



Speech by

**Ted Malone**

**MEMBER FOR MIRANI**

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## **TRANSPORT (AMENDMENT OF QUEENSLAND ROAD RULES) BILL**

**Mr MALONE** (Mirani—NPA) (9.41 pm): I will speak only briefly in the debate on the Transport (Amendment of Queensland Road Rules) Bill. I will reinforce the argument that the shadow minister and many other eloquent speakers have put to the House in terms of child restraints and how we should move forward in this regard.

I think it is fair to say that over many years the child restraint industry has grown. It is a very important part of child safety. Whether we are grandparents or parents, all of us regard the safety of our children as paramount. I do not think anybody would argue with that. It is important to realise where we have come from and where we are today. It is important to review the current legislation and look at how we can upgrade it to make sure that the statistics quoted—six children under the age of six killed and 312 seriously injured while passengers in motor vehicles in 2004—do not keep occurring. That is pretty horrific evidence of something going wrong. The RACQ is able to establish that 58 per cent of child restraints used in Queensland are currently fitted incorrectly.

I believe that there is a need to look at legislation and develop better ways of ensuring that child restraints are fitted in the proper manner. The QAS is a big service provider in this area. It would not be that difficult for them to upgrade their skills to enable them to fit the child restraints in a proper manner. I am not suggesting that they are not doing that now. There certainly is a need to make sure that child restraints are effective for the different weights and sizes of children carried in cars.

I will give a couple of anecdotes of things that happened in the past. I can remember that when I was at high school we had interschool cricket and basketball matches for both boys and girls. We were not able to hire a bus in those days so they hired a flat-top eight-tonne truck and tied stools to it. They proceeded to load all of the students on to the back of the truck and travel 150 kilometres up the highway and back at night. Just imagine trying to do that nowadays. We have certainly moved forward.

When I was young our family was travelling in a two-tonne ex-Army chev ute. In those days none of the roads were bitumen and the corrugations were rather bad. We were negotiating a corner and the passenger side door opened. My sister flew out of the vehicle and I was able to grab her and hold her up while the vehicle was stopped. I was holding her up to save her from going under the rear tyre. Those sorts of things happened in those days. As the member for Toowoomba South also indicated, I can recollect us having a bassinette in the back of the Valiant with our children in it. Just imagine if we had an accident. Fortunately, we did not. The consequences would have been serious.

I commend the shadow minister for bringing the bill to the House. I would hope that the government would at least look at the bill and perhaps in its wisdom, if it votes it down tonight, bring in amendments to the current legislation to ensure that our children are safe in cars as they travel to, from and around our cities.