

Information Pack: Licence Retention and Reinstatement

Workshop Boundary Rule: *We are not here to re-diagnose structural barriers. Our focus today is strictly on co-designing viable, place-based pilot solutions for the Mid North and North West regions that helps individuals securely retain their licences and reinstate licences efficiently.*

STRATEGIC OVERVIEW & THE LOCAL REALITY

Why This Pathway Matters

Licence retention and reinstatement are critical but often overlooked components of workforce participation in regional South Australia. While considerable attention is given to helping people obtain their first driver licence, maintaining lawful mobility over time is equally important. Loss of a licence, whether through suspension, disqualification, cancellation, non-renewal or other administrative processes, can result in immediate barriers to employment, training and education, particularly where alternative transport options are limited.

The Reality in Numbers

Based on a local community survey of 233 individuals who reported facing transport-related barriers to obtaining or increasing paid work:

- **56%** of regional residents with suspended licences picked support to regain driver licence as most helpful to improve their ability to return to employment.
- **23%** of regional residents whose licenses were suspended were ready to undergo a structured program to regain their licence to speed up the reinstatement.
- **30%** were willing to consider a structured program to regain their licence to speed up the reinstatement.

What We Heard From the Ground

“Remote community fines can get to about \$40,000, often from unlicensed driving and drink-driving, compounded by non-payment and poor mail access. Lack of licensing support can be associated with unsafe or illegal driving, but targeted programs can shift behaviour and legal compliance.”

“Only two approved doctors in Adelaide can provide DASSA clearance and the appointment itself is costly.”

CORE BARRIERS

Barrier 1 – Administrative and Financial Pathways into Licence Loss

The Breakdown: Licence loss frequently occurs through administrative and financial pathways rather than unsafe driving alone. Unpaid fines, failure to renew licences, documentation difficulties, poor understanding of licensing obligations and regulatory requirements can all contribute to suspension or loss of driving privileges.

The Regional Reality: Financial hardship, unstable housing, poor mail access, literacy challenges and limited access to support services often interact to make compliance difficult, particularly in remote communities.

Why It Matters: Where licence loss results from preventable administrative or financial circumstances rather than dangerous driving behaviour, early intervention may prevent

significant workforce participation impacts while avoiding more complex reinstatement processes later.

Barrier 2 – Complex Reinstatement Pathways

The Breakdown: Regaining a licence can involve complex administrative processes, significant costs and lengthy delays.

The Regional Reality: For residents in regional communities the reinstatement fees, medical clearance requirements, outstanding debts, limited regional service availability and long waiting periods are barriers that are more difficult to overcome without alternative forms of transport.

Why It Matters: Where reinstatement pathways become lengthy or difficult to navigate, individuals may remain excluded from employment, training and education long after they are otherwise ready to return to work.

Barrier 3 – Prevention Rather than Recovery

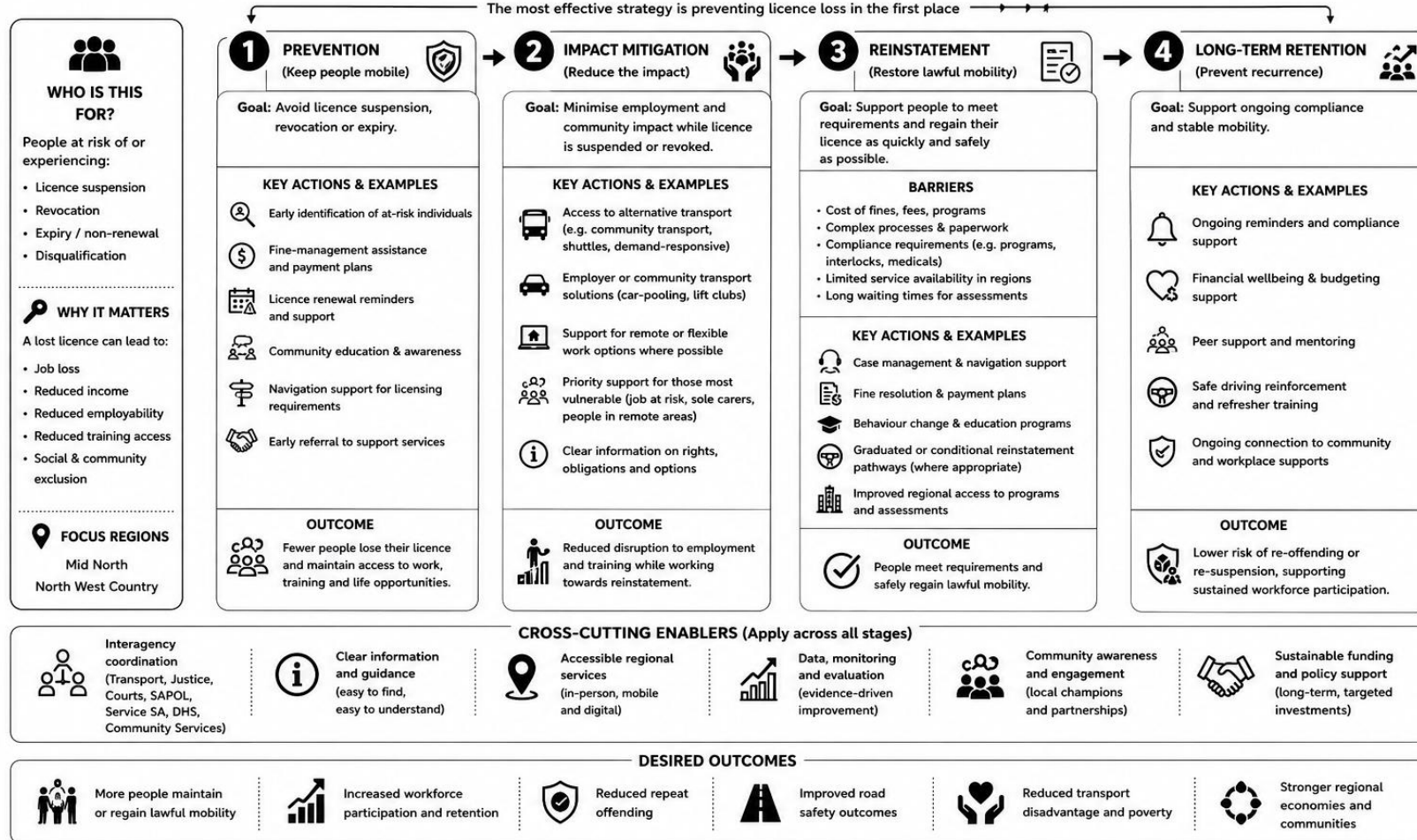
The Breakdown: Greater workforce participation benefits may come not only from improving driver licence reinstatement pathways, but also from preventing avoidable licence loss in the first place through earlier intervention, support and coordinated system responses.

The Regional Reality: Regional community stakeholder identified opportunities for earlier intervention through improved awareness, financial counselling, compliance support, employer engagement and community-based assistance before suspension occurs but are constrained by resources and red tape.

Why It Matters: Preventing avoidable licence loss has the potential to reduce workforce disruption, improve legal compliance and minimise the social and economic costs associated with later recovery.

LICENCE RETENTION & REINSTATEMENT PATHWAYS

Maintain or restore lawful mobility to support workforce participation



Note: Pathways and actions are indicative. Solutions should be tailored to local needs, evidence and resources.

LICENCE RETENTION, SUSPENSION PREVENTION AND REINSTATEMENT MECHANISMS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

To prevent duplication and identify clear integration points, any newly proposed pilot concepts must build upon, connect with, or address the gaps within the existing landscape of South Australian programs

Program / Mechanism	Provider/ Auspice	Target Group	Support Provided/ Key Features
FERU Payment Arrangements and Suspension Prevention	Fines SA / FERU	Individuals with outstanding fines or debts who are unable to pay immediately	Payment plans, instalment arrangements and hardship-based repayment options designed to prevent further enforcement action.
Good Behaviour Option	Service SA / Registrar of Motor Vehicles	Eligible drivers facing demerit-point disqualification who meet legislative requirements	Allows continued driving for 12 months instead of serving an immediate disqualification, subject to strict demerit-point limits.
Safer Driver Agreement	Service SA / Registrar of Motor Vehicles	Eligible provisional licence holders facing certain disqualifications or demerit-point consequences	Alternative to immediate disqualification, requiring compliance with stricter conditions.
Mandatory Alcohol Interlock Scheme	Service SA / Approved Interlock Providers	Drivers disqualified for specified serious drink-driving offences who have completed the required disqualification period	Allows return to driving subject to installation and use of an approved alcohol interlock device.
Medical Fitness and Conditional Licensing Pathway	Service SA / Health Professionals	Drivers with medical conditions affecting fitness to drive	Conditional licences may be issued with restrictions where safe driving can be demonstrated.
Legal Appeals and Review Processes	Courts and Legal Services	Drivers seeking review of licence decisions, penalties or disqualifications	Administrative review, court appeals and legal advice pathways. Need very strong objective evidence to succeed.

STRATEGIC INSPIRATION (WHAT WORKS ELSEWHERE)

Instead of designing from scratch, tables should adapt or hybridize elements from proven, operational models from other jurisdictions

Model & Jurisdiction	How it Works	Eligibility / Restrictions	Potential Lesson
Work and Development Orders (NSW,Australia)	Fine debt reduced through approved activities, treatment, education or mentoring	Eligibility linked to hardship and disadvantage	Addresses underlying causes of fine accumulation
Good Behaviour Licence (NSW,Australia)	Alternative to immediate suspension for eligible drivers	Lower demerit threshold during good behaviour period	Prevention rather than reinstatement
Special Hardship Order (Queensland)	Court-approved driving for employment, study and essential purposes	Strict eligibility criteria and conditions	Balances mobility and accountability
Extraordinary Licence (Western Australia)	Court may permit limited driving despite suspension	Demonstrated hardship required	Recognises disproportionate impacts of total licence loss
Limited Licence (New Zealand)	Driving permitted for approved purposes during disqualification periods	Genuine hardship must be demonstrated	Strong workforce participation focus
Restricted or conditional licences (Canada – selected provinces)	Limited driving for specified activities	Conditions vary by province	Flexible approach to mobility preservation
Debt-based suspension reform (California and other U.S. states)	Driver licences are no longer suspended solely because traffic fines or court debts remain unpaid	Suspension remains available for dangerous driving and safety-related offences	Distinguishes financial hardship from road-safety risk
National Driver Offender Retraining Scheme (NDORS)(United Kingdom)	Eligible drivers may complete approved education courses instead of receiving penalty points for certain offences	Restricted to specified lower-level offences	Early intervention before point accumulation
Germany Driving Aptitude Seminar (FES) (Germany)	Education and behavioural intervention program that may allow limited point reduction at lower point levels	Only available before higher suspension thresholds are reached	Behavioural rehabilitation before licence loss

CO-DESIGN PROMPTS & FOCUS AREAS

Table groups are required to use these direct prompts to develop practical pilot concepts and longer-term reforms within the Workshop Workbook.

1. **Preventing Licence Loss Before It Happens:** How can we identify individuals who are at risk of licence suspension before lawful mobility is lost? Should employment service providers, community organisations, employers or Fines SA be better connected to provide earlier intervention and support?
2. **Simplifying the Reinstatement Journey:** How can the reinstatement process be made easier to navigate without compromising road safety? Which administrative steps, assessments or support services could be streamlined while maintaining regulatory integrity?
3. **Maintaining Workforce Participation During Licence Loss:** When licence loss cannot be avoided, what practical mobility solutions could help people remain connected to work, training or education? Should temporary transport assistance, employer-supported transport, flexible work arrangements or transport brokerage form part of future pilot programs?
4. **Prioritising the Highest Workforce Benefit:** Which groups should receive priority within any pilot program? Should initial efforts focus on people who recently was suspended, suspended for long or those most at risk of licence suspension?
5. **Designating the Local Coordination Lead:** Which existing organisation is best placed to coordinate early intervention, referrals, temporary mobility support and reinstatement assistance? How can licensing agencies, employment services, community organisations and employers work together through a more coordinated local pathway?
6. **Building a Sustainable Support Model:** Beyond initial pilot funding, how can ongoing coordination, case management and temporary mobility assistance be funded and sustained? Could existing government programs, employer partnerships, community organisations or social enterprise models contribute to a financially sustainable approach?
7. **Informing Future Policy and System Reform:** While pilot initiatives must operate within existing South Australian legislation, what evidence should be collected throughout implementation to identify regulatory barriers, administrative complexity and opportunities for longer-term policy reform? How can lessons from the pilot be translated into future improvements in licence retention, reinstatement and workforce participation?