



Speech by

Hon. Rachel Nolan

MEMBER FOR IPSWICH

Hansard Wednesday, 19 August 2009

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Road Safety

Hon. RG NOLAN (Ipswich—ALP) (Minister for Transport) (10.16 am): I rise to make a ministerial statement in relation to road safety. This year so far 229 people have died on Queensland roads, 19 more than the same period last year and slightly more than the previous five-year average. While the experience of road accidents is shocking, members should take some comfort from the fact that overall driving, vehicle and policy improvements have significantly reduced the rate of accidents on our roads. At present, around eight people per hundred thousand of population are killed on the roads each year. In 1973, Queensland's worst year, it was 32.

The improvements have not happened by chance. The analysis shows they have come as a direct result not just of better cars but of government intervention like the .05 blood alcohol limit, RBT and speed cameras. Road safety is a field requiring constant reform and constant vigilance. Because they require public support, the changes we make must be evidence based.

In the few months since I have assumed this role a number of changes have taken place. The government has implemented the learner approved motorcycle scheme—which you, Mr Speaker, developed—restricting less experienced drivers to lower powered bikes, I have launched the motorcycle safety strategy for the next four years and the current 'Here for life' advertising campaign and we have continued the successful implementation of the young drivers reforms. I have introduced new signs accompanying red light cameras. The police minister has introduced 53 of a planned 106 new traffic police and we have added six new fixed speed camera sites.

The next step in this process, as we have already announced, will be a full review of drink-driving policy and an analysis of the results of a state-wide speed survey. Work is being undertaken on a new road safety curriculum for schools.

Given this level of attention, it seems cheap then for the shadow minister yesterday to have issued a press release claiming that the government and I personally were ignoring our responsibilities. Despite a breathless half page decrying the tragedy of the road toll, the best the shadow minister, who has had four stints over five years in this role, could offer was the suggestion that a full review should be undertaken by a committee. This is breathless blame shifting at the LNP's worst. There are serious issues requiring careful analysis and decisive action. That is what the government is doing. In contrast, there is no meaningful policy contribution from this directionless opposition.