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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

# **Better hours for Learner Drivers – a step towards safety and practicality**

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Monday, 19 March 2012

The peak body representing young people across NSW has welcomed the Minister for Roads and Port's establishment of an Expert Panel to create a 1-day training program for learner drivers.

Director of Policy and Advocacy at the Youth Action & Policy Association (YAPA) NSW, Eamon Waterford, said "This is a great step forward to achieve two things – reduce the number of hours that young people have to complete to get their P's, but also make sure that they are safe and capable drivers.'

'Too many young people struggle to get to the current requirement of 120 hours on their L's. By converting 20 hours of driving into an intense 1-day course, we are going to see more young people able to access education and employment through having their licence', stated Mr. Waterford.

'One of the biggest issues is cost – if a young person's parents are working or don't drive themselves, or the young person is in out of home care, 120 hour-long lessons at \$60 a pop puts driving out of the range of most young people.

YAPA regularly receives reports from youth workers and young people across NSW that many young people miss out on crucial employment and education opportunities as a result of being unable to reach 120 hours.

'It will be important that support for disadvantaged young people is packaged with this one-day training course, to allow them to access it.

Critically, YAPA rejects that this will have a negative impact on young people's safety behind the wheel – an intensive course that deals with driver attitudes and learning how to manage incidents will support the next generation of safe drivers.

While safety is the number one priority when young people get behind the wheel of a car, YAPA believes this can be achieved while keeping driving hours to a level that doesn't make it impossible for young people to get their licence.

For further comment, please contact Eamon Waterford, YAPA Director – Policy & Advocacy on 0431 534 790.