



Seniors Task Force

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From the desk of the State Coordinator for Seniors

Welcome to the second edition of the Seniors Task Force biannual newsletter. Sergeant Rodney Bell has been on leave, so it is with great pleasure I have the opportunity to deliver this newsletter.

Unfortunately, there were no submissions from delegates for this newsletter, however, I have compiled a range of articles from various agencies, and I trust that you find the information contained in this issue relevant and interesting.

Senior Constable Rod Sparrow.

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Older people and credit card fraud

With the ageing of the population, and increasing demand for individuals to be financially literate and self-sufficient, older Australians may find themselves at greater risk of fraud. Although the proportion of the elderly experiencing fraud is lower than for those aged less than 65 years, this is the crime seniors are most likely to experience and the effects can be devastating as the elderly are often not able to recoup the losses. This paper uses a series of simulation models to estimate the relative growth in fraud victims over the next 25 years. The modelling suggests that the prevalence of fraud could increase by up to 20% and the rate of growth in the number of older fraud victims will be much faster. Using unpublished data from the 2004 International Crime Victimization Survey to estimate age profiles of credit and bank card fraud, this study examines the previously unexamined sociodemographic characteristics of the victims of this form of fraud. Finally, it seeks to provide indicative projections of bank and credit card fraud in the Australian economy over 2006-2031.

For more information about this issue, visit the Australian Institute of Criminology website at <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/tandi2/tandi343.html>

Office of Fair Trading Update Identity Scams

"Scams target you - protect your identity"; is the latest message from the Australasian Consumer Fraud Taskforce. Did you know that some scams are not just out to steal your money, but also your identity?

We can all do a number of simple things to protect ourselves from identity theft and stay out of the scammers' traps.

- 1. Never give out personal information to someone you don't know or trust*
- 2. Don't just bin it - destroy old bills, records, or expired cards*
- 3. Check your credit report at least once a year*

"The ID Theft: Dealing with Identity Theft", booklet has been released as a part of the Australasian Consumer Fraud Taskforce's fraud awareness campaign "Scams Target You: Protect Yourself". It is a concise version of the Australian Government's information kit about how to prevent, and respond to, identity theft.

Learn more about the Australasian Consumer Fraud Taskforce or report a scam via the SCAMwatch Report a Scam page (or call the ACCC Infocentre on 1300 302 502)

<http://www.scamwatch.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/708716/fromItemId/694239>

Smoke Alarm Legislation for Queensland

Seniors have been identified as one of the groups most at risk in house fires in Australia. The new legislation requiring all homes and units throughout Queensland to be fitted with smoke alarms took effect on 1 July 2007.

What do I need to do?

If your home was built before 1 July 1997, and you don't already have smoke alarms installed, you will need to buy and install at least one 9 volt battery operated smoke alarm.

If your home was built after 1997, it should have had at least one 240 volt (hard-wired) smoke alarms installed at the time it was built. This is a requirement under the Building Code of Australia (BCA).

If you have done major renovations to your home since 1997, it should have included the installation of 240 volt (hard-wired) smoke alarms.

The Queensland Fire and Rescue Service have a number of fact sheets available to answer basic questions about the new legislation and explain how it will affect you.

Further information on smoke alarms and home fire safety can be found at

<http://www.fire.qld.gov.au/communitysafety/smokealarms/legislation.asp>

Volunteers get a pat on the back

Queensland Premier Anna Bligh recently publicly recognised 15 of the State's super seniors for their outstanding contribution to the State. Donating decades of time and a wealth of expertise to charities and other worthy causes, the recipients of the annual Premier's Award for Queensland Seniors were honoured at a special ceremony at Parliament House. "At a time when there's growing pressure on individuals, families and communities, these Queenslanders are an inspiration to us and they embody the true meaning of community spirit," Premier Bligh said.

More than 220 nominations were received and 15 winners were selected. The awardees provided community support in a number of areas including dance, sport, Indigenous culture as well as aged care and disability services. National seniors representatives attended the awards ceremony to take part in recognising the winners.

<http://www.nationalseniors.com.au/NSA%20Connect%20News2.htm>

Seniors reject 'S-Plate' proposal

Older Australians have welcomed the decision by the NSW Government to reject the suggestion that older drivers should be forced to display an 'S-plate'- for senior- on their cars. National Seniors CEO, Michael O'Neil, said the proposal, raised in a NSW Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) discussion paper, was not only outrageously discriminatory but appeared to be based on flawed data. "The RTA data indicates that older drivers may have a lower crash risk per kilometre than other drivers." He said it was because many seniors self-regulated their driving to places and times they felt comfortable with. This, along with current mandatory medical testing and, in a number of states, a driving test, is adequate to ensure the safety of older drivers on the roads. "Seniors will be glad to see this proposal has been rejected and that commonsense has prevailed. However, other, equally discriminatory, proposals remain in the RTA's discussion paper, including the suggestion that drivers over 85 should automatically be restricted to driving within a radius of just 10 kilometres of their home." To read national Seniors' submission to the RTA proposal, visit

www.nationalseniors.com.au/policies.htm.

It's never too late

Even if you are 70, you can still adapt your lifestyle to improve your chances of living to at least 90. A new study, published in the Archives of Internal Medicine, looked at 70-year- old men and found that if they lived a healthy lifestyle, 54 per cent would live to over 90. The healthy behaviours that made a positive impact on longevity in a person's 70s were, avoiding smoking, maintaining a healthy weight blood pressure control with regular exercise. Regular exercise was associated with significantly better late- life physical function, whereas smoking and being overweight were linked to considerably worse physical function.

<http://www.nationalseniors.com.au/NSA%20Connect%20News2.htm>