




Speech By
Hon. Brent Mickelberg

MEMBER FOR BUDERIM

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Road Safety; Bruce Highway

 **Hon. BA MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (2.39 pm): We are heading into that special time of year when friends and family gather across our state, some making long journeys and drives to be together. Sadly, far too many do not make it to their loved ones this time of year. As of midnight last night, the Queensland road toll sits at 287 people. That is 287 lives lost on our roads, 287 families who will have an empty seat at the table for Christmas lunch. Each death has a significant impact on not only their families but the whole community, other road users, emergency service workers and first responders. Just as a number of members of this parliament have had firsthand experience of road trauma as first responders, so too has my wife Anna. She shared with me the impact of road trauma on her during her service as a Queensland Police Service officer in Far North Queensland. The impact on those who keep our community safe stays for them forever, and I want to acknowledge the contribution they make to our community.

At this same time of year in 2019, the road toll was 212. Again it is far too many, but there has been a significant increase since then. One of the biggest increases to the road toll in the last five years has been motorbike riders: 44 motorbike riders lost their lives up to the same time in 2019; this year 75 motorbike riders have died on our roads. The toll has worsened over the last five years, with more families torn apart. We cannot keep doing more of the same; we must do something to reverse this alarming trend. The Crisafulli government will invest to deliver safer road infrastructure, which is why I am committed to fighting tooth and nail to reinstate 80:20 funding for the Bruce Highway with the federal government. I will not sit back when New South Wales has a quality national highway just south of our border, while Queensland's Bruce Highway in many places resembles more of a goat track. We are working to address the maintenance backlog that the former government has left us with. Queenslanders deserve quality infrastructure, and that includes maintenance.

Road safety must be at the forefront of every decision a government makes. While we commit to improving Queensland roads, ultimately driver behaviour is up to those who sit behind the wheel. I am asking each and every Queenslanders to have a conversation with their friends, family, their colleague or neighbour about the importance of road safety this Christmas. Tell them to be extra careful on the road. Tell them not to speed. Tell them to rest if they are feeling tired. Tell them to wear a seatbelt. Tell them to put their phone away when they are behind the wheel and tell them not to drink or drug drive. As a government, we will make a change and deliver on our commitment to better Queensland's road infrastructure. I ask Queenslanders to make one commitment: to make it home safe this Christmas and every day before and after.