

Media Release

TRAVELSAFE COMMITTEE TARGETS MINING INDUSTRY IN FATIGUE DRIVING TRIAL

The mining industry is being asked by a Queensland Parliamentary committee to trial new countermeasures to prevent fatigue-related crashes.

A report of the Travelsafe Committee released today, *Driving on Empty: Fatigue Driving in Queensland*, reveals that working conditions that contribute to fatigue play a significant role in road crashes on Queensland roads surrounding coal mines.

Committee Chairman, Mr Jim Pearce MP says research shows that coal miners fall asleep at the wheel and crash four times more often when driving home from work than on the way to work.

Mr Pearce says, "When you see figures that show fatigue is responsible for 13 per cent of fatal crashes on Queensland roads, there's no doubt this is a significant road safety problem. We need effective industrial relations strategies to reduce fatigue-related crashes in high risk groups."

"We are making practical recommendations to stop tired miners driving", says Mr Pearce. "We are asking employers in the mining industry to trial more effective rostering systems, public education, health programs and alternative transport arrangements to stop driver fatigue. These strategies will then be implemented in other industries", Mr Pearce says.

"We want to ensure that Queenslanders who work long hours, or drive long distances get the rest they need to avoid crashes", Mr Pearce says.

The report makes 31 recommendations to reduce fatigue-related crashes.

For long-distance travellers, the committee recommends revamping the Driver Reviver Program and constructing additional quality rest areas.

Mr Pearce says, "A combined effort by Industrial Relations, Health, the Police Service and Queensland Transport is needed to combat the problem of driver-fatigue."

Editor's notes:

- The Travelsafe Committee is a select committee of the Queensland Parliament required to monitor, investigate and report on all aspects of road safety and public transport in Queensland.
 - Mr Pearce is available for interview - please call the committee secretariat on 07 3406 7908, or Mr Pearce on 0419 778 401.
 - For further information about the committee's inquiry please contact Acting Research Director, Lyndel Bates at the committee secretariat on 07 3406 7931.
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The Travelsafe Committee is a select committee of the Queensland Parliament. It was appointed on 18 March 2004 to inquire into and report on all aspects of road safety and public transport in Queensland.