

Learning to drive with a hand difference

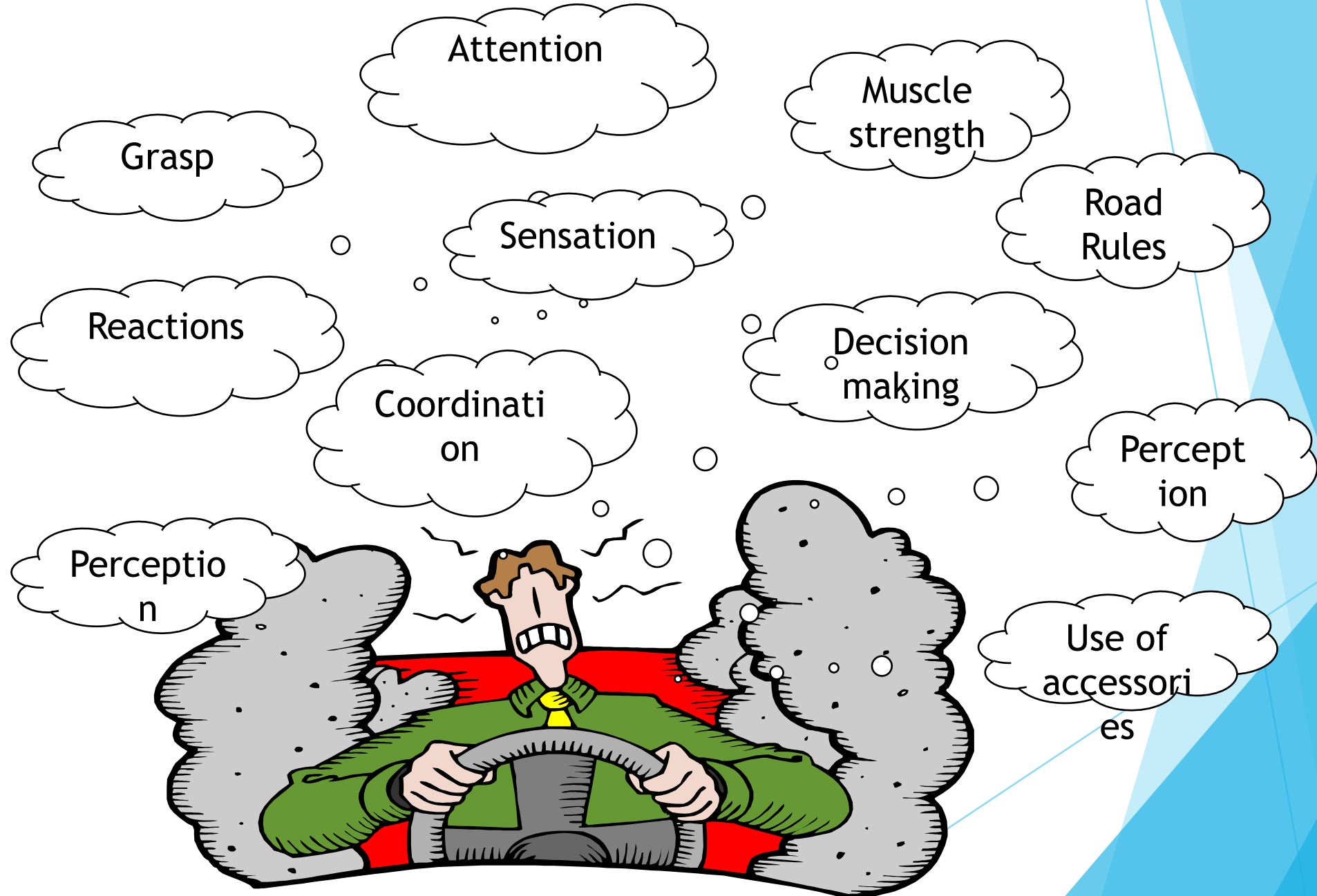
Janene Strahan
Occupational Therapist
Driver Assessor

Presentation at Elwood & St Kilda Neighbourhood Learning Centre
1 February 2020

Outline

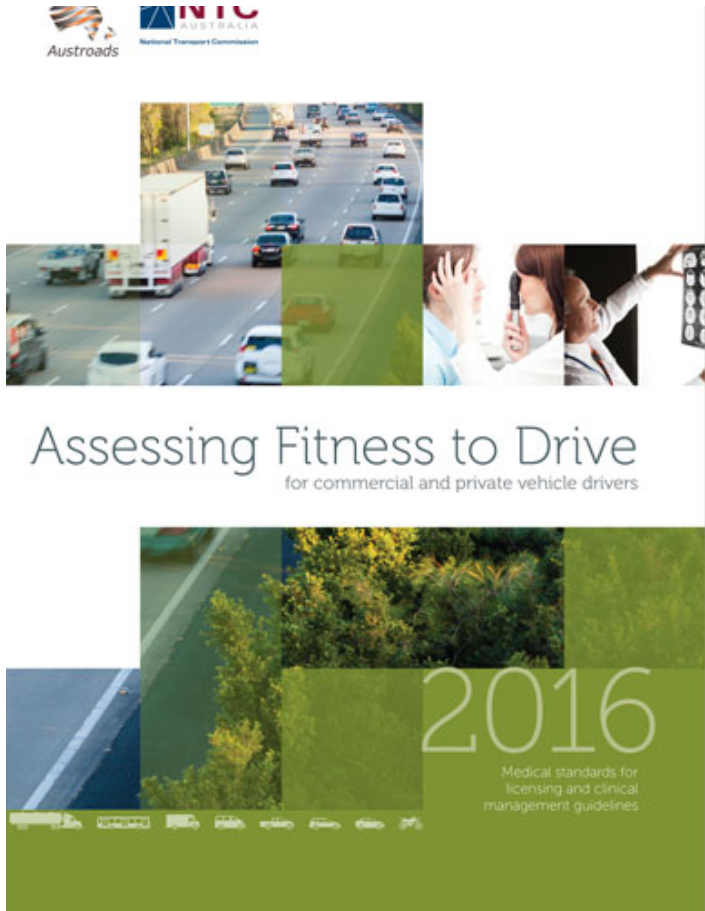
- Identifying when a driving assessment is required
- The Vic Roads process
- OT Driver Assessment Process
- Outcomes and Recommendations
- Modifications
- Funding Options
- Lived Experiences
- Specialised Driving Instructor
- Questions

Driving is a complex task!



Where do I start as a learner driver?

- ▶ Look at the Vic Roads website
<https://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/licences/health-and-driving/driving-with-a-disability/getting-your-licence>
- ▶ Discuss driving with your GP or other health professionals
- ▶ Study and sit for your learners- declare medical condition to VR when pass learners



The Vic Roads Process:

Assessing Fitness to Drive:
for commercial and
private vehicle drivers
www.austroads.com.au

Section 5- Musculoskeletal conditions

- ▶ Relevance to driving task: must be able to execute and coordinate many complex muscular movements in order to control the vehicle.
 - ▶ For example: operate ignition, hold and turn steering wheel, operate secondary controls consistently, operate gears/handbrake as required.
- ▶ If there is a concern in any of the above, Vic Roads needs to be made aware either when applying for your licence, or if it's an acquired injury, when returning to driving.
- ▶ Vic Roads will then decide on appropriate action.

Medical Standards

Condition	Private Standards	Commercial standards
Musculoskeletal disorder	<p>Not fit to hold an unconditional licence if the drivers ability to perform required driving activities is impaired.</p> <p>Fit to hold conditional licence taking into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Nature of driving- Information provided by Drs- Practical driving assessment- Any modifications to vehicle- Motorbike licences will require a practical driving assessment.	<p>Same as private standards- however all commercial vehicle drivers will require a practical driver assessment</p>

Roles and Responsibilities

Driver

- To report to the driver licensing authority any long-term or permanent injury or illness that may affect their ability to drive safely.
- To respond truthfully to questions from health professionals regarding their health status and likely impact on driving ability
- To adhere to prescribed medication
- To comply with requirements of a conditional licence as appropriate including periodic medical reviews

Roles and Responsibilities

Health Professionals

- To assess the persons medical fitness to drive based on Austroads published medical standards
- To advise the person regarding
 - Impact of condition or disability on ability to drive
 - Responsibility to report to licensing authority
- To treat , monitor and manage the condition with ongoing consideration to fitness to drive
- Report to the licensing authority regarding a persons fitness to drive in accordance with legislative requirements and public safety and ethical concerns

Roles and Responsibilities

Licensing Authority- Vic Roads

- To make all decisions regarding licensing of drivers- request relevant medical reports/information
- To make all decisions regarding issuing of conditional licences considering recommendations of health professionals as well as other relevant factors
- To educate the driving public of their responsibilities to report long term conditions

What happens next?



Vic Roads decide if a practical driving assessment is required.



Send list of OT's qualified to complete the assessment

Public Hospital
Private OT's

Occupational Therapy Driver Assessment Process

- Assessment process
 - Off Road (1.5 hours)
 - On Road (1 hour drive time)
- Usually separate days
- Costs involved for O.T Driver assessment
- Conducted in a dual control vehicle with a driving instructor
Driving instructor car matched to clients car
- Waiting times vary

Off road assessment

- Based on DORA Ax (Unsworth, et al 2011). Standardised sub tests with predictive qualities of the on road performance with certain tests and certain medical conditions.
- Driving History - client and relevant others
- Physical Ax- strength, ROM, coordination, A/B test
- Sensory Ax- fields, acuity, hearing, proprioception
- Cognitive Ax- relevant to driving: road law knowledge, problem solving tasks
- Other- pain, neglect, balance

On Road Assessment Process

- Learner versus experienced driver
- Trial no modifications
- Trial modifications
- Open/unrestricted licence
- Automatic fail if Driving Instructor intervenes (experienced driver versus learner)
- Habits versus unsafe driving
- Feedback is provided
- Report is provided to Vic Roads making recommendations
- Vic Roads make the final decisions regarding licensing
- Relevant professionals advised of outcome

Outcomes and Recommendations

Maintenance of licence

Conditional licence:

- Automatic only
- Modifications
- Lessons and reassessment

On road specific tasks

- ▶ What do we look for on road?
 - ▶ Can operate steering wheel to complete variety of manoeuvres such as 3 point turn, parking, U turn at roundabout.
 - ▶ Can operate and easily access indicators, lights, wipers
 - ▶ Need for power steering- lightened steering
- ▶ Criteria: Must have at least one hand controlling the steering wheel at all times. If need to remove the controlling hand from the wheel, this is considered unsafe car control- ie to access indicators, change gears

Modifications

- ▶ Steering assistance:
 - ▶ Spinner knob: basic
 - ▶ Indicator Extension
 - ▶ Multifunction spinner knobs
- ▶ Other Modifications:
 - ▶ Handbrake
 - ▶ Ignition
 - ▶ Gears
- ▶ Licence conditions



Some Spinner Knobs

Selecting a suitable car

- ▶ Think about what tasks maybe more difficult
- ▶ Ignition- press button versus key
- ▶ Side of indicators- L v R
- ▶ Automatic features of newer cars
- ▶ Criteria for funding bodies

Funding Options:

- ▶ There is two main funding options for modifications:
 - ▶ SWEP: State Wide Equipment Program
 - ▶ NDIS: National Disability Insurance Scheme

SWEP- State Wide Equipment Program

- ▶ Eligibility:
 - ▶ Long term disability
 - ▶ Permanent resident/Asylum seeker
 - ▶ Not eligible for NDIS, TAC, Workcover
- ▶ Covers up to \$10K of modifications every 7 years
- ▶ Waiting time varies
- ▶ Only covers modification costs- need to pay for OT and DI

NDIS- National Disability Insurance Scheme

- ▶ Long term disability that impacts of various domains, supports, specialist equipment
- ▶ Check eligibility: <https://www.ndis.gov.au/applying-access-ndis/am-i-eligible>
- ▶ Can cover cost of modifications, OT fees and DI fees, if written into plan with appropriate goals.
- ▶ Pays for DI lessons only related to disability, not as “normal” learner requirements.
- ▶ Waiting times for acceptance
- ▶ Varying plan funding
- ▶ Waiting time for modification funding

Vehicle Modifying Organisations

- ▶ North: Franks Engineering, Mobility Plus
 - ▶ South: Independence Automotive
 - ▶ South East: Capital Special Vehicles, Automobility
 - ▶ Rural: Ballarat- ASTEC, Geelong- VMS
- * Treating OT will recommend local suitable options
- ▶ Not recommended: cheaper options for SK- ebay, supercheap auto- safety issues

Specialised Driving Instructors

- ▶ Have a range of modifications
- ▶ Experienced working with OT's and clients with disabilities
- ▶ Your OT will be able to link you into a suitable DI
- ▶ Check when making an appointment that they have what you think you are after if its specific- not all instructors have comprehensive range

Commercial & Motorbike Licences

- ▶ Commercial licences have stricter medical standards (ie truck- other tasks)
- ▶ Motorbike licence would involve the usual process with OT input into possible modifications and licence conditions

Useful Websites

- www.austroads.com.au
- www.vicroads.vic.gov.au
- www.swep.bhs.org.au
- www.ndis.gov.au
- www.otaus.com.au (find an OT)

Vic Roads Medical Review: 9854 2390 medicalreview@roads.voc.gov.au

Disclaimer: Check local state agencies for up to date information.