Executive Summary

A lack of suitable and affordable transport can be a significant barrier to participation in work, education, access to health services and social, cultural and recreational activities.

People who have a car or live in a household with a car generally have better levels of transport and social inclusion than those who do not. For those who can’t drive or don’t have a car, life can be very difficult.

There is also considerable evidence that a lack of transport results in social exclusion for many people. Some sub-groups within the population are more affected by poor transport and mobility than others. This research examined the experiences of three groups of non-drivers:

• Older non-drivers
• Disabled people who don’t drive
• Young people who were not licensed.

A total of 225 people aged over 65 who do not drive or had given up driving were interviewed, as were 74 people with disabilities who did not drive and 207 people aged between 16-20 years who were not yet drivers.

Various methodological approaches were used including, qualitative research in the form of face-to-face in-depth interviews, a telephone survey to canvas the views of older and disabled non-drivers and an internet survey to gather information about young non-drivers.

The research showed that an inability to drive can have a significant impact on a person’s well-being. Many older people who need to stop driving are unable to take many of the trips they previously took as a driver, and subsequently miss out on important social interactions. As many as 50% of older non-drivers frequently forego social trips like visiting family and friends and attending social events due to a lack of transport. Almost one third also reported having difficulties in getting to medical appointments and one in five had difficulty getting to the corner store.

The most commonly used forms of alternative transport for older non-drivers were taxis and mobility scooters. Buses were the most commonly available form of transport, but many older people reported experiencing difficulties when using them.

Disabled non-drivers faced similar challenges as older non-drivers. They reported difficulties in undertaking social activities due to a lack of transport. Of the disabled people interviewed, approximately half undertook paid work. Of these people, just over 50% reported having difficulty getting to and from their workplace due to a lack of suitable transport.

Taxis were commonly relied upon by disabled non-drivers as their main mode of transport. However, people needing wheelchair taxis reported difficulties in the availability and reliability of those taxi services, particularly in the metropolitan area.

The findings of this research showed that most young unlicensed Victorians rely on public transport and rides from their parents as their main modes of transport. In most cases their transport needs were largely met, however a small number of young people living in rural and remote areas reported being disadvantaged by a lack of transport. While it was mostly social activities that were foregone due to a lack of transport, for a few young people living in rural or remote areas, it is possible that their chances of getting employment could be impeded due to a lack of transport.

There are many challenges for all levels of Government in trying to address social exclusion, and ensuring all members of the community have adequate transport is a critical one. Older retired drivers need to not only be able to undertake essential trips for food and medical help, but also to be able to participate in social activities and see their family and friends. Without this social engagement the risk of isolation, depression and subsequent illnesses greatly increases.

This is also the case for people with a disability. In addition, for people with a disability who wish to work, the availability of accessible, affordable and appropriate transport is essential. The situation is similar for young people living in rural areas who wish to leave school and join the workforce before they turn 18.

Federal, State and local Governments all need to implement improvements to mobility and transport programs to ensure that transport related social isolation does not worsen with the ageing of the population.
Co-ordinated action is needed in the following areas:

- Improved land-use planning to ensure that accessibility to transport services and to other essential community services is a priority.
- More accessible, frequent, reliable and comprehensive public transport services are needed to provide vital transport services for non-drivers.
- Funding for more demand responsive services that can bridge the gap between what can be offered by mass public transport and personalised door to door transport like taxis and community transport.
- Greater encouragement of businesses, especially in their role as employers, to ensure that people who are non-drivers (particularly disabled people and young people living in rural and remote areas) can undertake employment opportunities.

- Developing and implementing programs to:
  - Prolong driving among older and disabled people when they are still safe to drive
  - Encourage greater usage of transport alternatives among older people while they are still driving possibly by offering some incentives to older people.
  - Encourage non-drivers to continue or increase their social participation
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Preface

This research was conducted by RACV to better understand the needs of non-drivers and investigate what initiatives may improve mobility. Three groups of non-drivers were surveyed: older people, disabled people and young unlicensed people. While other groups of non-drivers exist and are worth studying, it was decided to focus only on these sub-groups as RACV already had some relationship with these groups of people as current or past members of the RACV. It is anticipated that research into other groups of non-drivers will be conducted in the future.

This research report summarises the key findings of this internal market research, particularly in the context of social exclusion, which can result when people can’t drive. Program and policy implications for Government are discussed and some overall conclusions are made as to how to improve the lives of people who cannot drive.

We would like to acknowledge the services of DBM Research and of Kerryn Alexander Research who conducted the surveys on behalf of the RACV.
Introduction

In 2006, RACV published the “Transport and Mobility: Challenges, Improvements and Innovations” report (Harris and Tapsas, 2006). This report detailed findings of a series of investigations and surveys that examined the transport and mobility options for Victorian non-drivers. Included in the report were several recommendations that the Victorian Government should implement to improve the lives of Victorian non-drivers. A number of these recommendations were accepted and the Victorian Government has implemented some programs to improve transport and mobility for non-drivers in Victoria. However, these improvements have been relatively minor given the extent and complexity of the problems associated with transport and mobility services in Victoria. As a result non-drivers still face significant disadvantage. The most far-reaching problem is that of social isolation and exclusion that results from poor transport.

1.1 What is social exclusion?

The term social exclusion has been used in a range of disciplines over recent years to describe a process whereby people do not participate fully in social and community activities. Lucus (2003) described social exclusion as a multi-faceted problem that results in people being “locked out” of the social, economic and political mainstream. The Australian Government’s social inclusion policy approach describes being socially included as having opportunities for:

- securing a job
- accessing services
- connecting with others in life through family, friends, work, personal interests and local community
- dealing with personal crises, such as ill health, bereavement or the loss of a job
- being heard (Gillard, 2008).

Exclusion can arise from multiple factors including poverty, disability, inability to communicate and poor accessibility (Markett and Titheridge, 2004). The impact that social exclusion has on individuals within a society can be extremely far-reaching and can adversely affect many aspects of their lives.

There is increasing awareness that problems with transport and the location of key services can reinforce the isolation and exclusion of individuals, social groups and whole neighbourhoods (Shaw, 2005).

1.2 Transport and social exclusion

A lack of suitable and affordable transport can be a significant barrier to participation in work, education, access to health services and social, cultural and recreational activities for socially disadvantaged groups of people (SEU, 2003).

For people who have a car or live in a household with a car their levels of transport and social inclusion are likely to be better than those who don’t. The gulf between people who have cars and those who don’t is widening and has serious implications for the extent to which individuals can participate and engage with their communities.

Lucas (2003) found that in developed nations over the last few decades, car ownership has grown dramatically and is now the norm in most households. The travel choices of people without cars have gradually been eroded, at the same time as the need to be more mobile has increased.

As a result, in highly mobile and car-dependant societies like Australia, a lack of access to a car is the main transport factor in social exclusion. In addition, dispersed land uses, changing work and lifestyle patterns and the closure of local shops and other amenities has served to exacerbate the problem of poor access for non-car owning households (Lucas, 2003).
1.3 Most socially excluded groups

A UK report (DETR/TRaC, 2000) found “clear connections” between transport and social exclusion, particularly among certain groups. These included unemployed people, families with young children, young people, older people and those on low incomes. Similar research conducted in Europe found that older people, people with disabilities, women and ethnic minority households are more likely to not have a license or access to a car (Lucas, 2003).

Some non-driving groups, like older people, disabled people and young people without licenses are relatively easy to identify and study. Other groups, like ethnic minorities tend to be more difficult to research and are often referred to as “hidden groups”. Little is known about the extent transport related social exclusion has on these people.

This report has focused on the following non-driving sub-groups:

- older people
- disabled people
- young unlicensed people.

1.4 The aged and exclusion

For most older people, their main mode of transport is the private car (OECD, 2001). Those who are physically healthy enough to drive safely, generally have good levels of social participation and inclusion.

However, as people age, deteriorating health can mean they need to stop driving. For most older people, this is a decision they make for themselves, usually after taking advice from health professionals. For others, it is forced upon them due to a sudden or serious illness, or in a small number of cases, if they are reported to their local licensing authority and do not successfully pass a driving assessment. The prevalence of health problems and declining eyesight are the most commonly cited reasons for driving cessation (Whelan, Langford, Oxley, Koppel and Charlton, 2006).

A recent US study of driving expectancy found that there is a difference in life expectancy and driving expectancy. The implication is that both men and women will live for a period of time when they will be transport dependent. It is estimated that men will live for as many as 6 years when they will be transport dependant and 11 years for women. It is the people aged over 85 years that are especially vulnerable to transport disadvantage due to an inability to drive (Freeman, Gange, Muñoz & West, 2006).

For many older people, driving cessation is a stressful experience and can have a negative effect on their psychological health and quality of life. Driving cessation is associated with a number of adverse consequences, including reduced out-of-home activities, loss of independence, loss of personal identity, decreased life satisfaction and an increase in depressive symptoms (Harrison and Ragland, 2003).

UK researchers have concluded that a lack of adequate transport for older non-drivers can result in poor access to healthy and affordable food and a reduced ability to socialise and visit friends and family. These circumstances can act to reinforce and perpetuate ill-health. It can also lead to a reduced take-up of medical services, resulting in increased costs to healthcare providers due to failed appointments and delayed medical interventions (Lucas 2003).

In order to minimise some of the negative aspects of driving cessation, usage of alternative forms of transport is important. Other forms of transport are required to enable older people to continue to access services, activities and socialise with other people when they stop driving. Maintaining mobility levels is essential to well-being and quality of life (Whelan et al, 2006).

Finding adequate forms of transport for older non-drivers is not simple. For some older people public transport provides a good level of mobility and access. However, for many others it does not. As older people develop age-related health problems, they are more likely to experience problems walking and using public transport before they experience difficulties driving (Whelan et al, 2006). Subsequently, when poor health means it is time to stop driving, public transport is not an option.

Earlier RACV research identified that transport services available for older people who are unable to drive are inadequate. The research found that many non-drivers found it difficult to undertake the most essential trips like buying groceries or getting to medical appointments (Harris and Tapsas, 2006).
Understanding the impact that not driving has on older people and the de-licensing process that older drivers go through is important as it helps to determine appropriate policy and program responses. Also understanding what alternative forms of transport are usable and acceptable to older non-drivers is important if the transport options for non-drivers are to be improved. This research will investigate some of these issues among older people and also, where appropriate, compare the results with the earlier RACV research.

1.5 The disabled and exclusion

The other group widely recognised as experiencing problems with transport are the disabled. Currie and Allen (2007) reported that an accepted definition of what is a disability is offered by Disabled Person’s International who wrote that “a disability is the functional limitation within the individual caused by physical, mental or sensory impairment”. As many as 20% of all Australians have a disability of some kind according the Australian Bureau of Statistics, and a large number of them are in the older age groups. The ABS found that 51% of people aged over 60 years reported having some form of disability (ABS, 2003).

Many people with disabilities are unable to drive due to their impairment (Ker, 1996) and as a result can experience problems in finding employment and participating in social and recreational activities. A national inquiry into disability and employment found that difficulties getting to and from work were a major barrier in people with disabilities finding employment (HREOC, 2005).

The ABS found that 30% of disabled persons report having difficulty using public transport, and 2% report that they rarely leave their homes. Not unexpectedly, it was found that the more severe the disability, the less likely people were to use public transport (ABS, 2003).

The difficulties many people with disabilities face in finding employment, together with the higher transport costs many incur due to the need to use taxis or door-to-door transport, can have an extremely detrimental effect on the quality of life of people with disabilities. The situation is exacerbated for those living in rural or outer metropolitan areas due to the lack of public transport in those areas, and Currie and Allen (2007) reported that a higher share of people with disabilities in Australia live in regional or rural Australia.

Research conducted among disabled people in Scotland (Capability Scotland, 2004) found that inappropriate public transport provision contributes to the social exclusion and disadvantage of disabled people in every area of life. Inadequate public transport provision can:

- Limit the educational choices of adults and children.
- Affect people’s ability to socialise, limit people’s choices of where to shop, and prevent people from going on holiday or on day trips.
- Prevent people from looking for work, attending interviews and accepting offers of work, and limit where people can work and what hours they can work.

This Scottish research also found that the difficulties individuals have using public transport can have hidden emotional and social effects including:

- Individuals can experience significant stress, anxiety and uncertainty related to using and planning to use public transport, with many losing confidence in their ability to travel.
- Some people have to plan every aspect of their lives around the transport available, leading to a complete lack of spontaneity in their lives.
- Disabled people spend more money on transport but go out less than other sections of the population. This has an extremely significant impact on the many disabled people who have low incomes.
- How long a journey takes influences the amount of energy needed to perform a journey, and therefore affects the decision of whether or not to travel.
- Disabled people face various additional inconveniences when trying to use public transport, including: difficulties getting on or off vehicles; lack of information about accessibility; unsuitable toilet facilities; concerns about personal safety; the level of comfort experienced during the journey; difficulties in getting into the bus or train station.

Despite the widely held understanding that many disabled people are transport disadvantaged, very little research has been conducted among disabled Australians about their levels of transport and mobility, and the subsequent effect this has on their lives.
1.6 Young people and exclusion

Young people living in rural and regional Victoria and in outer suburban areas can be transport disadvantaged. Those who are too young to be licensed or who cannot afford a car are particularly isolated if no adequate alternative transport services operate in their local area.

A review of travel behaviours among young people aged under 24 years shows that car dependence, especially getting lifts with parents is the most dominant mode of transport for young Australians (Currie, 2007).

A recent Australian study (Currie, Gammie, Waingold, Paterson, & Vandersar, 2005) found that young people living in areas of rural Australia that had poor transport had restricted education, employment and social/recreational opportunities. Limited transport services were reported to have a more profound effect on young people living in remote rural areas than in regional towns (LGCTWG, 2007).

The extent of research among young non-drivers is not extensive. Some studies report that the education and employment opportunities for young people living in rural areas have been negatively influenced by a lack of suitable transport. However other studies have reported that it is mainly the social and recreational trips that have been foregone due to a lack of transport (Currie, 2007).

Unlike most older and disabled non-drivers, one would assume that many young unlicensed people will go on to get a drivers license and will not be transport disadvantaged in the future. However, the impact of poor mobility on young people, especially those living in rural or outer metropolitan areas, is potentially important and warrants being researched.

1.7 Need for research

There has been some research conducted in developed countries into transport related social exclusion, predominantly in the UK. However, there has only been limited research in Australia into the role that transport plays in social exclusion in cities and in rural areas (Hurni, 2006).

Further Australian research is needed to:

- Quantify the extent of transport difficulties faced by non-drivers
- Understand specific issues among each group of non-drivers
- Engage with the specific groups affected to better understand how improvements can be made.

1.8 Research aims and objectives

RACV decided to undertake a detailed market research among three sub-groups of non-drivers to better understand the issues faced by: older people, people with disabilities and young unlicensed people.

The aim of the research was to provide information about the issues non-drivers face, determine current strategies non-drivers employ to undertake some trips and identify ways non-drivers may be assisted to stay mobile to meet their daily and social needs, in the future.

The specific objectives of the research were to:

- Gain an understanding about why they are non-drivers and to explore their transition experience of going from driver to non-driver
- Identify what difficulties non-drivers face in terms of undertaking trips and in using alternative transport options
- Determine what barriers non-drivers face when trying to access various forms of transport
- Understand what improvements would help non-drivers to become more socially included
- Determine what transport services non-drivers use and how well these are meeting their needs
- Determine what other services could be offered to assist non-drivers
- Explore the issues surrounding the mobility of young Victorians who are not yet licensed.
Methodology

Several different methodological approaches were used to address the research objectives across the three different sample groups. These approaches are described below.

2.1 Survey of older non-drivers

Both qualitative and quantitative methodologies were used to survey older non-drivers. The sample comprised non-drivers who were aged over 65 years and who lived in Victoria. The sample was drawn from RACV’s membership database. An interrogation of this database enabled people who met this criterion to be easily identified. RACV has a total membership base of 1.9 million and therefore is relatively representative of the Victorian population.

Older people who were aged over 65 and who had recently ceased being RACV members were contacted via letter and informed of the survey and asked to inform RACV if they did not wish to be contacted for the survey.

A qualitative research approach was used initially to understand first-hand the experience of non-drivers and the issues they face when accessing services and community activities.

In-depth interviews with 12 people aged over 65 were undertaken. Ten of these were face-to-face interviews that took place in the older person’s home, and two were telephone interviews. The telephone in-depth interviews were undertaken with people who lived in remote areas.

Following the qualitative research, quantitative research was used to measure the extent to which attitudes and perceptions are held among older non-drivers. The questionnaire was administered using CATI (computer assisted telephone interviewing) and took an average of 15 minutes to complete. A total of 225 people aged over 65 who had stopped driving were interviewed. The sample characteristics of the older non-drivers who participated in the research are shown in Table 1.

The qualitative phase of this research was undertaken in October 2007 and the quantitative between January and March 2008.

Table 1:
Sample Characteristics of older non-driver survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample Characteristics</th>
<th>Older non drivers (n=225) %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outer metro</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65-69</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-74</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75-79</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-84</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85-89</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90+</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.2 Survey of disabled non-drivers

Similar to the survey of older non-drivers, the disabled non-driver study comprised both qualitative and quantitative approaches.

In-depth interviews with 12 disabled people aged between 16 and 64 were undertaken. Six of these were face-to-face interviews that took place in the person’s home, and six were telephone interviews. The telephone in-depth interviews were undertaken with people who lived in remote areas.

Following the qualitative research, a quantitative survey was used to measure the attitudes and perceptions held. The questionnaire was administered using CATI (computer assisted telephone interviewing) and took an average of 15 minutes to complete. A total of 74 disabled people who did not drive were interviewed.

The qualitative phase of this research was undertaken in October 2007 and the quantitative between January and March 2008.

The sample for the survey of disabled non-drivers was drawn from a range of sources. These included the RACV wheelchair membership database, as well as sample sourced by DBM Research from a variety of organisations that assist or work with people with disabilities.

The sample included a mix of:

- Disabled people who are unable to drive and have never driven
- Locations (i.e. metropolitan, outer metropolitan, rural)
- Socio-demographic status.

The sample characteristics of the disabled non-driver survey are shown in Table 2.

Table 2:
Sample Characteristics of disabled non-driver survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample Characteristics</th>
<th>Disabled non drivers (n=74)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outer metro</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-34</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-49</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-54</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-60</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.3 Young non-driver survey

As with the other two sample groups, both qualitative and quantitative methodologies were used in the survey of young drivers.

In the qualitative phase, in-depth interviews with young people living in rural Victoria were conducted as were interviews with professionals working with young people in rural Victoria. A total of ten face to face interviews with young non-drivers aged 16 to 18 were undertaken and four interviews with youth workers were undertaken.

The qualitative research was conducted in November 2007 and was undertaken by DBM Research.

The quantitative research phase involved an internet survey of young people aged between 16-20 years and this was undertaken by Kerryn Alexander Research. This was part of a larger survey that also looked at the experiences of young drivers. RACV was provided with a link to the survey which was placed on its free2go\(^1\) website. The availability of the survey was promoted by RACV to its members via a free2go e-newsletter and through Royal Auto. free2go members and other young people self-selected to participate in the survey. An incentive of a 'small prize' (headphones) was offered to encourage participation.

It should be noted that the methodology was not able to provide a sample which is necessarily representative of young Victorians generally, hence the findings should not be generalised to the Victorian population.

The survey was conducted during April and May 2008. A total of 207 young people who were non-drivers aged 16 to 20 years completed the survey. Non-drivers were defined as learner drivers, probationary drivers without access to a vehicle and those who did not have a learners permit or license. Demographic characteristics of the sample are shown in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3: Young non-drivers sample structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probationary driver (no access to any vehicle)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner driver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-driver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melbourne (&lt;20 km from city)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melbourne (&gt;20 km from city)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large country town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural area</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) Free2go is an RACV membership program offering people aged 18 years or who are in Year 12 free RACV membership for a year. RACV currently has 90,000 free2go members. A number of free2go members have a Learners Permit but not a Driver’s License.
Results

The results of the surveys from the three sub-groups of non-drivers are presented separately in this section. It should be noted that there are a number of older non-drivers who could also be classified as disabled. However, for the purposes of this research we defined older people as those aged 65 years and over with or without a disability and disabled people as those aged 18-64 years with a disability. This is to enable comparisons between the results of this survey of older non-drivers and the one undertaken by RACV in 2002 and reported in Harris and Tapsas (2006). It is also worthwhile differentiating between younger disabled people and older people, given that younger people may still potentially be in the workforce or would like to be.

3.1 Survey of older non-drivers

The older non-drivers were asked about why they had stopped driving, what impact not driving had on their life and what forms of transport they now use.

3.1.1 Driving cessation

Most of the older non-drivers surveyed had been a driver and most had stopped driving within the past five years. Almost half of those who have stopped driving (42%) claimed this was due to being too sick/incapacitated, followed by one in ten (10%) who claimed a loss of confidence resulted in driving cessation. A fear of driving after having a crash (6%) and the expense of running a vehicle (6%) were also reasons for not driving. Some typical responses given during the qualitative research included:

"I am getting cataracts on the eyes and it’s dangerous to drive like that.”

"I had an accident in the driveway and I was worried that if it happened in the street I would kill someone”

Details of the reasons for stopping driving from the quantitative research are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1:
Reasons why stopped driving

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Too sick / incapacitated</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less confident</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had accident - got scared</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too expensive to run vehicle</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Found it too stressful</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too old to be driving</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noticed driving was unsafe</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The doctor told me to stop</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thought it was time</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision impairment</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car needed work/ replacing</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No need to drive (as much)</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
```

"What are the reasons why you stopped driving?"
Base: Driven car in past (n=187)
Two thirds of those who stopped driving (66%) claimed they made the decision on their own. Advice from a doctor (13%) and a health specialist (7%) were also cited as being influential factors when making this decision. Suggestions from children (10%) or a partner (5%) were factors for fewer retired drivers. A total of 6% of those surveyed said they had stopped due to being reported to VicRoads for a licence assessment.

Just over one in ten (12%) respondents reported having to undertake a VicRoads assessment to determine their driving ability. One fifth (27%) of those who undertook a VicRoads assessment had their licence cancelled based on the assessment. All who failed the assessment process agreed that the assessor explained the reasons for failing the assessment. Most of the people who underwent a VicRoads assessment were relatively happy with the process. Some suggested that the level of communication they received could be improved.

3.1.2 Consequences of not driving

Older non-drivers were asked about what effect not driving had on them. A loss of independence was cited as the most common drawback of not driving, with almost one in three (28%) respondents making specific mention of this, followed by those who indirectly cited a loss of independence by needing to rely on others (14%) and public transport (12%). A loss of spontaneity (17%) and difficulty doing basics (20%) were also cited as some of the drawbacks of not driving. The following experiences among older non-drivers were typical:

“I would rather not ask people to do it unless I really needed them. I like being independent.”

“I get depressed…and sometimes I just can’t get out of bed. I’ll sleep ‘til lunchtime. I need motivation, something to do, somewhere to go.”

Details of the quantitative research into the impact of not driving are shown below.

**Figure 2:** Negative impact of not driving

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drawback</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loss of independence</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of spontaneity</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult to do basics (e.g. shopping)</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need to rely on / burden others</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need to rely on public transport</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling lonely / isolated</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General difficulties getting around</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unable to go on trips or holidays</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takes longer to get around</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can only travel limited distances</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need to rely on other forms of transport</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenses incurred</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of confidence</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
```

“What, if any, are the drawbacks of not driving?”
Base: All respondents aged 65+ (n=225)
3.1.3 Extent that transport needs are being met

Respondents were asked to what extent they thought their current transport needs were being met. Almost half (48%) of the older non-drivers surveyed felt their needs were fully met and 45% said that their transport needs were only partially met. Three percent said their needs were not met at all.

Figure 3:
Extent older non-drivers transport needs are met

![Chart showing extent older non-drivers transport needs are met]

“Would you say your transport needs are fully met, partially met, not met or not met at all?”
Base: All respondents aged 65+ (n=225)

3.1.4 Transport alternatives

Respondents were asked about what forms of local transport they were aware of in their local area. Almost two thirds of respondents stating they were aware of taxis (64%) as an alternative form of transport. Taxis were also the most commonly used form of alternative transport with just over half the respondents (54%) using them regularly. Although to a lesser extent compared to taxis, the use of electronic mobility scooters (39%), buses (26%) and trains (17%) was also relatively high. These findings are shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4:
Local Transport: awareness and usage

![Chart showing local transport awareness and usage]

“Can you tell me what transport options you are aware of in your local area?”
“Can you tell me do you currently use [transport available in area]?”
Base: All respondents aged 65+ (n=225)
3.1.5 Difficulty using transport modes

Respondents were asked whether they ever had difficulty using each of the transport modes that operated in their area.

Buses are clearly the most challenging form of transport, with over one third of respondents (36%) experiencing difficulty when using buses. Trains and trams also proved to be problematic (difficulty experienced by 16% and 8% of respondents respectively) although to a lesser extent.

The most common problem with buses and trams was boarding and alighting the vehicle (36% and 46% respectively). Further, getting a scooter or wheelchair aboard the vehicle was also problematic. In comparison, difficulties associated with using trains was due to the location of the station, with 24 per cent of respondents experiencing difficulty walking to and from the station and one fifth (19%) complaining that the station was too far away.

Reasons for not using taxis were dissimilar to difficulties associated with using trains, trams and buses, with cost being the only real deterrent for people using them.

The reason for not using local community transport was not needing to use it. The other deterrent was the difficulty arranging pick-up/drop-off time. These findings are shown in Figure 5.

**Figure 5:**
Method of transport difficult to use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transport Mode</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Train</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tram</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxi</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A frame or stick for walking</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifts from family/friends</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electric Mobility Scooter</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community (Council) Transport</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheelchair</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of the forms of transport in area</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"Which of the following, if any, do you have difficulty using? (only asked of forms of transport available in local area.)"

Base: All respondents aged 65+ (n=225)

Respondents were also asked about who provided them with lifts or rides. Respondents claim that they mostly rely on those close to them for transport assistance and information. One in three (38%) respondents relied on their daughter for transport assistance and information. Sons (15%), partners (9%) and friends (10%) also played a role, but to a lesser extent.
3.1.6 Level of difficulty in undertaking activities

Respondents were asked how hard it was to undertake a range of activities due to their non-driver status. Activities ranged from everyday things like going to the corner store or buying groceries, to going on holidays, visiting family and friends and undertaking hobbies. The results are detailed in Table 4.

### Table 4:
Difficulty of older non-drivers completing tasks without driving

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Don't Do</th>
<th>Easy</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Hard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit friends</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to the corner store</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit the doctor</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit family</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to the pub/entertainment venues</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to special events</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go shopping for groceries</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping for non-grocery items</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to clubs and societies</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate in neighbourhood activities</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do volunteer work</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take part in hobbies</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to church</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go on holidays</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to work or study</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Could you please tell me how easy you find the following tasks as a result of not driving?”
Base: All respondents aged 65+ (n=225)

The results indicate that for many older non-drivers, it is the social and recreational trips that are difficult to undertake, with 51% reporting it was difficult to visit family and 48% saying it was difficult to visit friends. Almost half the people surveyed (47%) said it was difficult to go on holidays and 49% found it hard to attend functions or special events. While many older non-drivers could relatively easily undertake essential trips like getting groceries or going to medical appointments, 29% stated it was hard to go grocery shopping and 29% found it difficult to visit their doctor.

“It’s the little things that are annoying, like running out of milk in between shopping trips. It’s difficult to get to the shops outside of my scheduled weekly trip with my daughter.”

3.1.7 Comparison with findings from the 2002 non-driver research

The RACV undertook a survey of 125 older retired drivers in 2002 (reported in Harris and Tapsas, 2006). The findings of this research were quite similar to those of this survey, especially the types of activities that are forgone as a result of not driving.
The results from the two surveys were also similar in the types of transport used, with taxi travel being commonly used. One difference in the findings related to trips with family and friends, which was commonly cited as a means of transport in the 2002 survey, but it was a less commonly used form of transport in the 2008 survey. This may reflect a change in demographics with families and adult children being less available to drive older relatives due to work or other commitments or living further away from them geographically. It could also be a result of the different methodology used in the 2008 survey which was a telephone survey, whereas the methodology employed in 2002 was a face-to-face survey. These findings are shown in figure 6.

**Figure 6:**
Comparison of transport usage among older non-drivers 2002 vs 2008

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Don’t do %</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard to undertake task %</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t do %</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard to undertake task %</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit friends</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to the corner store</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit the doctor</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit family</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to the pub/entertainment venues</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to special events</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go shopping for groceries</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping for non-grocery items</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to clubs and societies</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do volunteer work</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take part in hobbies</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to church</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go on holidays</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

```

"Could you please tell me how easy you find the following tasks as a result of not driving?"
Base 2008: All respondents aged 65+ (n=225) Base 2002: Older non-drivers aged 65+ (n=100).
3.2 Survey of disabled non-drivers

Disabled non-drivers (aged 18-64 years old) were also asked a range of questions about their driving background, what transport they use and what the impact of not having a car has on them.

3.2.1 Driving history and driving cessation

Of the respondents surveyed, 36% had never driven in the past, while 64% had previously held a licence. The predominant reason for stopping driving was health problems (70%). The other reasons given were that they felt unsafe (9%) and they had a crash or near miss (9%).

3.2.2 Consequences of not driving

Disabled non-drivers were asked about what effect not driving had on them. A loss of independence was cited as the most common drawback of not driving, with over a quarter (27%) of respondents making specific mention of this, followed by those who indirectly cited a loss of spontaneity (23%). Needing to rely on public transport (26%) and relying on others (19%) were also seen as negative consequences of not driving. Details of findings are shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7: 
Negative impact of not driving

3.2.3 Extent that transport needs are being met

Respondents were asked to what extent they thought their current transport needs were being met. Less than a third (30%) of people with disabilities felt their needs were fully met. The majority of people with disabilities felt their transport needs were only partially met (60%) and 7% said their needs were not met at all.
3.2.4 Awareness and usage of transport modes

Disabled non-drivers were asked about what forms of transport operated in their area and what transport they had used recently.

Respondents were asked what types of transport operated within their local area. Most people (78%) were aware of taxis and 70% used them regularly. Trains were the next most commonly used form of transport (used by 55%) followed by buses which were used by over a quarter (28%) of respondents. These findings are shown in Figure 9.

3.2.5 Suggestions for improvements

Disabled non-drivers were asked how transport could be improved. Easier access to public transport was the most commonly suggested improvement (32%). A larger number of accessible or wheelchair taxis was suggested by 14% of respondents and cheaper taxis or greater subsidies was also suggested by 14%.
Figure 10:
Suggestions for improvement to transport

```
"Do you have any suggestions for improvement to ensure your transport needs are better met in the future?"
Base: People with a disability with transport needs only partially met or not met at all (n=50)

3.2.6 Level of difficulty in undertaking activities
Respondents were asked how hard it was to undertake a range of activities due to their non-driver status. Activities ranged from going to the corner store or buying groceries, to going on holidays, visiting family and friends and undertaking hobbies. The results are detailed in Table 6.

Table 6:
Difficulty of disabled non-drivers completing tasks without driving

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Don’t Do</th>
<th>Easy</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Hard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visit friends</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to the corner store</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit the doctor</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit family</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to the pub/entertainment venues</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to special events</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go shopping for groceries</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping for non-grocery items</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to clubs and societies</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate in neighbourhood activities</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do volunteer work</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take part in hobbies</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to church</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go on holidays</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to work or study</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
```

"Could you please tell me how easy you find the following tasks as a result of not driving?" Base: All respondents with a disability 18-64yrs (n=74)
As with the older non-driver sample, the results indicate that for many non-drivers with disabilities, it is the social and recreational trips that are difficult to undertake. Visiting friends and family were among the most difficult activities to undertake due to a lack of transport, with over half the respondents rating these tasks as difficult. Typical responses included:

“I can’t get to the social club I used to go to – it is just too far for me to go out at night and even with a half price taxi fare I could not afford it.”

“When my friends call out of the blue for a coffee I can never go. I need to book the taxi a couple of hours in advance to make sure it is available.”

The majority of people with disabilities surveyed (70%) find it difficult to go on holidays and 69% find it hard to attend functions or special events. While almost half of the disabled people surveyed did not work, 27% found it difficult to get to work (or almost half of those who worked). Over one third of respondents said it was difficult to visit the doctor (35%) and to get groceries (36%).

3.3 Survey of younger non-drivers

A total of 207 young Victorians (aged 16-20 years old) were surveyed via the internet about their transport and mobility needs and behaviours. They included non-drivers, learner permit holders and probationary drivers who did not have access to a vehicle.

3.3.1 Getting to work/school

Respondents were asked to rate on a scale of 0-10, (where 0=not at all difficult and 10=extremely difficult) how difficult it is for them to get to school, TAFE, uni or work.

As shown in Figure 11 more than two thirds gave a rating of 0 to 4, indicating that it was not very difficult for them to get to these locations. Only 7% gave a difficulty rating of 8 or higher. The mean rating was 2.9.

Those living outside Melbourne did not report greater difficulty getting to school, TAFE, uni or work, if fact there was a trend for greater difficulty to be reported by Melbourne residents, particularly in outer Melbourne.

Figure 11:
Level of difficulty in getting to school/uni/work

Although differences were not significantly different, the mean scores by location were:

- Inner Melb: 2.9
- Outer Melb: 3.4
- Large town: 2.1
- Country town: 2.5
- Rural area: 2.3

3.3.2 Getting to other places

Respondents were asked to rate on a scale of 0-10, (where 0=not at all difficult and 10=extremely difficult) how difficult it is for them to get to other places they want to get to (other than school, work or university).

As shown in the figure below, respondents found it more difficult to get to other places, than to get to school, university or work. The mean rating was 4.6. Although differences were not significantly different (due to small sample sizes in some locations), the mean scores by location were:

- Inner Melb: 4.1
- Outer Melb: 4.7
- Large town: 3.9
- Country town: 4.8
- Rural area: 6.4
3.3.3 Inability to get to places
As shown in Figure 12, most respondents had some times when they were unable to get where they wanted to go, however for most respondents this occurred only a few times a month to a few times a year.

Only 14% of respondents reported that they were unable to get where they wanted to go every week. However, of the respondents from rural areas, over half indicated that they could not get where they wanted to go every week (please note that sample size for rural residents was low n=16).

Figure 13: How often not able to get to places
Almost three quarters of respondents indicated that they could not get where they wanted to go because there was no one to drive them. No or limited public transport was an issue for one third of respondents and was a greater problem for those living in country towns (67%) or rural areas (56%).

Figure 14: Reasons not able to get to places
“What is the main reason or reasons that you not able to get to places that you would like to go?” Base: non-drivers, learner drivers and probationary drivers without access to a vehicle (n=207)
3.3.4 Problems with public transport

All of the respondents were asked whether some characteristics of public transport services in Victoria were problems for them. The responses are outlined in Table 7.

Table 7: Problems with Public Transport

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>No problem</th>
<th>Slight problem</th>
<th>Reasonable problem</th>
<th>Big problem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No/limited PT where live</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No PT late at night</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced PT at weekends</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PT doesn’t go where I need</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of synchronisation</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delays with PT</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of PT</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal safety concerns</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"To what degree are the following issues with public transport a problem for you?"
Base: non-drivers, learner drivers and probationary drivers without access to a vehicle (n=207)

Of those that did have access to public transport, half indicated that they experienced problems with it.

The results from this survey suggest that no or limited public transport is barely a problem for young people in inner Melbourne, a slight problem in outer Melbourne and in large towns, and quite a large problem in country towns and rural areas.

The types of problems young people had included no public transport late at night and a lack of public transport on weekends. This is a reasonable or large problem for many young people across Victoria. These problems are clearly greatest in country towns and rural areas where 60% of respondents indicated that it was a ‘big problem’ for them.

The availability of public transport where young people need to go is a similar problem to the lack of public transport late at night and on weekends, for young people across Victoria. Yet again, the problem is greatest in country towns and rural areas where 40% of respondents indicated that it was a ‘big problem’ for them.

Overall, 11% of respondents indicated that not feeling safe on public transport was ‘a big problem’. Feelings of personal safety on public transport varied by gender, with female respondents more likely to indicate that this was a ‘big problem’ (15%). No differences were observed on the basis of location or other demographic variables.
A lack of transport in Victoria means that many non-drivers miss out on undertaking important trips and activities. This can have a very detrimental effect on their quality of life and sense of well-being.

All of the non-driver sub-groups surveyed in this research were adversely affected by a lack of transport to varying degrees. The disabled non-drivers surveyed were the most unhappy with how well their transport needs were met. Many older non-drivers were foregoing trips they used to make as drivers, predominantly trips for social and recreational purposes. A small number of young non-drivers, especially those living in rural or remote areas were adversely affected by a lack of transport. The implication of the findings for each non-driver group is discussed below.

4.1 Older non-drivers

Most older people who have stopped driving had reduced mobility as a result. The current research findings were similar to those found in an earlier survey of older non-drivers conducted by RACV in 2002 (reported in Harris and Tapsas, 2006). Older non-drivers forgo many trips and activities that they once enjoyed after they stopped driving. Many miss out on social and recreational trips due to a lack of transport. A small but not insignificant number of older non-drivers are unable to get to their doctors and to local shops to buy groceries. This obviously has a major impact on their physical well-being.

In addition, being unable to get to social and recreational events can have serious psychological implications for older people, and isolation, loneliness and depression can result due to their lack of social participation.

Given that the population of older people will increase significantly in coming decades, it is paramount that measures are implemented to ensure the safety and well being of older people when they stop driving. These measures need to address a range of areas including:

- Encouraging older people to continue driving if they are safe to do so
- Helping older people decide when it is time to stop driving
- Providing both practical and emotional support to older people who need to stop driving
- Providing information to older people about what transport options are available to help them maintain their existing level of mobility when they stop driving
- Ensuring that public transport, taxis and community transport better meets the needs of older non-drivers.

A report by the OECD (2001) stated that one important measure to help older people’s mobility levels is to extend their driving life for as long as they are safe. They stated that “it has been well established that loss of mobility can have serious consequences for older people. Loss of independence and its adverse effects on an individual’s sense of well-being may carry greater weight than any risk of harm from traffic accidents” (OECD, 2001, p81). This is an area that has not been seriously explored by Governments in Australia, as the emphasis to date has focused on the de-licensing process as people age.

Previous research has shown that many older people do not adequately plan for a time when they won’t drive (Oxley and Fildes, 2004). Programs are needed to encourage older people to give more consideration to their future mobility especially if they need to stop or limit their driving. Decisions about where to live in retirement and what services and transport facilities are nearby should all be considered by older people, even if they are healthy and still driving safely.

Some ways to improve the usage of public transport among older non-drivers include encouraging greater public transport use while older people are still drivers, so they are less intimidated when they are forced into using it as non-drivers. Greater training and information about public transport usage would assist older people, as would more accessible, better designed public transport services.

Governments have focused much of their policy and program efforts in the past on the accessibility of public transport. While this is important, it is essential to recognise that public transport alone, regardless of how efficient, affordable or accessible it is, will not solve all of the mobility problems of the elderly. By the time many
older people stop driving, they are too incapacitated to use public transport. These people currently rely on rides with family and friends, taxis and to a small extent community transport. As this group will grow considerably with the ageing of the population, further services are urgently needed to cater for their mobility needs. Detailed investigations of whether demand-responsive transport can address some of the problems faced by these non-drivers needs to be undertaken.

For many older people stopping driving is a significant life event, one that is often associated with either a gradual decline or an acute decline in their health. Health problems combined with a lack of transport can contribute to an increase in social isolation among older people. Initiatives aimed at encouraging older people to become or continue to be engaged with the community when they stop driving are needed, as are the necessary transport services to enable this to happen.

4.2 Mobility and disabled non-drivers

Disabled non-drivers were the most dissatisfied of the three survey groups with how their transport needs were being met. Many of the disabled non-drivers either could not or chose not to use some forms of public transport, especially buses and trams. The most commonly used form of transport overall was taxis, and the most utilised form of mass public transport was trains.

The results from this survey indicate that while many people with disabilities would like to participate in more social activities, their lack of transport precludes this. Many disabled people reported that it was difficult to attend social functions, to visit family and friends and to partake in their hobbies due to a lack of transport. For one third, even essential trips to visit the doctor or get groceries were difficult.

The implications of poor transport for disabled people can be far-reaching, especially in terms of access to employment. Of the people with disabilities that participated in this study, just over 50% were employed. It is not possible to determine from the data whether any of those that reported not working wanted to work or were looking for work. However, of those that did work, half reported that they found it difficult to get to and from work. The reasons why they found it difficult to get to work were not explored in this study, but certainly warrant further investigation. Access to employment is a key element in achieving social inclusion and more assistance is needed to ensure that transport is not a barrier for people with disabilities who are able and wish to work.

The provision of accessible public transport is imperative to creating a society whereby disabled people can have the same opportunities as those without disabilities. While ensuring that public transport is available and accessible to people with disabilities, whole trip accessibility is a key issue. Being able to access shops, offices and other services is just as critical as having transport to get to that location. Achieving this level of accessibility requires a more holistic approach to planning, designing and creating infrastructure and services. This will need a whole of government commitment from all levels of Government.

Improving the accessibility and level of mobility for disabled non-drivers will be increasingly important as the population ages and there will be an even greater number of people with disabilities in the future. A range of improvements are needed which include:

- Providing greater assistance in the form of information and funds, to help disabled people modify vehicles to enable them to continue driving if they are safe to do so
- Improving the level of metropolitan taxis services for wheelchair users
- Providing useful information about the accessibility of public transport
- Research into the times, destinations, routes and types of vehicle required to satisfy the transport needs of disabled people.

4.3 Young non-drivers

Most of the young non-drivers surveyed did experience some transport disadvantage in that they were sometimes unable to undertake social activities due to a lack of transport. Most however, were able to get to school, work or university without problem. The young people most adversely affected were those who lived in rural and remote areas. Those living in metropolitan areas were less affected and most could easily use available public transport services.

Young non-drivers differ from disabled and older non-drivers in that their transport options are likely to improve as most of them will go on to get a driver’s license. However, for a small number of young people living in rural or remote areas who choose to leave formal education before they turn 18, their employment options may be limited due to a lack of transport.
One of the priorities for the provision of transport services in rural and remote areas should involve enabling young people to access work either full-time, part-time or take up an apprenticeship.

Programs to encourage the involvement of businesses in offering transport solutions to young employees, especially apprentices, should be initiated. Education and employment services funded by Governments should address the transport needs of the young people who want to utilise these services.

4.4 Transport and social exclusion: Policy responses needed

The findings of this research confirm what has been found in previous Australian and international research studies: that people who do not have a car usually have very limited transport and mobility and this can have a detrimental effect on their quality of life. This problem is worse for some groups in the population like the aged and disabled and for people living in rural or remote areas (Stanley, Currie & Stanley, 2007).

Similar problems have been identified in other developed countries. Researchers in the UK and Europe concluded that the lack of policy and action in this area is because there has been no robust, transparent and accountable framework for assessing whether people are able to safely and affordably access the places they need to go. Local authorities who provide services and facilities do not tend to consider whether transport services are provided in places that people can reach without cars (Lucas, 2003). The same situation exists in Australia. At a population level in Australia, no one exactly knows who the transport disadvantaged are, where they live, where they need to go and what is the most appropriate form of transport to get them there. This information is critical if effective services are to be developed.

Similarly, public transport operators are not usually required to undertake research to determine whether people, especially those without cars, can access key services. It has been recommended that responsible Government Departments and transport operators should be required to:

- identify the people who experience exclusion and where they are located
- undertake research to determine whether their transport programs are having a positive effective on social inclusion
- develop a more inclusive user participation approach when determining the operation and management of transport systems (Shaw, 2005).

In order to address the problems associated with a lack of information about the needs of residents and of land-use planning, the UK Government has promoted an integrated approach to transport and local planning. They require local authorities to develop plans that promote locations that are accessible by public transport, walking and cycling. Local authorities are required to develop local area “accessibility plans” in order to receive federal transport funding (Lucas, 2003).

The effectiveness of this approach should be examined by Australian Governments. Initial reports on its success have indicated some teething problems in the willingness of key non-transport sectors to engage in policy action when transport is not an explicit part of their core delivery agenda (Lucas, 2003). It has also been noted that there is a limit to what land-use planning can achieve (Markett and Titheridge, 2004). However, it is still regarded as a very promising policy initiative and reflects a central Government that takes land-use planning and accessibility seriously.

At an operational level, there has been a growing emphasis in recent years on the increasingly important role of flexible, demand responsive services in meeting the transport needs of households without cars (Lucas, 2005). These services could offer flexible, kerb-to-kerb transport options for those who cannot access mass public transport, but do not require door-to-door services. More flexible demand responsive transport services need to be trialled in Australia to determine the extent to which they can alleviate transport related social isolation.

Responsible Governments in Australia are starting to recognise the importance of social inclusion in creating a healthy, prosperous and fair society. The Australia Government recently convened the Social Inclusion Board, and the South Australian Government has had a Social Inclusion Initiative within its Department of the Premier and Cabinet since 2002. However, unlike European countries, the impact that transport has on social inclusion has not been widely acknowledged.
In a report by the Australian Institute for Family Studies on behalf of the Australian Social Inclusion Board, Hayes, Gray and Edwards (2008) concluded that a key lesson learned from the social inclusion agendas in the UK, Europe and South Australia has been the importance of delivering multiple services. They wrote that “it is clear that placing the person in need of services at the centre for the “web of services” is crucial” (p.15). This approach will obviously only be effective if individuals have accessible, affordable, acceptable, and appropriate transport services to enable them to access these services.

4.5 Environmentally responsible solutions
The impact that transport has on climate change needs to be carefully considered when addressing the problem of social exclusion and transport.

It is incorrect to assume that non-drivers have little impact on transport related emissions. Many people who cannot drive still rely on a private vehicle for transport, travelling in a taxi or with a family member or friend. Subsequently, non-drivers still generate vehicle travel even though they do not drive themselves.

Many of the transport solutions that can help non-drivers are environmentally friendly as most involve some form of group transit. For instance, using a demand responsive minibus to get to the local supermarket is better for the environment than catching a taxi or asking a friend or family member to make a special trip (Stanley, Currie and Stanley, 2007).

This link between transport related exclusion and environmentally friendly transport modes has not been widely researched or discussed. Further research is needed to clarify the environmental benefits of the different forms of transport and mobility programs.
The results of this survey indicate that the characteristics and needs of non-drivers are diverse. Subsequently, there is no one simple solution to address this problem, but a range of actions are needed. If the current state of political inertia continues, social isolation caused by poor transport will worsen considerably and this will be compounded by the ageing of the population.

Policy responses at all levels of Government are needed to address social isolation caused by a lack of transport.

In order to improve mobility and reduce transport related social exclusion, RACV recommends that a range of policy and program initiatives be undertaken.

**Older non-drivers**

In order to improve the level of transport and mobility for older non-drivers, RACV recommends that responsible Governments implement:

- Programs to encourage older people to continue driving if they are safe to do so and programs to help older people decide when it is time to stop driving.
- Initiatives that provide both practical and emotional support to older people who need to stop driving.
- More information to older people and their families about what transport options are available to help them maintain their existing level of mobility when they stop driving.
- Programs to encourage older people to give more consideration to their future mobility especially if they need to stop or limit their driving, especially in relation to where they choose to live.
- Programs that provide training and information about public transport usage and a greater emphasis on ensuring more services are accessible for older and disabled people.
- Initiatives aimed at encouraging older people to become or continue to be engaged with the community when they stop driving.

**Disabled non-drivers**

A range of measures that improve mobility and accessibility would benefit both older and disabled non-drivers. These include:

- Improving land use planning so that accessibility is considered for the whole trip, to ensure that disabled people can access buildings, shops and other services as well as being able to use some form of public transport to get to their destination.
- Providing greater assistance in the form of information and funds, to help disabled people modify vehicles to enable them to continue driving if they are safe to do so.
- Improving the level of metropolitan taxis services for wheelchair users.
- Providing useful information about the accessibility of public transport.
- Conducting research into the times, destinations, routes and types of vehicle required to satisfy the transport needs of disabled people.

**Young non-drivers**

The emphasis of any programs targeting young people and mobility needs to be on the provision of services to assist young school-leavers get to workplaces. As such, RACV recommends that State and Federal Governments implement:

- Programs to encourage the involvement of businesses in offering transport solutions to young employees, especially apprentices, should be initiated.
- Programs that ensure that education and employment services funded by Governments address the transport needs of the young people who want to utilise the services or programs.
System-wide improvements

RACV recommends that:

• Improved land-use planning to ensure that accessibility to transport services and to other essential community services is a priority and the benefits of having a system whereby funding for transport is tied to local accessibility plans needs to be investigated.

• More accessible, frequent, reliable and comprehensive public transport services providing vital transport services to those in need as well as making it attractive enough to encourage drivers to use it.

• Funding for more demand responsive services that can bridge the gap between what can be offered by mass public transport and personalised door to door transport like taxis and community transport.

• Encouragement of businesses, especially in their role as employers, to ensure that people who are non-drivers (particularly disabled people and young people living in rural and remote areas) can undertake employment opportunities.

• A system where all Government policies are assessed for their transport and social exclusion implications is implemented.

• Developing and implementing programs to:
  - Prolong driving among older and disabled people when they are still safe to drive
  - Encourage greater usage of transport alternatives among older people while they are still driving possibly by offering some incentives to older people.
  - Encourage non-drivers to continue or increase their social participation

• Greater data collection at a local and State level about the accessibility and transport needs of non-drivers.
References


