



Speech by

Hon. Pat Purcell

MEMBER FOR BULIMBA

Hansard Tuesday, 20 February 2007

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Road Awareness and Accident Prevention Program

Hon. PD PURCELL (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Emergency Services) (10.21 am): The horrendous road toll on Queensland roads in February is an issue of importance to all Queenslanders and is a priority for our Emergency Services. There is serious concern that the number of road accident rescues and motor vehicle accidents that our firefighters attend is increasing year after year. In fact, the figure is up 20 per cent over the past four years. More than two people a day are cut out of crumpled cars. That is not the number of accidents that our firefighters attend; they attend over 10,000 accidents a year, but two a day must be cut out of their cars.

With seven people dying in just one day earlier this month, the importance of programs like the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service's Road Awareness and Accident Prevention—or RAAP—program are clear. This year marks the 10th anniversary of the RAAP program, and later this year the 200,000th year 12 student will complete the program. The RAAP program targets young drivers, primarily year 12 students, but it is also delivered to novice and prelicensed drivers in universities, TAFEs and even military facilities. The program, which is conducted by firefighters, is currently presented to around 90 per cent of all year 12 students in Queensland. I recommend that all members ensure their high schools offer their year 12 students this program. This year the RAAP program will be reassessed to ensure that we continue to stay relevant and to make sure we keep delivering important road safety messages while meeting the changing needs of our target audience.

Here in Queensland 17- to 24-year-olds account for 30 per cent of all road fatalities, despite making up only 12 per cent of the population. The RAAP program aims to reduce this figure by providing year 12 students with a practical, interactive insight into what happens in a road accident, its aftermath and the effects on victims and their families. It is an effective and unique program that educates road users from a firefighter's perspective, and the Beattie government will make sure that it continues to be delivered to young Queenslanders.

I congratulate the minister, Paul Lucas, as well as his department on the great advertising program they have running at the moment. It really does sheet home to young people the consequences of road accidents.