



Speech by

**Mr J. HEGARTY**

**MEMBER FOR REDLANDS**

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Hansard 25 March 1999

### **ROAD AWARENESS AND ACCIDENT PREVENTION PROGRAM**

**Mr HEGARTY** (Redlands—NPA) (6.58 p.m.): For the past year, officers from the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority and the Queensland Police Service have been conducting lectures and demonstrating the effect of road accidents on motor vehicles and the human body at high schools in the Brisbane and Ipswich regions. The Road Awareness and Accident Prevention Program—RAAPP—which recently was undertaken at the Chisholm Catholic College in my electorate, has attracted criticism because of the way in which a police constable presented the graphic facts of life and death in road accidents to students following the report in the *Courier-Mail* of 28 February.

Mortuary officials are said to be upset at the way in which the police officer described their workplace. Having watched a subsequent presentation at the school, I would be surprised that they thought that the presentation disparaged them. Certainly, the school itself had no problems with it. It would certainly be unfair if this reporting adversely affected the career of the police constable involved or led to unwarranted questions being raised about the RAAP program. The students and teachers regard the presentation as extremely positive. It seems to me to be well designed and, in these days of graphic images, to concentrate the minds of those most at risk of falling victim to the terrible epidemic of road trauma that afflicts Australian society.

These students may not remember the exceptionally graphic grim reaper television advertisements that were run during the anti-AIDS campaign some years ago. However, their teachers and the students' parents certainly would. That campaign was very effective, largely because of its shock value. The Dead Right road safety campaign now screening on television in Queensland is similarly graphic and I believe it is working to great effect.

Morgue workers perform an invaluable service for the community, operating in an environment that is deeply challenging to the human psyche and they deserve the respect and admiration of everyone. So do the fire officers who conduct the program in their own time, and so also does the constable at Chisholm, who at short notice was tasked to present the dangers of road trauma and the risk of death to students in or entering the most high-risk age group.

Time expired.

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