

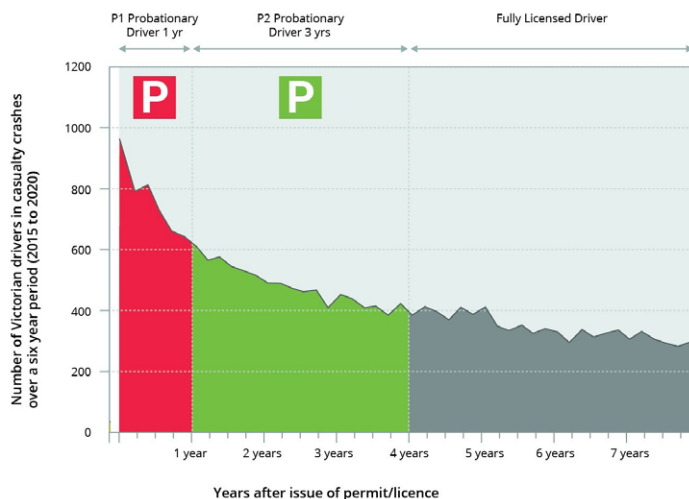
Young drivers continue to be over-represented among road crash victims - more than one in five drivers killed in 2016 were aged 17-25 years (Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics, 2018), and one in four drivers seriously injured belonged to this age group (BITRE, 2019).

## What is the difference between a “novice” and “young” driver?

- Generally, a young driver is defined as aged 17-20 years; however traditionally in road safety research, young drivers include those up to 25 years of age.
- Novice drivers are “new to the road” (ie. they hold provisional licenses and are in their first years of solo driving).
- Young novice drivers therefore are young adults who are comparatively new to the experience of driving or riding on the road.

Drivers are at their highest risk of being involved in a crash during their first year of driving unsupervised (Lee, Simons-Morton, Klauer, Ouimet, & Dingus, 2011; VicRoads, 2005).

Risk Factors for Young or Novice Drivers Research has indicated that lack of experience is the most notable cause of the high collision rate among young and novice drivers and that there is a dramatic decrease in the number of collisions after a few years of driving experience. The primary cause for the higher crash rate for novice drivers is lack of experience, inadequate hazard perception skills and the predisposition for risk-taking, rather than age.



Other risk factors involving young and novice drivers include:

- Speeding, which affects a driver’s ability to react to unexpected road events and take evasive action if needed (Aarts & Van Schagen, 2006; Liu, Chen, Subramanian, & Utter, 2005).
- Driving when fatigued (‘drowsy driving’), which can affect driver attention, judgement, reaction time and, in some cases, cause a driver to fall asleep and crash (Dobbie, 2002).
- Driving under the influence of alcohol or other drugs (‘drink or drug driving’), which affects how a driver thinks and feels, the speed at which they react, as well as their hand–eye coordination (Drummer, 2008; Moskowitz & Fiorentino, 2000).

## Risk Management Suggestions for Young and Novice Drivers

- Employers should limit the work pressures creating the pressure to speed by being mindful of such things as time sensitive deliveries, payment by results, as well as other work distractions, which can all cause drivers to speed or lose concentration.
- When creating a road safety communication plan, employers should be mindful of strategies to communicate messages specifically to young drivers.
- When driving for work is required, employers should consider this as part of the recruitment process. It is possible for employers to request a minimum amount of driving experience and/or specific experience when handling certain types of vehicles as part of job requirements.
- Driver training should create drivers that are safe, and not just technically competent. Training should focus on improving hazard perception and the ability to predict dangerous situations on the road ahead. Driver education should be completed in a way that will not lend itself to feelings of overconfidence in the young driver.
- Employers should ensure young and novice drivers are skilled and comfortable with the work vehicle provided (van, manual transmission, etc.).

**vero.com.au**

The information is intended to be of a general nature and is not legal advice. Subject to any rights you may have under any law, AAI Limited ABN 48 005 297 807 (trading as Vero Insurance) does not accept any legal responsibility for any direct or indirect loss or damage, incurred as a result of reliance upon it. Please make your own enquiries

Date written: 15/08/2024

V11523 15/08/24 A

**For more information** 

[www.vero.com.au/risk-management](http://www.vero.com.au/risk-management)

Contact us at [riskengineering@vero.com.au](mailto:riskengineering@vero.com.au)