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MEDIA RELEASE

DATE: THURSDAY 10 MAY 2007**THE OMBUDSMAN FOR SHORT-TERM INSURANCE SAYS THAT THERE ARE DIFFERENT LEGAL IMPLICATIONS IF YOU FAIL TO CONVERT YOUR OLD DRIVER'S LICENCE TO THE CARD LICENCE AS OPPOSED TO RENEWING YOUR CARD LICENCE**

The Ombudsman for Short-Term Insurance says that there are different legal implications if you fail to convert your old driver's licence contained in your identity document to the card licence as opposed to failing to renew your card licence every five years.

In recent years we have seen the introduction of a card based driver's licence, which replaced the driver's licence contained in an identity document and is renewable every five years. "However there are different legal implications for drivers if they fail to convert their identity document driver's licence to the card format as opposed to renewing their card format licence", says Brian Martin, Ombudsman for Short-Term Insurance.

In the first instance if you fail to convert your identity document licence to a card licence you will no longer be deemed to be a licensed driver and as such you will have to be retested. The failure to renew a card licence is different as you will still be in possession of a valid licence albeit without the required proof and you may be subject to a fine if stopped by a traffic officer for not being in possession of a valid driver's licence. However any insurance claim you may have should not be affected, as you will still be deemed to be a licensed driver.

Regarding the issue of foreign licences, South Africa acknowledges certain foreign or international driving licences, however it may become problematic when a person obtains their permanent resident status. South African law requires that you convert your foreign licence to a local one within a year of obtaining your resident status. "A person with a foreign driver's licence needs to apply to their country's consulate to obtain proof of their licence and submit it to local authorities who will then issue a card based driver's licence once all the administrative requirements have been met. The person will not have to undergo a driving test to demonstrate their driving skills."

