



Speech by

Hon. Neil Roberts

MEMBER FOR NUDGEЕ

Hansard Tuesday, 15 September 2009

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Road Safety

Hon. NS ROBERTS (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services) (10.03 am): Next week Queensland schools will start their two-week spring holidays. Tragically, 11 people were killed in road crashes during the spring break last year and another six people died in the week leading up to the holidays. In an effort to avoid a repeat, the Queensland Police Service has developed a new road safety operation code named Operation Blitz 'Em. I am pleased to be launching this operation later today with the Police Commissioner. This operation is a state-wide initiative promoting road safety and targeting illegal driving behaviour. To put it simply, this road safety operation is about saving lives and preventing crashes by discouraging people from breaking the road rules.

This Queensland-first operation will focus on high-visibility policing of the state's major highways from tomorrow until Saturday. The blitz will target the major coastal highways between Cairns and Gympie and the major highways and roads in the southern corner of the state within the Gympie, Kingaroy, Miles, Goondiwindi, Warwick and Coolangatta geographic areas. Police will employ a multifaceted strategy including speed camera and mobile and hand-held radar deployments, random breath and drug testing, general traffic enforcement activities and increased police presence using marked and unmarked vehicles. Following the completion of Operation Blitz 'Em on Saturday, police will begin the two-week Operation Spring Break aimed at reducing road trauma during the school holidays.

It is a sad fact that preventable factors such as speeding, drink driving, fatigue and not wearing a seatbelt contributed to 93 per cent of the fatalities on Queensland roads last year. Police know from experience that high-visibility policing is key to deterring and catching dangerous drivers. Queensland drivers need to change their driving behaviours and attitudes. By speeding, driving tired, not wearing a seatbelt or driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, motorists are putting their lives and the lives of other motorists at risk. Already this year 255 Queenslanders have lost their lives on our roads. It is my hope that Operation Blitz 'Em will contribute to a safer spring holiday season.