



Speech by

PHIL REEVES

MEMBER FOR MANSFIELD

Hansard 16 March 2000

TRANSPORT LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Mr REEVES (Mansfield—ALP) (12.42 p.m.): I rise to strongly support this Bill for the benefits it will bring to Queenslanders and to provide more information on one of the key changes under the national registration scheme concerning the registered operator of a vehicle. Queensland is at the forefront of the development and implementation of the national uniformity in road transport reform and Queensland stands to receive significant benefits under the National Competition Policy by introducing the national reforms to registration.

Queensland Transport has worked with other States and Territories to develop and implement consistent registration arrangements. The adoption of the national registration scheme has two main benefits for Queenslanders: first, Australiawide arrangements for vehicle registration reduces confusion for Australians who relocate to another State or Territory; secondly and more importantly, the national registration scheme will help to improve road safety by making the registered operators of vehicles more accountable for their behaviour on the road.

Queensland's implementation of the national registration scheme strengthens and streamlines the registration process. This makes requirements the same throughout Australia and reduces the cost involved in meeting different State and Territory rules. The national registration scheme will also deter fraud and vehicle theft through tougher proof of identity requirements to register vehicles through the establishment of links with interstate registers.

I would now like to specifically address one of the changes under the national registration scheme that is to include the new term "registered operator". This Bill introduces the term "registered operator" into the Queensland legislation as the person in whose name a vehicle is registered. The definition of a vehicle's registered operator is the person who is responsible for the operation or use of a vehicle on the road. The registered operator will receive registration renewal notices and infringement notices relating to any offences that the driver or the vehicle may incur, for example, speed and red-light camera notices.

The registered operator of a vehicle was previously known as the "registered owner". This term was sometimes misunderstood to be the same as the "legal owner". Many vehicles these days are leased or under hire purchase agreements and, therefore, are registered in the name of the person who is responsible for the vehicle, rather than the legal owner. The new term "registered operator" removes this misconception about legal owner. The registered operator is not necessarily the legal owner of a vehicle, but must be a legal entity. A legal entity can be defined as a private individual; a body corporate, such as a registered company; or a body politic, for example, a Government department or organisation incorporated under an Act of Parliament.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I suggest that the honourable members interjecting desist from doing so and allow the honourable member for Mansfield to conclude his speech.

Mr REEVES: Under the new registration scheme, there will be tougher proof of identity requirements for people who register vehicles. Identification is required to establish that the registered operator legally exists. Unfortunately, some motorists fail to pay infringements or fail to comply with safety regulations. This identification process will help to ensure that all people are treated fairly when it

comes to irresponsible behaviour on the roads. Identification is required when a customer registers a new or second-hand vehicle or transfers a name that appears on the registration to another name.

Adopting the term "registered operator" will have little or no impact on customers, except for the need for them to nominate a single legal entity as the registered operator of a vehicle. Vehicles can still be registered in the names of joint individuals, such as husband and wife. To help notify Queenslanders about the changes to registration arrangements, Queensland Transport is currently producing a series of brochures for customers which outline the registration requirements under the national registration scheme.

In conclusion, the proposals contained in the Bill which I have addressed today will benefit all road users in the State and will continue Queensland's well deserved reputation for leading the way in delivering significant beneficial road transport reforms. I commend the Bill to the House.
