

Media Release

The Hon Melissa Horne MP

Minister for Casino, Gaming and Liquor Regulation

Minister for Local Government

Minister for Ports and Freight

Minister for Roads and Road Safety



Monday, 4 October 2024

MEDICINAL CANNABIS DRIVING TRIAL STARTS

The first drive has taken place on the Allan Labor Government's closed-circuit trial to investigate whether individuals who use medicinal cannabis can drive safely.

Minister for Roads and Road Safety Melissa Horne today announced the world first trial kicked off at METEC Driver Training in Bayswater.

Backed by a \$4.9 million investment by the Labor Government – the 18-month trial conducted by Swinburne University of Technology, will assist in understanding how THC in medicinal cannabis impacts driving performance and how this translates into risk on the road – with a regional trial track set to also begin in Anglesea.

Researchers will review participants' ability to manage distractions and assess their driving performance including steering, braking and speed control.

The drivers will also be closely monitored throughout the trial and strict protections will be in place to make sure people at the track keep safe.

A qualified driving instructor will be present in the vehicle at all phases of the driving assessments, with access to dual controls to intervene promptly if needed.

The private driving course mirrors real-world conditions and is away from public roads.

To qualify, participants must have been prescribed medicinal cannabis for a sleep disorder, chronic pain, or a mental health condition for at least six months. The trial will include pre and post-drive drug impairment screenings.

To learn more about the track trial, visit swinburne.edu.au/research.

Quote attributable to Minister for Roads and Road Safety Melissa Horne

"In a world first trial, we have kicked off the first drive to gain a greater understanding on the effects of medicinal cannabis on driving in Victoria."

Quote attributable to Swinburne University of Technology Lead Researcher Drugs and Driving Research Unit, Professor Luke Downey

"We've made significant strides in the articulation of our research vehicles, which are specifically designed to assess driving performance in real-world conditions."