



Speech by

Stuart Copeland

MEMBER FOR CUNNINGHAM

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ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS, ROAD SAFETY

Mr COPELAND (Cunningham—NPA) (9.35 pm): Tonight I want to draw attention to an issue that is of great concern to me and to my constituents. I want to focus on the issue of shock-value advertising campaigns and in particular the government's recent road safety television advertisements. I am sure most people in the House have seen these antispeeding ads, the message being that 'Every k Over is a Killer'. There are three different commercials. Each centres around a father and son speeding in a car as well as a mother pushing her baby in a pram on the footpath. These ads aim to get the antispeeding message across, but they are very distressing to watch. The graphic images depicted on screen illustrate the ultimate price paid—a mother killed instantly, an injured baby and the emotional trauma of those also involved.

Recently I spoke to one of my constituents, Debbie Zupp, who had grave concerns about the TV ads and the times that they go to air. As a mother with young children, she was particularly worried that the commercials had screened during an early timeslot when one of her young children were watching. Her son became very upset at the images showing death and blood. I admit that I also share these concerns, as does my wife, who simply will not watch these ads when they come on TV. While it is upsetting enough for adults to watch, it is even more distressing for children. These types of advertising campaigns are not targeted at children. They are instead designed for young adults, adults and seniors who have a drivers licence.

Effective advertising can change people's attitudes. However, changing their behaviour is a completely different matter. A 2004 report published by the Monash University Accident Research Centre makes note that there has been a lengthy debate on using fear in advertising campaigns in order to change behaviour. Road safety campaigns in particular have successfully incorporated 'fear appeals'. However, there is still wide debate about the level of fear arousal necessary to really affect a person's actions and behaviour. I would like to see these government commercials in a different format where, instead of depicting the dead mother and bleeding baby, other images may be more appropriate. Even just showing the looks on the faces of the uninjured man and his son may be enough. With that, the audience is then able to picture for itself what has happened. Perhaps the images not seen by the audience could be just as effective and hard-hitting, if not more.

It is interesting to note the results of a study conducted between road safety campaigns in New South Wales and Tasmania in recent years. While the New South Wales Road Traffic Authority implemented a shock advertising strategy, the Tasmanian road safety campaign used a more subtle approach. The 'Just Like That' campaign avoided shock tactics because it was thought that nowadays audiences have become more desensitised. Some 66 per cent of people surveyed in the first few months said the advertising campaign had influenced their actions. In comparison, New South Wales experienced a 4.5 per cent increase in road fatalities after the launch of its shock advertising campaign in 1999 while Tasmania recorded a decrease of 19 per cent. The horrendous road toll statistics experienced in Queensland over Christmas would indicate that the campaign in Queensland has not achieved the desired outcome. I hope Queensland Transport continues to educate the public on the importance of road safety—

Time expired.