%) were more likely than those in urban locations (19%) to have got their vehicle from a friend or relative.

Table 18: Place of Vehicle Purchase by Location

Where Main Vehicle Obtained	Total A %	Urban W %	Regional X %	Remote Y %
Dealership	57	81 ^{XY}	55	46
Friend/relative	33	19	29	46 ^W
Trading Post/Newspaper	2	-	2	5
Was given to me	2	-	3	2
Work	2	-	3	-
Other	2	-	5	-
BASE: Vehicle Owners	127*	21*	65*	41*

*CAUTION: Small Bases

Interestingly, current holders (65%) were more likely than past holders (25%) to have purchased their vehicle via a dealership, whereas past holders (60%) were more likely that current holders (26%) to have obtained their vehicle from a friend or relative (Table 19 – over the page).

Table 19: Place of Vehicle Purchase by Licence Holding

Where Main Vehicle Obtained	Total A %	Current Holder B %	Past Holder C %	Never Held D %
Dealership	57	65 ^C	25	50
Friend/relative	33	26	60 ^B	43
Trading Post/Newspaper	2	2	-	7
Was given to me	2	1	10	-
Work	2	2	-	-
Other	2	3	-	-
BASE: Vehicle Owners	127*	93*	20*	14*

*CAUTION: Small Bases

As can be seen in Table 20, seven in ten (70%) vehicle owners used a mechanic or repairer for their vehicle maintenance and repairs, just under a quarter (23%) used a friend or relative, whilst 15% suggested they did repairs themselves. Respondents were able to nominate more than one method of repair.

Interestingly, 16-24 year olds (38%) were more likely than those aged 45 years and over (15%) to have their vehicle repaired/maintained by a friend or relative. Females (80%) were more likely than males (57%) to use a mechanic/repairer, while males (30%) were more likely than females (4%) to do vehicle repairs/maintenance themselves, as can be seen in Table 20.

Table 20: How Vehicle is Repaired and Maintained by Age and Gender

Who repairs vehicle	Total A %	16-24 yrs D %	25-44 yrs E %	45+ yrs F %	Male G %	Female H %
Mechanic/Repairer	70	67	70	73	57	80 ^G
Friend/relative	23	38 ^F	22	15	28	19
Self	15	13	14	18	30 ^H	4
BASE: Vehicle Owners	127*	24*	63*	40*	54*	73*

*CAUTION: Small Bases

There were no significant differences according to location and licence holding.

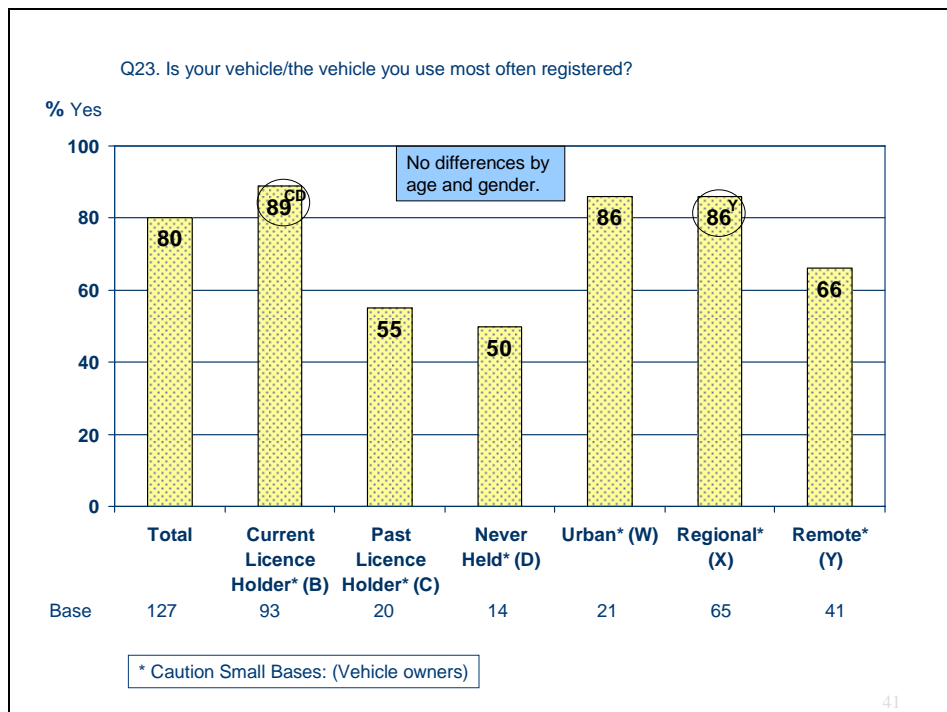
5.2.4 Vehicle Registration

Eight in ten owners (80%) indicated their vehicle (main vehicle) was registered in NSW, 1% (one respondent) said their vehicle was registered in another State, and 19% had an unregistered vehicle. As shown in Figure 10, those in regional locations (86%) were more likely than those in remote locations (66%) to have a registered vehicle.

Whilst there were no significant differences in vehicle registration according to age and gender, there were differences according to licence holding (Figure 10). **Current holders (89%) were more likely than past holders (55%) and those who have never held a licence (50%) to have a registered vehicle.**

Those with unregistered vehicles (24 respondents) were asked when their vehicle was last registered. Just under nine in ten (88%) said their vehicle was registered within the last 2 years, 8% 3-5 years ago, and 4% said their vehicle was registered 6-10 years ago.

Figure 10: Vehicle Registration by Licence Holding & Location



Of the unregistered vehicle owners (24 respondents), 50% were ‘very likely’ to get their vehicle registered, 17% ‘likely’, 8% were ‘unsure’, 17% were ‘unlikely’, and 8% were ‘very unlikely’ to register their vehicle. As shown in Table 21 below, there were a number of reasons for not being likely to register their vehicle, with debt and capacity to pay again being prominent.

Table 21: Reasons Owner Unlikely to Register Vehicle

Reason Unlikely to Register	No. of Respondents
Wouldn't pass inspection and can't afford repairs needed	2
Not worth repairing in order to pass inspection	2
Don't have a licence	2
Can't afford CTP	1
Outstanding fines/SDRO debt	1
Plan to sell the car/buy another	1
Other ¹¹	2
BASE: Owners Unlikely to Register Vehicle	8

5.3 Outstanding Debt with the State Debt Recovery Office

As shown in Table 22, **42% of respondents had outstanding debt with the State Debt Recovery Office (SDRO)**. Interestingly, 25-44 year olds (59%) were more likely than those aged 16-24 years (31%) and 45 years and over (24%) to have outstanding SDRO debt, whilst males (54%) were more likely than females (32%) to have outstanding SDRO debt.

Table 22: Outstanding Debt with State Debt Recovery Office by Age & Gender

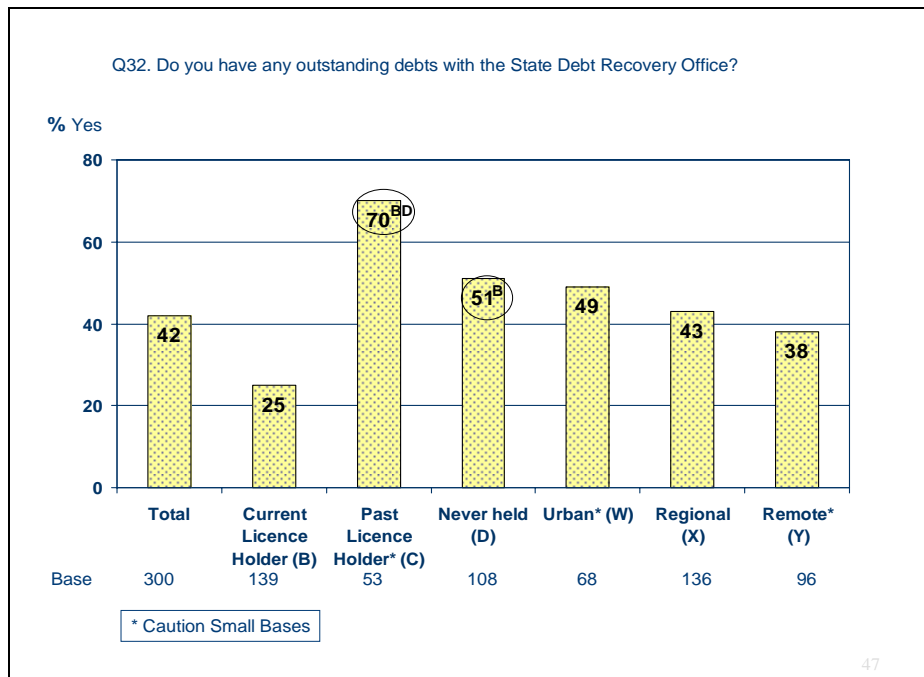
Outstanding SDRO Debt	Total A %	16-24 yrs D %	25-44 yrs E %	45+ yrs F %	Male G %	Female H %
Yes	42	31	59 ^{DF}	24	54 ^H	32
No	56	67 ^E	40	74 ^E	44	67 ^G
Refused	2	2	1	2	2	1
BASE: All Respondents	300	97*	140	62*	142	158

*CAUTION: Small Bases

¹¹ These ‘other’ responses were incongruous with the question and made little sense as answers. They were therefore left coded as ‘other’.

Whilst there were no differences according to location, debt was very different across the different licence holding categories. As can be seen in Figure 11, **past holders (70%) were more likely to have outstanding SDRO debt than both those who have never held a licence (51%) and current holders (25%)**. The difference between current holders and the ‘never held’s’ was also significant.

Figure 11: Outstanding Debt with State Debt Recovery Office by Licence Holding & Location



A little over four in ten (44%) of those with outstanding SDRO debt were paying that debt off, just under a third (32%) were in the process of applying for Time To Pay (TTP), 10% were previously paying off their debt but had not kept to the agreed payments, and 14% refused to answer the question (Table 23). Whilst there were no differences according to gender, 25-44 year olds (34%) were more likely than those aged 45 years and over (13%) to be in the process of applying for Time To Pay, as shown in Table 23 (over the page).

Table 23: Debt Payment by Age & Gender

Paying Debts Off	Total A %	16-24 yrs D %	25-44 yrs E %	45+ yrs F %	Male G %	Female H %
Yes	44	47	43	47	43	46
No, I was but didn't keep to agreed payments	10	7	11	13	12	8
No, but in process of applying for TTP	32	33	34 ^F	13	34	28
Refused	14	13	12	27	12	18
BASE: Respondents with SDRO Debt	127*	30*	82*	15*	77*	50*

*CAUTION: Small Bases

There were also some key differences in payment of debt according to licence holding, with **current holders (74%) being more likely than both past holders (43%) and those who have never held a licence (26%) to be paying off their debts.** Further, the 'never held's' (46%) and past holders (38%) were more likely than current holders (3%) to be in the process of applying for Time To Pay, as can be seen in Table 24.

Table 24: Debt Payment by Licence Holding

Paying Debts Off	Total A %	Current Holder B %	Past Holder C %	Never Held D %
Yes	44	74 ^{CD}	43	26
No, I was but didn't keep to agreed payments	10	3	14	13
No, but in process of applying for TTP	32	3	38 ^B	46 ^B
Refused	14	20	5	16
BASE: Respondents with SDRO Debt	127*	35*	37*	55*

*CAUTION: Small Bases

Whilst 32% of those with outstanding debt suggested they were in the process of applying for Time To Pay (TTP), the majority of these respondents (80%) had, in fact, not begun the process with the State Debt Recovery Office. As shown in Table 25 (over the page), the remainder had either applied for TTP over the phone (8%) or sent the form in (8%).

Table 25: Payment Plan Application

Completed Payment Plan Application	Total %
Over the phone	8
Sent the form in	8
No, about to start the process	80
BASE: Respondents in Process of Applying for TTP	40*

*CAUTION: Small Bases

5.4 Awareness & Perceptions of RTA Services

Respondents were asked a number of questions relating to RTA communication campaigns, Motor Registry service, and proof of identity.

5.4.1 Awareness of Proof of Identity Options

Respondents revealed a relatively good understanding of the various ways in which they could provide proof of identity to the RTA. The most commonly mentioned sources of identification were: a Birth Certificate/Photo Birth Card (75%); a Medicare/Pensioner Concession Card/DVA/Other Commonwealth Card (62%); RTA Proof of Age Card (23%); and a Phone/Gas/Electricity Bill (20%). More than one in ten also mentioned a Passport or ID issued by a Passport Office (14%), a Student ID card (11%), and a Bank Card/Credit Card/Statement (11%) as shown in Table 26 over the page.

The key differences according to age and gender were as follows:

- 25-44 year olds (79%) were more likely than those aged 45 years and over (63%) to mention Birth Certificate/Photo Birth Card;
- 16-24 year olds (33%) were more likely than those aged 45 years and over (11%) to mention RTA Proof of Age Card;
- 25-44 year olds (26%) were more likely than 16-24 year olds (13%) to mention a Phone/Gas/Electricity Bill;
- 16-24 year olds (24%) were more likely than both 25-44 year olds (4%) and those aged 45 years and over (5%) to mention a Student ID Card; and
- males (16%) were more likely than females (6%) to mention a Student ID Card (Table 26).

Table 26: Awareness of Proof of Identity Options by Age & Gender

Awareness of Sources of Proof of ID	Total I A %	16-24 yrs D %	25-44 yrs E %	45+ yrs F %	Male G %	Female H %
Birth Certificate/Photo Birth Card	75	77	79 ^F	63	78	72
Medicare/Pensioner Concession Card, DVA, other Commonwealth Card	62	63	62	58	61	63
RTA Proof of Age Card	23	33 ^F	21	11	23	23
Phone/Gas/Electricity Bill	20	13	26 ^D	16	17	22
Passport or ID issued by Passport Office	14	14	13	18	17	12
Student ID card	11	24 ^{EF}	4	5	16 ^H	6
Bank card/credit card/Statement	11	7	13	11	8	14
Other RTA Photo ID (eg: Firearms, etc)	6	9	4	7	8	4
NSW Licence less than 2 years old	4	4	4	3	4	4
Water/Council Rates or land valuation	3	2	3	5	2	4
Letter from Council/Confirmation of Aboriginality	2	-	1	5	1	2
100 Point check	2	1	2	2	1	3
DFAT or Consular Photo ID	1	3	1	-	1	2
Photo ID (NFI)	1	1	1	-	1	1
Tax File Number	1	-	1	2	1	-
Document with Current Address	1	-	1	-	1	1
Marriage Certificate	1	-	-	3	-	1
NSW Mobility Parking Scheme Card	◆	1	-	-	-	1
NSW police of Defence Force Photo ID	◆	-	-	2	1	-
Stat Dec/JP Endorsement	◆	1	-	-	1	-
Bus Pass	◆	1	-	-	-	1
ID Badge	◆	-	-	2	-	1
Electoral enrolment card/evidence	-	-	-	-	-	-
Don't Know	8	10	5	11	5	11
Other	2	1	3	2	3	1
BASE: All Respondents	300	97*	140	62*	142	158

◆ = Less than 0.5%

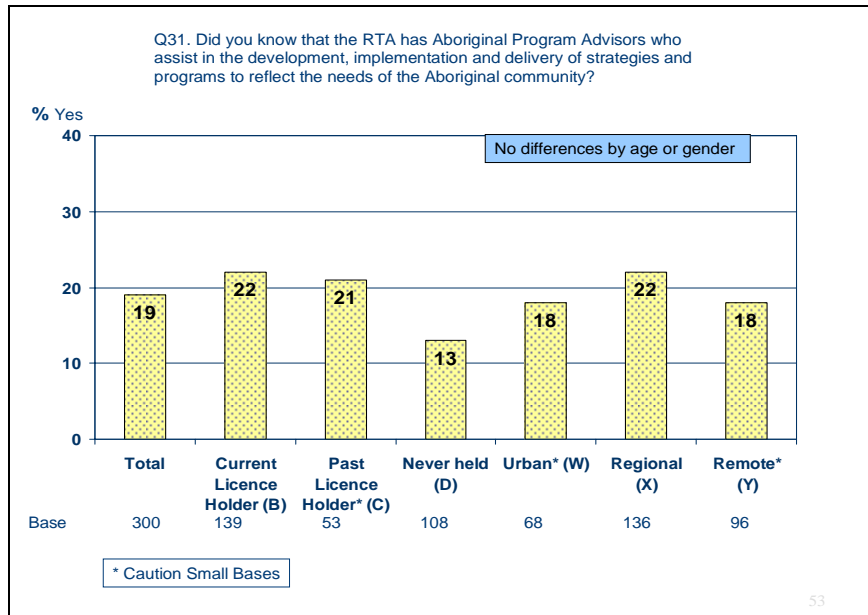
*CAUTION: Small Bases

5.4.2 Awareness of Aboriginal Program Advisors (APA's)

All respondents were asked if they were aware that the RTA had Aboriginal Program Advisors (APA's) who assist in the development, implementation and delivery of strategies and programs to reflect the needs of the Aboriginal community.

Just under two in ten respondents (19%) had heard of the APA’s. Whilst there were no significant differences according to age and gender, there was some small (but not significant) variation according to licence holding, as shown in Figure 12. There were no differences by licence holding and location.

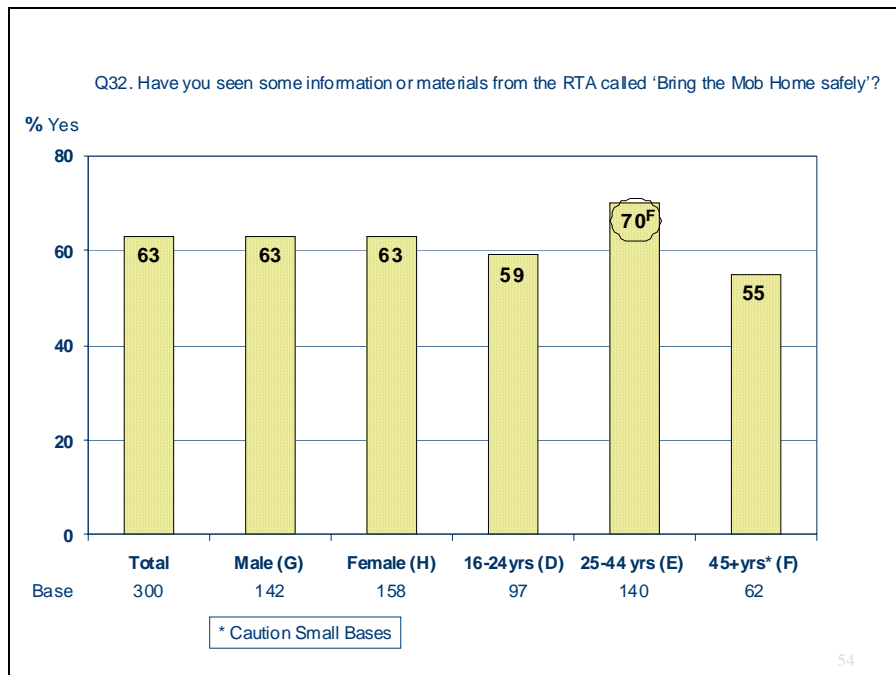
Figure 12: Awareness of Aboriginal Program Advisors by Licence Holding & Location



5.4.3 Awareness of ‘Bring the Mob Home’ & ‘Kooris in Cars’

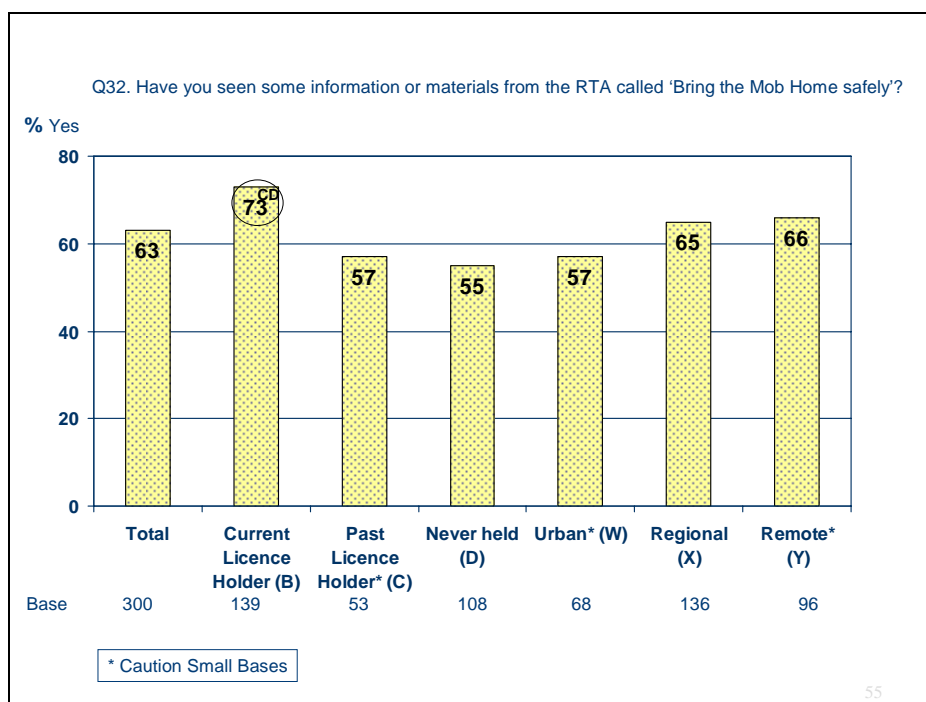
Awareness levels for the ‘Bring the Mob Home’ campaign were very positive with a little over **six in ten (63%) respondents aware of the campaign.** Respondents aged 25-44 years (70%) were more likely than those aged 45 years and over (55%) to recall the campaign (Figure 13).

Figure 13: Awareness of ‘Bring the Mob Home’ by Age & Gender



There were no significant differences according to location, however, there were differences according to licence holding. Current holders (73%) were more likely than both past holders (57%) and those who have never held a licence (55%) to have heard of 'Bring the Mob Home' (Figure 14).

Figure 14: Awareness of 'Bring the Mob Home' by Licence Holding & Location



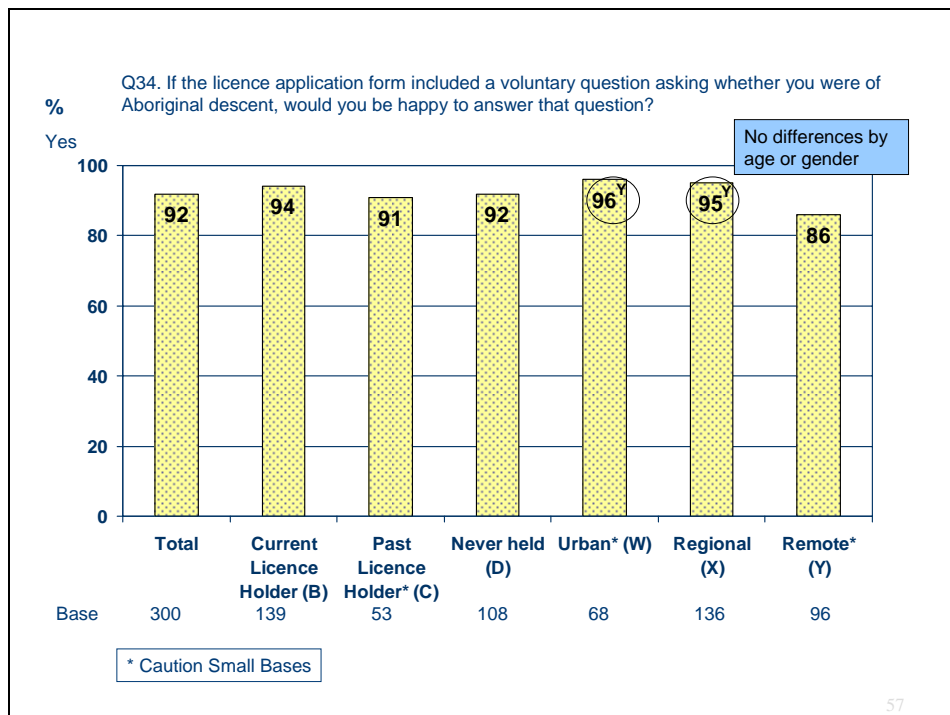
Awareness of the ‘Kooris in Cars’ program was somewhat lower than that of ‘Bring the Mob Home’, with 15% of respondents having heard of it. There were no awareness differences according to age, gender, licence holding or location.

5.4.4 Indication of Aboriginality on Licence Application

As the RTA is interested in gathering more licencing data in regards to the Aboriginal Community, respondents were asked whether they would be happy to answer a question on a licence application form, asking if they were of Aboriginal descent. **A little over nine in ten (92%) respondents indicated they would be happy to indicate their Aboriginality on a licence application form.**

There were no differences according to age, gender, and licence holding. However, those in urban (96%) and regional (95%) locations were more likely than those in remote locations (86%) to say they would be happy to answer a question about their Aboriginality (Figure 15).

Figure 15: Happy to Indicate Aboriginality on Licence Application by Licence Holding & Location

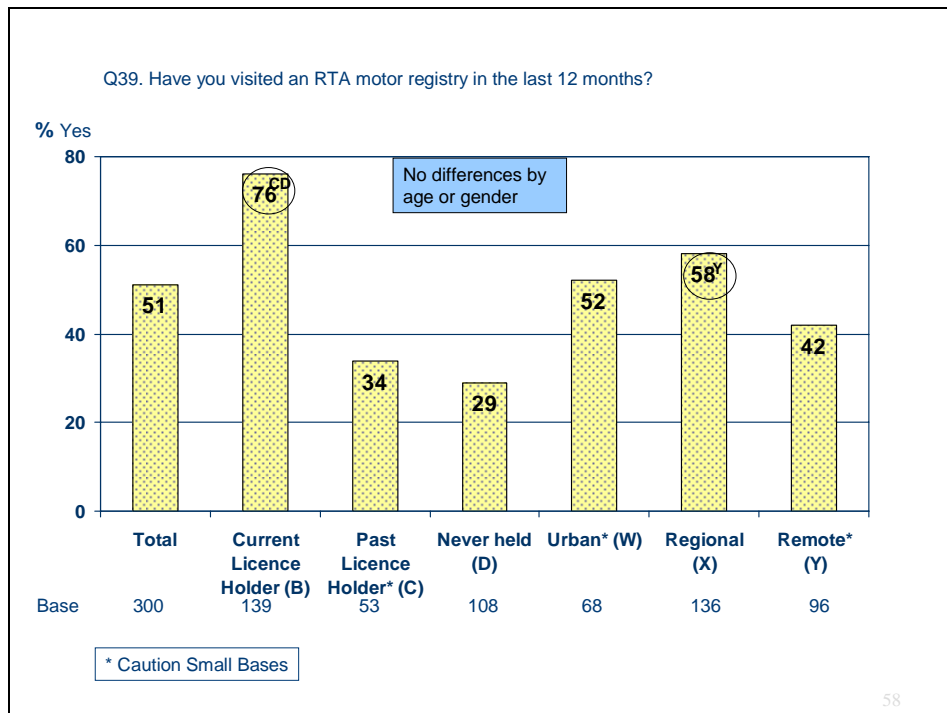


5.4.5 Motor Registry Visitation

Just over half (51%) of all respondents had visited an RTA Motor Registry (or RTA outlet¹²) in the last 12 months. There were no differences according to age and gender.

As might be expected, current holders (76%) were more likely than both past holders (34%) and those who have never held a licence (29%) to have visited an RTA Motor Registry (or RTA outlet) in the last 12 months. Further, those in regional locations (58%) were more likely than those in remote locations (42%) to have visited an RTA Motor Registry in the last 12 months, as can be seen in Figure 16 (over the page).

Figure 16: Motor Registry Visitation by Licence Holding & Location



As can be seen in Table 27, the majority (84%) of respondents who had visited an RTA Motor Registry felt they were treated well on their last visit. In fact, 38% felt they were treated 'very well', 46% were treated 'well', 4% were 'unsure', 6% felt they were treated 'badly', with the remainder (6%) declining to answer this question.

¹² In some regional and remote areas the RTA Motor Registry is located with or within other services such as a Bank, Police Station, or as part of Government Access Centre, which houses multiple Government Agencies.

Interestingly, respondents aged 25-44 years (47%) were more likely than 16-24 year olds (23%) to indicate they were treated ‘very well’. There were no differences according to gender.

Table 27: Treatment at Motor Registry

Treatment at Registry	Total I A %	16-24 yrs D %	25-44 yrs E %	45+ yrs F %	Male G %	Female H %
Very Well	38	23	47 ^D	42	38	39
Well	46	58	37	49	46	47
Unsure	4	4	4	3	7	1
Badly	6	6	4	6	4	7
BASE: Visited Registry	154	48*	73*	33*	77*	77*

*CAUTION: Small Bases

Interestingly, respondents in regional (56%) and urban (49%) locations were more likely than those in remote locations (25%) to suggest that they were treated well, although overall treatment was similar across the three location segments (Table 28).

Table 28: Treatment at Motor Registry by Location

Treatment at Registry	Total A %	Urban W %	Regional X %	Remote Y %
Very Well	38	40	32	50
Well	46	49 ^Y	56 ^Y	25
Unsure	4	-	5	5
Badly	6	9	4	5
Very Badly	-	-	-	-
BASE: Visited Registry	154	35*	79*	40*

*CAUTION: Small Bases

In terms of the treatment that led to a rating of ‘badly’, seven of the eight respondents who said they were treated badly referred to “impersonal/abrupt/rude service”, while one respondent referred to a lack of confidentiality within the registry (Table 29).

Table 29: Negative Treatment at Motor Registry

Negative Treatment	No. of Respondents
Impersonal/abrupt/rude service	7
Lack of confidentiality/indiscrete	1

Other ¹³	2
BASE: Respondents Treated Badly at Registry	8

¹³ These 'other' responses were incongruous with the question and made little sense as answers. They were therefore left coded as 'other'

5.5 Suggestions for Helping the Aboriginal Community

When respondents were asked what they thought the RTA could do to help Aboriginal people obtain a full licence, a large range of suggestions were provided. As can be seen in Table 30 (over the page) **issues relating to financial capacity and debt; access to vehicles; and literacy or the ability of some to pass the required tests, were again prominent.**

In an overall sense, the most common suggestions for helping the Aboriginal Community were:

- “assistance with reading & writing for learning/testing” (23%), with those in regional locations (28%), more likely to suggest this than those in urban locations (13%);
- “more/free driving lessons” (20%), with those in urban locations (34%) being more likely to suggest this;
- “run courses/programs/training around licencing” (19%);
- “financial assistance/help with fines/costs of tests/lessons” (19%);
- “more indigenous RTA service staff” (18%), with those in regional locations (23%) more likely to raise this than those in rural locations (10%);
- “provide vehicles for Learner drivers to use/practice/do test” (11%);
- “RTA advisors to visit communities/RTA information sessions” (11%), which was a more common suggestion from those in rural locations (18%) than those in urban locations (4%);
- “Indigenous instructors” (10%); and
- 13% suggested there was nothing the RTA could do.

Table 30 also shows that respondents in remote locations (13%) were more likely than those in urban locations (2%) to suggest “more opportunities/access to computer practice test”, while those in urban locations were more likely than those in regional locations to want the RTA to “increase awareness of assistance for Indigenous people” (7% and 1% respectively) and more likely than those in remote locations to suggest “privacy/time when completing test” (9% and 1% respectively).

Table 29: Suggestions for Helping Aboriginal People Obtain a Full Licence by Location

How RTA Could Help Aboriginal Community	Total A %	Urban W %	Regiona l X %	Remot e Y %
Assistance with reading & writing for learning/testing	23	13	28 ^W	24
More/free driving lessons	20	34 ^{XY}	15	16
Run courses/programs/training around licencing	19	15	22	17
Financial assistance/help with fines/costs of tests/lessons	19	22	20	17
More indigenous RTA service staff	18	19	23 ^Y	10
Provide vehicles for Learner drivers to use/practice/do test	11	6	13	12
RTA advisors to visit communities/RTA information sessions	11	4	9	18 ^W
Indigenous instructors	10	7	10	13
Teach at school/TAFE/CDED	8	9	5	12
More opportunities/access to computer practice test	7	2	5	13 ^W
Promote/advertise RTA services more	5	9	4	4
Lift fine restrictions/allow people to obtain licence while paying off SDRO	5	10	4	3
Workshops/Information about dealing with SDRO/debt	4	2	6	2
Simplify test/clearer explanations/fewer questions	3	3	3	2
Increase awareness of assistance for Indigenous people	2	7 ^X	1	1
Increase awareness of safe driving	2	3	2	1
Give licence back when employed/link licencing to employment	2	-	1	4
Privacy/ time when completing test	2	9 ^Y	-	1
Driving courses/lessons in/about culturally appropriate environ (e.g. country driving)	2	6	-	1
More patient/understanding/encouraging staff	1	2	2	-
Re-assess cancelling/suspending licences/shorter suspension times	1	-	-	4
More assistance re-obtaining licence after suspension	1	-	-	4
Reduce required number of hours spent learning to drive	1	3	2	-
More practical exercises than questions	1	-	1	2
Mobile testing service	1	-	1	1
Free learner books	1	-	2	-
Provide transport for travelling to RTA office	1	-	-	2
Community service to pay off fines/debt	1	2	2	-
More support from Indigenous elders/mentors	◆	-	1	-
Koori car pool	◆	-	1	-
First Aid	◆	-	1	-
Reintroduce former licencing system	◆	-	1	-
Don't make past licence holders re-do the learners course	◆	-	1	-
Provide venue for practising driving	◆	-	1	-
Not charging for failing test	◆	-	-	1
Free eye tests	◆	-	1	-
Make permitted blood alcohol level for drivers 0%	◆	-	1	-
Other	9	9	7	12
Nothing	13	12	15	12
BASE	300	68*	136	96*

*CAUTION: Small Bases

6. Summary & Conclusions

The key issues to arise from the qualitative and quantitative phases of this project are as follows:

1. **Unlicenced driving is prevalent.** In the qualitative phase, group members indicated that for many, driving unlicenced is the norm. They have limited access to licenced drivers, and in many cases, public transport, in order to attend to their day to day activities. This was confirmed in the quantitative phase.
 - 29% of those who have never held a licence had driven on NSW roads in the past 12 months, with 40% of these respondents driving on a weekly basis. In an overall sense, 7% of those who have never held a licence claim to drive on a daily basis and 12% on at least a weekly basis, with an additional 8% of those who have never held a licence driving every 2-3 weeks.
 - 19% of past licence holders are driving on a daily basis.
2. **Those who obtain a licence have difficulty holding on to that licence,** with half of respondents who have, or no longer have, a licence having had that licence suspended or cancelled.
 - 74% of past licence holders and 43% of current licence holders have had their licence suspended or cancelled at some point.
 - 47% of past licence holders have lost their licence on one occasion, 9% have lost it twice, and 12% have had their licence suspended or cancelled 3 or more times (6% refused to answer the question).

3. Debt is key issue for the Aboriginal community.

- 40% of respondents had outstanding debt with the State Debt Recovery Office.
- Debt was most prevalent amongst past licence holders (70%), 25-44 year olds (59%), males (54%) and those who've never held a licence (51%). (Only 25% of current holders had outstanding debt).

4. The Aboriginal Community's overall financial capacity and level of Debt has wide ranging consequences regarding licencing and vehicle registration.

- Unpaid fines (31%) and outstanding SDRO debt (28%) were the most common reasons for licence suspension or cancellation, although DUI was also common (26%).
- 25% of those unlikely to try for a licence can't pay off their debt and 2% are waiting for an SDRO response, while 15% said they simply can't afford a licence.
- 19% of past licence holders didn't renew their licence because they couldn't afford it.
- 23% of current licence holders 'couldn't afford a driving instructor' when learning, while 15% 'sometimes couldn't afford the petrol money to go driving as a learner'. Further, 25% had problems accessing a registered vehicle and 15% found the log book requirements difficult when learning.
- 42% of respondents owned a vehicle, with 72% of owners having a vehicle that was 6 or more years old. Two in ten (19%) were unregistered.
- Debt (13%) and affordability (38%) were also preventing some vehicle owners from getting their vehicle registered.

5. Financial assistance, help in dealing with debt, and improved access to vehicles were seen by many as the key ways in which the RTA could help Aboriginal people obtain a full licence.

- 20% wanted “more/free driving lessons”.
- 19% referred to “financial assistance/help with fines/costs of tests/lessons”.
- 11% called for the RTA to “provide vehicles for learners”.
- 4% suggested the RTA “lift fine restrictions/allow people to obtain a licence while dealing with SDRO/debt”.
- 4% wanted “workshops/information about dealing with SDRO/debt”.

6. The other key issue to emerge in this study related to literacy problems and the community’s ability to pass the various tests associated with the licencing system.

- The qualitative study clearly identified literacy as an issue that was making it difficult for some to gain a licence, and causing others to avoid the licencing system altogether. For those with literacy difficulties the Road User’s Handbook and other RTA materials are very wordy and daunting. The testing system is therefore seen as daunting.
- Quantitatively respondents suggested the RTA could help Aboriginal people obtain a full licence through “assistance with reading and writing for learning/testing” (23%), running “courses/programs/training around licencing” (19%), “more opportunities/access to computer test” (7%), and “simplify test/clearer explanations/fewer questions” (3%).

7. **Many qualitative participants referred to being uncomfortable in RTA Motor Registries and being unaware of the help available to them.** In the quantitative phase, most respondents felt they were treated well on their last visit (84%), however, **there were suggestions for more Aboriginal faces and greater interaction with the RTA:**

- Just under two in ten (18%) respondents suggested “more indigenous RTA service staff”.
- One in ten suggested (11%) “RTA advisors to visit communities/RTA information sessions” and “indigenous instructors” (10%).
- 5% suggested “promote/advertise RTA services more”.

7. Recommendations

Based on the findings from both the qualitative and quantitative phases of this project the following recommendations are made:

1. To minimise the impact of literacy issues on licencing, the RTA (and other relevant Government bodies) should be looking to **provide greater assistance to those wanting to obtain their licence**. There is a need to provide the community with some help in understanding and learning the Road User's Handbook and in practicing the Computer Based Driver Knowledge Test.

2. **Consider whether SDRO debt should be linked to licencing** as it has a significant impact on the Aboriginal Community's ability to obtain and maintain a licence.

If SDRO debt must be linked to licencing, **the RTA and SDRO need to work more closely to help the community deal with that debt** in a way that minimises its impact on their ability to obtain or maintain a licence.

3. **Dealing with the Community's debt will have flow on effects** on licencing and registration.
 - If less drivers lose or unable to renew their licence because of debt, there will be more licenced drivers available to help learner drivers. This improved access to licenced drivers will in turn improve learner driver's ability to fulfil the log book requirements.

 - There was anecdotal evidence in the qualitative phase that employment was strongly linked with licencing, with a loss of licence often meaning a loss of job. Conversely having a licence can improve an individual's job prospects.

 - Consequently, obtaining and maintaining a licence can improve an individual's ability to pay off their debt, afford licence costs, and own and maintain a registered vehicle.

4. **Consideration should also be given to what can be done at a Registry level to increase the Community's level of comfort in dealing with the RTA.**

- Can the number of Aboriginal staff be increased?
- Can there be designated staff in Registries to deal with members of the Aboriginal Community? If not, can there be some kind of interface between the Aboriginal Community and RTA staff?

This could be an employee (a type of liaison officer), ideally of Aboriginal descent, who is the initial point of contact, then personally hands the customer over to another staff member, perhaps staying close by to assist with the transaction if need be.

- Can there be a designated day for the Aboriginal Community, (particularly those in remote areas and those in regional communities that are relatively isolated from the mainstream town), to attend Registries?

There is also a **need to improve the Aboriginal Community's understanding of the type of help available to them** within a Motor Registry.

5. Ultimately the RTA (along with other Government agencies) needs to **continue to consult and work with the Aboriginal Community** to improve licencing and road safety.

8. Appendices

- Appendix A – Discussion Guides
- Appendix B – Questionnaire
- Appendix C – Summary of Interviews per Location

Appendix A: Discussion Guides

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Introduction

Today we would like to talk to you about driving, obtaining a licence, and car registration, and we would like to hear about all of your experiences in regards to these areas.

So firstly, let's briefly talk about where and when you drive.

- Who normally drives? How often would you drive? How do you decide who is going to drive when there is a few of you?
- Where do you drive? What are the most common purposes of your trips? Who is with you on these trips?
- Who owns the car? How long have you/they owned the car?

Ok, now let's talk about getting and maintaining a driver's licence.

- We talked earlier about driving, so how many of you have a driver's licence whether it be L's, P's or a full licence? And is that a current driver's licence? (Explain if necessary)
- **If no licence or lapsed licence at all:**
 - Why haven't you got a licence?
 - Is it the cost of learning? Is it the cost/cost of renewing your licence? Is it your ability to renew within the required timeframe? If you go outside of the required timeframe do you then not bother? If so, why?
 - Is it something to do with the process of getting a licence such as access to a teacher, access to a car to learn in, filling in and maintaining a log book? What do you know about the testing procedure for your L's, P's and Renewal? How do you feel about the testing procedure for each level? Is there any part of the process that is just too hard?
 - Are there any issues with accessing an RTA? What about in terms of understanding and filling in the paperwork required? Again are there issues with not wanting to deal with the RTA, something about RTA staff or offices, the way they deal with you, etc? Is language an issue?
 - Are outstanding fines with the State Debt Recovery Office a reason for not renewing or getting your licence? Why?

- To what extent is proof of identity or a birth certificate an issue? Why? Would Confirmation of Aboriginality be a better form of identity than a birth certificate? Why?
 - Have you ever tried to obtain a licence? What happened, tell me what you did and what happened? Has anyone else you know had similar experiences? What happened to them?
 - Have you ever had a licence but not renewed it? Why didn't you renew it? What happened?
- **If have a current licence:**
 - How have you found the process of obtaining and keeping a licence? Is it easy or difficult? Why? In what way is it easy/difficult? Please tell me how you went about it and what your experience was like.
 - Is it something you do if you can afford it at the time but let it lapse if you can't afford it?
 - How did you find the testing procedures? How about the paperwork? Was it easy to access an RTA? How did you find the staff? So overall how would you describe the process?
 - What will determine whether you renew your licence next time it is due for renewal?
 - How likely are you to get caught driving without a licence? Why is that? Are there things you can do to reduce the chance that you will get caught? What do you do to avoid getting caught? What happens if you do get caught, again tell me about the things that have happened to you and others you know?
 - So what do you think the RTA could do to help you get and keep your driver's licence? In what way would that help do you think? Anything else that could be done?

Now let's talk about car registration.

- Is your car, or the car you drive most often, registered?
- **If not registered:**
 - Why isn't the car registered?
 - Is it the cost of registering the car? Is it the cost of repairs to get the car to pass registration?
 - Is it something to do with the process of registration such as getting to the RTA, understanding and filling in the paperwork, not wanting to deal with the RTA, something about RTA staff or offices, the way they deal with you, etc? Is language an issue?

- Have you tried to register the car recently? What happened, tell me what you did and what happened? Has anyone else you know had similar experiences? What happened to them?
- Has the car ever been registered? What is different now versus when the car was registered? Why was it registered back then?
- **If registered:**
 - Did you automatically register the car?
 - Is it something you do when the car is in good condition and/or if you can afford it at the time?
 - How did you find the process of getting the car registered? Please tell me how you went about it and what your experience was like?
 - How did you find the paperwork? Was it easy to get to the RTA? How did you find the staff? So overall how would you describe the process?
 - What will determine whether the car gets registered next year?
- How likely are you to get caught driving an unregistered vehicle? Why is that? Are there things you can do to reduce the chance that you will get caught? What do you do to avoid getting caught? What happens if you do get caught, again tell me about the things that have happened to you and others you know?
- So what do you think the RTA could do to help you register and keep your vehicle registered? Why would that help? Anything else that could be done?

Can we quickly talk about the RTA.

- What do you think of them? How do you feel about dealing with the RTA? Why do you feel that way? How do they treat you? Can you give me some examples?
- Are there things the RTA does that are particularly good or bad in regards to driver's licences and Aboriginal people?
- **Show registry materials** – what do you think of these? Are they easy to read and understand? Why not? Are they better or worse than you imagined they would be? Why?
- If the licence and registration forms had a question asking you about your ethnicity/whether you were Aboriginal or not would you fill it in?

- **Show 'Bring The Mob Home'**
 - Initial reactions;
 - To what extent are they appropriate? If inappropriate, why? Where did they go wrong?
 - Are they easy to read and understand? Why not?
 - What is it saying? What does it mean?
 - Who are they aimed at? Who are they talking to? What makes you say that/What gives you that impression?
 - How else could they communicate with you? What should they say? How should they be saying it? Why?

DISQUALIFIED DRIVERS DISCUSSION GUIDE

Introduction

Today we would like to talk to you about driving, obtaining a licence, and car registration, and we would like to hear about all of your experiences in regards to these areas.

So firstly, let's briefly talk about where and when you drive.

- Who normally drives? How often would you drive? How do you decide who is going to drive when there is a few of you?
- Where do you drive? What are the most common purposes of your trips? Who is with you on these trips?
- Who owns the car? How long have you/they owned the car?

Ok, now let's talk about getting and maintaining a driver's licence.

- So firstly, how did you lose your licence? Can you please tell me what happened? Was it a single incident or was it a number of incidents over time? Can you describe to me each of these incidents? What was the process that you went through in terms of the cancellation/disqualification of you licence? How did you find that process? How were your dealings with the police? How about the RTA?
- How long did you have your licence before you lost it?
- If you hadn't been disqualified would you have kept you licence up to date/current? Why?
- Would you ever get your licence again?
- What determines whether you keep your licence up to date or get a new one?
 - Is it the cost of learning? Is it the cost/cost of renewing your licence? Is it you ability to renew within the required timeframe? If you go outside of the required timeframe do you then not bother? If so, why?
 - Is it something to do with the process of getting a licence such as access to a teacher, access to a car to learn in, filling in and maintaining a log book? What do you know about the testing procedure for your L's, P's and Renewal? How do you feel about the

testing procedure for each level? Is there any part of the process that is just too hard?

- Are there any issues with getting to the RTA? What about in terms of understanding and filling in the paperwork required? Again are there issues with not wanting to deal with the RTA, something about RTA staff or offices, the way they deal with you, etc? Is language an issue?
 - Are outstanding fines with the State Debt Recovery Office a reason for not renewing or getting your licence? Why?
 - To what extent is proof of identity or a birth certificate an issue? Why? Would Confirmation of Aboriginality be a better form of identity than a birth certificate? Why?
 - How did you find the process of getting your licence originally? How did you find the testing procedures? How about the paperwork? Was it easy to get to the RTA? How did you find the staff? So overall how would you describe the process?
- How likely are you to get caught driving without a licence? Why is that? Are there things you can do to reduce the chance that you will get caught? What do you do to avoid getting caught? What happens if you do get caught, again tell me about the things that have happened to you and others you know?
 - So what do you think the RTA could do to help you get and keep your driver's licence? In what way would that help do you think? Anything else that could be done?

Now let's talk about car registration.

- Is your car, or the car you drive most often, registered?
- **If not registered:**
 - Why isn't the car registered?
 - Is it the cost of registering the car? Is it the cost of repairs to get the car to pass registration?
 - Is it something to do with the process of registration such as getting to the RTA, understanding and filling in the paperwork, not wanting to deal with the RTA, something about RTA staff or offices, the way they deal with you, etc? Is language an issue?
 - Have you tried to register the car recently? What happened, tell me what you did and what happened? Has anyone else you know had similar experiences? What happened to them?
 - Has the car ever been registered? What is different now versus when the car was registered? Why was it registered back then?

- **If registered:**
 - Did you automatically register the car?
 - Is it something you do when the car is in good condition and/or if you can afford it at the time?
 - How did you find the process of getting the car registered? Please tell me how you went about it and what your experience was like?
 - How did you find the paperwork? Was it easy to get to the RTA? How did you find the staff? So overall how would you describe the process?
 - What will determine whether the car gets registered next year?

- How likely are you to get caught driving an unregistered vehicle? Why is that? Are there things you can do to reduce the chance that you will get caught? What do you do to avoid getting caught? What happens if you do get caught, again tell me about the things that have happened to you and others you know?
- So what do you think the RTA could do to help you register and keep your vehicle registered? Why would that help? Anything else that could be done?

Can we quickly talk about the RTA.

- What do you think of them? How do you feel about dealing with the RTA? Why do you feel that way? How do they treat you? Can you give me some examples?

- Are there things the RTA does that are particularly good or bad in regards to driver's licences and Aboriginal people?

- **Show registry materials** – what do you think of these? Are they easy to read and understand? Why not? Are they better or worse than you imagined they would be? Why?

- If the licence and registration forms had a question asking you about your ethnicity/whether you were Aboriginal or not would you fill it in?

- **Show 'Bring The Mob Home'**
 - Initial reactions;
 - To what extent are they appropriate? If inappropriate, why? Where did they go wrong?
 - Are they easy to read and understand? Why not?
 - What is it saying? What does it mean?
 - Who are they aimed at? Who are they talking to? What makes you say that/What gives you that impression?
 - How else could they communicate with you? What should they say? How should they be saying it? Why?

Appendix B: Questionnaire

ABORIGINAL LICENCING QUESTIONNAIRE

JOB NO: 1266

Introduction: Good morning/afternoon my name is from Origin Communications. We are conducting a study in regards to driving and licencing issues on behalf of the RTA (NSW Roads and Traffic Authority). Could you please spare 10 minutes of your time to answer a few questions for me? Everyone who completes the questions will receive \$10 cash for your time. Please be assured that your answers are confidential and that you will not be identified in anyway. If there are any questions you don't want to answer, just tell me and I can skip over them. (IF NEEDED: We do not report back what you have said yourself, just the overall results of the study).

A. Record Location:

Kempsey	1	Shoalhaven	5	Wellington	9
Tabulum	2	Wallaga Lake	6	Wilcannia	10
Toronto	3	Griffith	7	Campbelltown	11
Karuah	4	Balranald	8	Mt Druitt	12

B. Record Gender Male 1 Female 2

Q1. Firstly, could I please get your age? Which of the following groups do you fit into? **READ OUT/SHOW CARD**

16-17 years	1	35-44 years	4	65 years and over	7
18-24 years	2	45-54 years	5	Refused	8
25-34 years	3	55-64 years	6		

SECTION A: DRIVING & LICENCING

Q2. Have you driven a vehicle on NSW Roads in the last 12 months?
CLARIFICATION: such as a car, van, truck or motorcycle.

Yes	1	CONTINUE
No	2	GO TO Q4

Q3. How often would you drive? **READ OUT/SHOW CARD**

Every day	1	Once a month	5
Every 2-3 days	2	Once every 2-3 months	6
Once a week	3	Once or twice a year	7
Once every 2-3 weeks	4		

Q4. Do you have a valid or legal NSW Driver's Licence?

Yes	1	CONTINUE
No	2	GO TO Q11

Current Licence Holders

Q5. What type of licence or licences do you have ? **READ OUT/SHOW CARD with Silhouette of Each Category MULTIPLE RESPONSE ALLOWED**

LICENCE 1		LICENCE 2	
Car (C)	1	Car (C)	1
Motorcycle (R)	2	Motorcycle (R)	2
Light Rigid (LR)	3	Light Rigid (LR)	3
Medium Rigid (MR)	4	Medium Rigid (MR)	4
Heavy Rigid (HR)	5	Heavy Rigid (HR)	5
Heavy Combination (HC)	6	Heavy Combination (HC)	6
Multi Combination (MC)	7	Multi Combination (MC)	7

Q6. And is that a **READ OUT/SHOW CARD**

LICENCE 1		LICENCE 2	
Learner licence	1	Learner licence	1
P1/Red P licence	2	P1/Red P licence	2
P2/Green P licence	3	P2/Green P licence	3
Full licence	4	Full licence	4

Q7a. How long have you held that licence? **DO NOT READ OUT**

LICENCE 1		LICENCE 2	
Less than 1 year	1	Less than 1 year	1
1 – 2 years	2	1 – 2 years	2
3 – 5 years	3	3 – 5 years	3
6 – 10 years	4	6 – 10 years	4
11 or more years	5	11 or more years	5

Q7b. And has your licence ever been suspended and/or cancelled at any time? **MULTIPLE RESPONSE ALLOWED**

No	1	GO TO Q8a
Suspended	2	
Cancelled	3	

Q7c. Why was your licence suspended/cancelled? **DO NOT READ OUT, MULTIPLE RESPONSE ALLOWED**

Outstanding debt with SDRO	1
Demerit points	2
Medical/health problems	3
Unpaid RTA/Traffic fines	4
police suspension	5
DUI Offense	6
Refused	7
Other (specify) _____	

Q8a. When you were learning to drive did you experience any of the following issues or problems? **READ OUT/SHOW CARD, MULTIPLE RESPONSE ALLOWED**

- | | |
|--|---|
| Sometimes I couldn't find a licenced driver to teach/help me | 1 |
| Sometimes the licenced driver who was helping me had been drinking so we couldn't go driving | 2 |
| The licenced driver helping often didn't have time to help me go driving | 3 |
| Sometimes I had problems finding a registered car to learn in | 4 |
| The car owners I knew would not let me learn in their car | 5 |
| Sometimes I couldn't afford the petrol money to go driving as a learner | 6 |
| I found it very difficult to do 120 hours driving for my log book | 7 |
| I couldn't afford a driving instructor | 8 |

Q8b. Did you experience any other problems when you were learning to drive?
PROBE FULLY

Q9a. When you wanted to get your Learners permit were you able to practice the RTA's Computer Based Driver Knowledge Test anywhere?

- | | | |
|-----|---|------------------|
| Yes | 1 | |
| No | 2 | GO TO Q10 |

Q9b. Where were you able to practice the RTA's Computer Based Driver Knowledge Test?

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| At an RTA branch or office | 1 |
| At the land council | 2 |
| At the local job network centre | 3 |
| At the local legal services centre | 4 |
| Other place (specify)_____ | 5 |

Q10. Have you ever helped a learner driver obtain some or all of the 120 hours they needed for their log book?

- | | | | |
|-----|---|----|---|
| Yes | 1 | No | 2 |
|-----|---|----|---|
- NOW GO TO Q21**

Past Licence Holders

Q11. Have you ever held a NSW Driver's Licence?

- | | | |
|-----|---|-------------------|
| Yes | 1 | CONTINUE |
| No | 2 | GO TO Q19a |

Q12a. What type of licence or licences did you have ? **READ OUT/SHOW CARD with Silhouette of Each Category MULTIPLE RESPONSE ALLOWED**

LICENCE 1		LICENCE 2	
Car (C)	1	Car (C)	1
Motorcycle (R)	2	Motorcycle (R)	2
Light Rigid (LR)	3	Light Rigid (LR)	3
Medium Rigid (MR)	4	Medium Rigid (MR)	4
Heavy Rigid (HR)	5	Heavy Rigid (HR)	5
Heavy Combination (HC)	6	Heavy Combination (HC)	6
Multi Combination (MC)	7	Multi Combination (MC)	7

Q12b. And was that a **READ OUT/SHOW CARD**

LICENCE 1		LICENCE 2	
Learner licence	1	Learner licence	1
P1/Red P licence	2	P1/Red P licence	2
P2/Green P licence	3	P2/Green P licence	3
Full licence	4	Full licence	4

Q13a. How long did you have that licence? **DO NOT READ OUT**

LICENCE 1		LICENCE 2	
Less than 1 year	1	Less than 1 year	1
1 – 2 years	2	1 – 2 years	2
3 – 5 years	3	3 – 5 years	3
6 – 10 years	4	6 – 10 years	4
11 or more years	5	11 or more years	5

Q13b. And was that licence**READ OUT**

Suspended	1	GO TO Q15
Cancelled	2	GO TO Q15
Or did you decide not to renew it/hand it in	3	CONTINUE

Q14a. Why did you decide not to renew your licence? **DO NOT READ OUT, MULTIPLE RESPONSE ALLOWED**

Too old	1
Health problems	2
Didn't want to/need to renew	3
Couldn't afford it	4
Other (specify)_____	5

Q14b. Has your licence ever been suspended or cancelled?

Yes	1	CONTINUE
No	2	GO TO Q17a

Q15. Why was your licence suspended/cancelled? **DO NOT READ OUT, MULTIPLE RESPONSE ALLOWED**

Outstanding debt with SDRO	1
Demerit points	2
Medical/health problems	3
Unpaid RTA/Traffic fines	4
police suspension	5
DUI Offense	6
Refused	7
Other (specify)_____	

Q16. How many times has your licence been cancelled or suspended? _____

Q17a. How likely are you to try to get another licence? **READ OUT/SHOW CARD**

Very likely	1	GO TO Q18a
Likely	2	GO TO Q18a
Unsure	3	CONTINUE
Unlikely	4	CONTINUE
Very unlikely	5	CONTINUE
Licence was suspended it will be returned automatically	6	GO TO Q18a

Q17b. Can I ask why you aren't likely to try for a licence again? **DO NOT READ OUT Probe Fully, MULTIPLE RESPONSE ALLOWED**

Graduated licencing scheme to hard to get through	1
Can't afford to get/maintain a licence	2
Difficulty reading booklet	3
Difficulty doing computer based test	4
Can't pay off SDRO debt	5
No access to registered vehicle	6
No access to licenced driver to teach/help me	7
Banned from driving for a long time	8
Too old	9
Health problems	10
Difficulty getting proof of identity	11
Shame (please explain)_____	12

Other specify_____	13

Q18a. When you were originally looking to get your Learners permit were you able to practice the RTA's Computer Based Driver Knowledge Test anywhere?

- | | | |
|-----|---|-----------|
| Yes | 1 | |
| No | 2 | GO TO Q21 |

Q18b. Where were you able to practice the RTA's Computer Based Driver Knowledge Test? **DO NOT READ OUT**

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| At an RTA branch or office | 1 |
| At the land council | 2 |
| At the local job network centre | 3 |
| At the local legal services centre | 4 |
| Other place (specify)_____ | 5 |

NOW GO TO Q21

NO LICENCE

Q19a. How likely are you to try to get a licence? **READ OUT/SHOW CARD**

- | | | |
|---------------|---|------------------|
| Very likely | 1 | GO TO Q20 |
| Likely | 2 | GO TO Q20 |
| Unsure | 3 | CONTINUE |
| Unlikely | 4 | CONTINUE |
| Very unlikely | 5 | CONTINUE |

Q19b. Can I ask why you don't intend to try for a licence? **DO NOT READ OUT**

Probe Fully, MULTIPLE RESPONSE ALLOWED

- | | |
|---|----|
| Graduated licencing scheme to hard to get through | 1 |
| Can't afford to get/maintain a licence | 2 |
| Difficulty reading booklet | 3 |
| Difficulty doing computer based test | 4 |
| Can't pay off SDRO debt | 5 |
| No access to registered vehicle | 6 |
| No access to licenced driver to teach/help me | 7 |
| Banned from driving for a long time | 8 |
| Too old | 9 |
| Health problems | 10 |
| Difficulty getting proof of identity | 11 |
| Shame (please explain)_____ | 12 |
| <hr/> | |
| Other specify_____ | 13 |
| <hr/> | |

Q20a. If you wanted to get your Learners permit is there were anywhere you could practice the RTA's Computer Based Driver Knowledge Test?

- | | | |
|-----|---|-----------|
| Yes | 1 | |
| No | 2 | GO TO Q21 |

Q20b. Where would you go to practice the RTA's Computer Based Driver Knowledge Test? **DO NOT READ OUT**

At an RTA branch or office	1
At the land council	2
At the local job network centre	3
At the local legal services centre	4
Other place (specify)_____	5

SECTION B: CAR OWNERSHIP & REGISTRATION

Q21. Do you own a vehicle?

Yes	1	CONTINUE
No	2	GO TO SECTION C:RTA

Q22. What type of vehicle or vehicles do you own? **DO NOT READ OUT**

	<u>Vehicle 1</u>	<u>Vehicle 2</u>	<u>Vehicle 3</u>	<u>Vehicle 4</u>
Car	1	1	1	1
Motorcycle	2	2	2	2
Van/1-2 Tonne Truck	3	3	3	3
Truck/Bus	4	4	4	4

Q23. Is your vehicle registered? **IF OWN MORE THAN ONE: Is the vehicle you use most often, registered? DO NOT READ OUT**

Yes	1	GO TO Q27
No, registered in other state	2	GO TO Q27
Not registered	3	CONTINUE

Q24. When was the vehicle last registered? **DO NOT READ OUT**

Never registered	1	6 – 10 years ago	4
Within the last 2 years	2	More than 10 years ago	5
3 – 5 years ago	3		

Q25. How likely are you to get the vehicle registered? **READ OUT/SHOW CARD**

Very likely	1	GO TO Q27
Likely	2	GO TO Q27
Unsure	3	CONTINUE
Unlikely	4	CONTINUE
Very unlikely	5	CONTINUE

Q26. Why don't you intend to get the vehicle registered? **DO NOT READ OUT, Probe Fully, MULTIPLE RESPONSE ALLOWED**

Wouldn't pass inspection and can't afford the repairs needed	1
Can't afford registration	2
Can't afford CTP	3
Not worth repairing in order to pass inspection	4
Outstanding Fines/SDRO Debt	5
Other (specify)_____	6

Q27. And how old is your vehicle/main vehicle? **DO NOT READ OUT**

Less than 3 years old	1	6-10 years old	3
3-5 years old	2	More than 10 years old	4

Q28. Where did you buy or get it from? **DO NOT READ OUT**

Friend/relative	1	Internet	5
Dealership	2	Other (specify)_____	
Trading Post/Newspaper	3	_____	6
It was given to me	4		

Q29. If your car needs repairs or maintenance, who does the work? **DO NOT READ OUT**

Me	1	Mechanic/Repairer	3
Friend/Relative	2	Other (specify)_____	4

SECTION C: RTA

I would now like to ask you a few questions relating to the RTA.

Q30. If you don't have a current drivers licence do you know what you need for proof of identity when dealing with the RTA? **DO NOT READ OUT**

Birth Certificate/Photo Birth Card	1	Phone/Gas/Electricity Bill	9
Passport or ID issued by Passport Office	2	Water/Council rates or land valuation	10
NSW Licence less than 2 years old	3	Electoral enrolment card/evidence	11
Other RTA Photo ID (Firearms etc)	4	Student ID card	12
NSW police of Defence Force Photo ID	5	NSW Mobility Parking Scheme Card	13
DFAT or Consular Photo ID	6	Don't know	14
RTA Proof of Age Card	7	Other (specify)_____	15
Medicare/Pensioner Concession Card, DVA, other Commonwealth Card	8		

Q31. Did you know that the RTA has Aboriginal Program Advisors who assist in the development, implementation and delivery of strategies and programs to reflect the needs of the Aboriginal community?

Yes	1	No	2
-----	---	----	---

Q32. Have you seen some information or materials from the RTA called 'Bring the Mob Home Safely'? (Show CARD)

Yes	1	No	2
-----	---	----	---

Q33. Have you heard of a program called Koori's & Cars?

Yes	1	No	2
-----	---	----	---

Q40a. And how well were you treated on your last visit to the motor registry, would you say you were treated **SHOW CARD**

- | | | |
|------------|---|------------------|
| Very well | 1 | GO TO Q41 |
| Well | 2 | GO TO Q41 |
| Unsure | 3 | GO TO Q41 |
| Badly | 4 | CONTINUE |
| Very badly | 5 | CONTINUE |

Q40b. Why do you say you were treated badly? Can I ask what happened?_____

Q41. And can I ask do you have access to the internet? **DO NOT READ OUT, MULTIPLE RESPONSE ALLOWED**

- | | | | |
|---------------------------|---|------------------------------|---|
| No | 1 | Yes, at internet café/store | 5 |
| Yes, at home | 2 | Yes, at community centre | 6 |
| Yes, at work | 3 | Yes at other place (specify) | |
| Yes, at friends/relatives | 4 | _____ | 7 |

Thank you very much for your time

RESPONDENT'S NAME: _____

ADDRESS/POSTCODE: _____

PHONE No: _____

INTERVIEWER'S NAME: _____

I certify that this is a true, accurate and complete interview conducted in accordance with the MRSA Code of Professional Behaviour. I will not disclose to any other person the content of this questionnaire or any other information relating to the project.

SIGNATURE: _____ TIME FINISH: _____ DATE: _____

Appendix C: Number of Interviews per Location

Location	No of Interviews	Location	No. of interviews
Mt Druitt	42	Wellington	20
Campbelltown	26	Tabulum	21
Kempsey	24	Wallaga lake	25
Toronto	25	Balranald	7
Karuah	23	Wilcannia	17
Shoalhaven	21	Wreck bay	11
Griffith	23	Baryugil	15