



General Media Enquires

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Assessors concerned about untested migrant drivers

Department of Transport licence assessors have blasted a national campaign that has added extra countries to the Recognised Country and Experienced Driver Recognised Country categories

This means more people moving to Australia will not have to sit local driver tests, something the majority of WA's licence assessors have questioned in a series of union meetings.

Community and Public Sector Union/Civil Service Association Branch Secretary Toni Walkington said the assessors were concerned that the standard of driving in some of these countries was not as high as in Australia.

"Assessors told us they have regularly driven applicants from these countries back to licensing centres because many of them posed a serious risk on the road," Ms Walkington said.

"The community needs to know Western Australia's assessors mark to a standard and to lower that standard would be a compromise.

"The assessors are the ones who uphold road safety standards and make sure applicants only get a licence when they meet a certain standard."

Ms Walkington said assessors were only passing applicants who were safe on the road and complied with local standards.

"Now it could be open slather and undermine everything they are supposed to stand for."

The revised categories are under a national scheme that came into affect on March 1.

Ms Walkington said it was wrong for overseas licences to be transferred without a minimal test.

"We acknowledge it is a national decision and not a Department of Transport one but we call on the department to conduct an immediate review of the 'Recognised Country' and 'Experienced Driver Recognised Country' categories as a matter of priority and to conduct proper consultation with assessors as a part of this review."

"We also have to question why the Federal Government let this happen and call for them to review the situation as well."

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- In November 2012 the Austroads Board approved Bosnia-Herzegovina being added to Recognised Country status.
- The following countries have been granted Experienced Driver Recognised Country status: Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Cyprus, Poland and South Africa.

FOR COMMENT:

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