



Speech by

Hon. Paul Lucas

MEMBER FOR LYTTON

Hansard Thursday, 7 October 2004

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Hon. P.T. LUCAS (Lytton—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (10.11 a.m.): I advised the parliament at Estimates Committee D this year that we are further investigating logbooks for learner drivers. A voluntary logbook is currently included in the *Ready to guide* booklet, which provides practical advice for private instructors, relatives and others who teach young people how to drive. I table the booklet. Learners and their instructors are encouraged to use this fold-out log to record the learner's driving experiences. This helps the instructor plan future driving sessions to ensure the learner gets experience driving different routes and in different conditions such as on highways, at night and in wet weather. We recommend that learners accumulate at least 120 hours of supervised on-road experience.

I am pleased to advise that my department is currently surveying learner drivers and recently licensed provisional drivers to measure the level and type of supervised experience they receive and their attitudes to road safety. About 400 learners across Queensland are being surveyed. A series of focus groups in Brisbane, Gladstone and Biloela will also be held to gain a more in-depth perspective on experiences in rural and urban areas. Queensland Transport will also review use of the *Ready to guide* publication, including the learner's logbook. Both surveys will be finalised in coming months and I expect to be in a position early next year to consider any future initiatives.

If compliance is not high and evidence indicates that it has value, then the government will consider the possibility of making logbooks compulsory for learner drivers. Clearly there are issues that first need to be resolved, including the length of time the learner licence is valid and the number of compulsory logbook hours that would be practical for young drivers. We need to ensure that learners have sufficient opportunities to gain the required driving experience.

Current data indicates that young Queensland drivers are sadly overrepresented in the annual road toll. For every 100,000 young adults in Queensland, about 20 die in a road crash. This is almost three times higher than the average for all Queenslanders and is higher again for young people in rural areas. Of the 310 people who died on Queensland roads last year, 80 were aged between 17 and 24. We have come a long way. I remember the days when the *Telegraph* ran Campaign 550. Our road toll has certainly come down a long way, but one death is one too many.

The Beattie government has introduced a range of strategies which target young drivers, such as public education campaigns, a graduated licensing system and mentoring programs. We know that more has to be done. In March we responded to the Travelsafe Committee's two inquiries, supporting either fully or partially 31 of the committee's 33 recommendations. Early next year we will trial the reintroduction of L-plates for learners. The evaluation will be crucial when considering the reintroduction of P-plates for provisional licence drivers. I will soon launch an informative and hard-hitting DVD package for newly licensed provisional licence holders aged 17 and 18. My department is also leading an important initiative called the school road safety education project. It involves developing teaching aids and student activities to be incorporated into the school curriculum for preschool to year 10. These activities demonstrate this government's ongoing commitment to helping young drivers to be safe on our roads.