About us

Over the last two years, since the Indigenous Driver Licensing Unit (IDLU) became fully operational, the mobile licensing team has brought driver licensing services to remote Indigenous communities across far north Queensland. The unit has travelled from Doomadgee to the east coast, to Torres Strait and Gulf Islands, and to mainland Indigenous communities near or in towns as far south as Hervey Bay.

In all these visits the most common feature relevant to driver licensing is the lack of identity documents; in particular, birth certificates.

The IDLU team spends a lot of time explaining and processing documents and they are happy to help. But, they cannot issue a licence if they are not sure of your proper name, where you live and how old you are.

The licensing team does not like turning people away. So, this newsletter has information about proving who you are; that is, proving your identity.

If you are not sure you have the right papers to get a licence, read through the newsletter, or ask someone to help you, to learn what you need to do before the next IDLU visit to your community.

Also in this issue you can read about a new driver training book and CD designed for remote Indigenous communities. This will help you learn and remember the road rules. There is also helpful information if you are a young learner struggling to get 100 hours practice.

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Who are you?
Why we have to be so tough about your identity

Your driver licence is a very important card. Its main purpose is to allow you to drive legally. But, your licence also has another important function.

When someone needs to know who you are, they will usually ask to see your driver licence first. This is because they know you have been able to show the Department of Transport and Main Roads papers and cards that prove who you are, your age and where you live—in other words—your identity.

If you want to open a bank account, or apply for credit in a shop, go to licensed premises, hire a DVD, get a telephone connected or start a job and much more, you must prove that you are who you say you are. Showing your licence is the most common and easiest way to do it.

People trust a driver licence as proof of your identity. That is why we must be very sure and very strict about the papers and cards that you show us.

What you need for a learner licence or 18+ card

When you apply for a licence, or you are renewing a licence that expired (ran out) more than two years ago, or you have lost your licence, you must show papers or cards that have your name or address and/or other information. These are also called documents.

You must show ONE of these documents: a birth certificate, OR a 18+ card, OR a passport

AND you must have TWO of these: a bank account card, a Medicare card, a Centrelink card, which may be a concession, pension or health care card.

You must also prove where you live. If none of these cards have the address where you live now, you must show a document that has your address. This could be a bank statement, an electricity bill, a rent receipt, or, if you have a job, a letter from your boss saying where you live.

Two rules:
1. All the names and spelling must be the same as on the birth certificate or 18+ card.
2. All the documents must be an original, not a copy.

Getting a birth certificate

If you do not have a birth certificate, or you have changed your name, such as, when you married, or the names do not match for some other reason, you must write to:

Births, Deaths and Marriages,
P O Box 15188, City East, Brisbane 4002 or phone (local call cost): 1300 366 430 and explain what you want.

Your certificate might take up to 6 weeks to arrive, so why not write or call as soon as you can.

Need more help?

If there is a computer in your community that can get the internet, ask if you can use it for a while. Don’t be shy about asking someone to help you. There is a place, called a web site, on the internet where you can get all the information you need. The site is called “Get Road Ready”. It was made just for Indigenous drivers by the Indigenous Lead Centre at Cairns TAFE with help from the IDLU. It will take you step by step through everything you need to know about which documents you have and which one you might need to get.

You can find the website at: www.indigenouslead.com/getroadready
Torres Strait visit

The Indigenous Driver Licensing Unit (IDLU) and the Thursday Island police recently teamed up for a licensing visit to Thursday Island and Poruma. This joint trip was so successful more could become regular items on the calendar.

At Taigai College on TI, 32 senior students sat for the learner driver written test. All passed. But two could not receive their licence on the spot because their identity papers were not complete.

On Poruma, 20 people—that’s 10 per cent of the population—lined up for a range of licences and renewals. The council did a great job in letting people know the IDLU was coming. They put notices on the community bus, outside the store and even on tree trunks. Locals were pleased about getting help near their homes and saving time and money in travelling.

Police Sergeant Rob Colthorpe stressed the importance of government people talking face to face with Indigenous people. “It is always better than email and telephone,” he said.

He added “I am very happy with the manner in which they [IDLUs’s Marita and David] conducted themselves professionally, personally and culturally.”

Driving Examiner, Marita and the Poruma Community Police

The Indigenous Driver Licensing Unit would like to thank the TI police for their help with travel and equipment. The team hopes that in return their presence reduced the police workload in licensing matters.

Both agencies look forward to strengthening this working partnership and making more visits to outer islands.

Meet the Crew: Daisy

Daisy’s birth name is Serai but she prefers Daisy. She is a true far north Queenslander, born on Thursday Island, with parents from Saibai and Papua New Guinea and a large mob of six brothers and sisters.

Daisy joined the Department of Transport and Main Roads in 1993, starting as a trainee in the Cairns Customer Service Centre. After nine years valuable experience, she moved to Townsville. Then, six years later she moved to the Gold Coast as a driving examiner where, she admits, she found the size and pace a bit daunting, particularly with driving tests in the South East Queensland traffic.

“I had always wanted to work with Indigenous communities,” she said. “I wanted to give something back to communities and promote some service, if possible in the outer islands.

“Also, my family was up north, so when I heard about a vacancy in the Indigenous Driver Licensing Unit I applied for a transfer.”

As part of the mobile licensing team Daisy is now fulfilling her wish. “People are much more comfortable talking to Indigenous examiners. I didn’t realise how much we could make a difference. The IDLU is filling a big gap by helping communities get licences.”

“I didn’t realise how much we could make a difference.”
New Training tools

Ready for the Road is a new training tool made by the Department of Transport and Main Roads, with TAFE’s Indigenous Lead Centre, especially for Indigenous learner drivers. This kit has a book and interactive CD with a voice explaining the rules and moving vehicles on the screen. It will help learners understand and remember the road rules to pass the written test for a learner licence. It also has a video message of support from champion footy player, Steve Renouf. You can ask the licensing mob about it.

Or, when a training company visits your community for driver training, they will give you a copy and show you how to use it. Ready for the Road will also help those who already have a learner or other licence to remember the rules. If you have to drive somewhere new or to a city, it would be a good idea for you to have another look at the rules.

Can’t do 100 hours?

Learner drivers under 25 need 100 hours of supervised driving practice before they can get a provisional licence. This is because young learners kill or hurt themselves more than other age groups as soon as they start driving on their own. The practice helps them become used to driving, using the road rules and driving safely.

The Department of Transport and Main Roads knows how hard it is for some learner drivers in remote communities to do 100 hours and write it in a logbook. Very often there are no cars to use, or supervisors to show you, or the petrol costs too much. There might not be anywhere to go except round and round on the same few streets.

You can ask the department to let you off getting 100 hours and keeping a logbook. This is called an exemption and there are a couple of rules.

1. If you get an exemption you must wait two years with your learner licence before you can do your practical driving test. But remember, it is a good idea to still get as much practice as you can with a supervisor in this time.

2. You must fill out a form and pay the fee. The IDLU will have the form. You must tell the department, honestly, why you cannot get 100 hours and keep a logbook. If you have trouble filling out forms, ask for help.

Did you know?

The licensing mob CAN help you with:
- Getting an 18+ card
- Written tests for learner licences
- Practical driving tests for a car, bus or truck licence
- Renewing a licence
- Replacing a licence.

The licensing mob CAN NOT help you with boat, flying, gun, fishing, or any other type of licence.

Contact IDLU

Phone: 1800 130 886 (local call cost)
Email: indigenous.drivers.licensing@tmr.qld.gov.au
Offices:
Shop 18
Bendley Village Shopping Centre
96 McLaughlin Road
Bentley Park
Cairns QLD 4869