

June 12, 2009

Geoff marks 25 years of protecting students

Ipswich School Crossing Supervisor Geoff Watson was today honoured for a quarter century of protecting students at Ipswich Central State School.

Transport Minister Rachel Nolan said Mr Watson had been a crossing supervisor since the School Crossing Supervisor Scheme was first introduced in 1984 and had protected thousands of children from harm.

She presented Mr Watson with a Certificate of Appreciation from the Queensland Government for his valuable service to the community. Mr Watson is one of a select group of 21 quarter-century School Crossing Supervisors who will receive the honour to mark the 25th anniversary of the scheme this year.

“What a wonderful thing to look back on – a quarter century of protecting children and teaching them road safety. It’s a great contribution to the community and he deserves to be honoured for it,” Ms Nolan said.

“I’m told he is now supervising the children of people who he used to supervise as students at the school – two generations and he intends to keep going.

“All our crossing supervisors are protecting the lives of children all over the State every school day, and I know Queenslanders are very grateful to all of them.

“In the 25 years the school crossing scheme has been in operation there has not been one death on a supervised crossing. That is largely due to the dedication of people like Mr Watson,” she said.

Ms Nolan said that Mr Watson began supervising crossings at Ipswich Central State School in March, 1984, the year the scheme commenced.

“When the scheme started in 1984 there were 353 supervised crossings at 255 schools. Today, there are 1,165 crossings staffed by 1,831 supervisors at 639 schools,” she said.

“Every school day, at least 30,000 students use supervised crossings across Queensland, and at least 176,500 vehicles pass through these crossings.

“The provision of supervised school crossings is a partnership between the Queensland Government, local councils, and most importantly the school community.

“School crossing supervisors play a vital role in protecting and educating children about road safety as they travel to and from school.

“The effort they put in, often in difficult conditions, is to be admired, and for Mr Watson to maintain this effort for 25 years at the same school is quite extraordinary,” Ms Nolan said.

“Responsibility to protect the safety of our children doesn’t only rest with government and crossing supervisors - everyone has a role to play.

“Everyone who drives past a school or around school precincts must be very careful and cautious at all times because children are unpredictable,” she said.

“It’s also very important that parents and carers teach their children the dangers of crossing the road and how important it is to obey school crossing supervisors.

“During 2009, all crossing supervisors have been given a 25 year anniversary pin to mark this significant milestone,” Ms Nolan said.

She said school crossing supervisors were employed by the Department of Transport and Main Roads and earned \$22.30 per hour. Anyone interested in becoming a school crossing supervisor could get application forms and details about the scheme from the department’s road safety staff in South East Queensland on 1300 360 135.