

Question on Notice

No. 1557

Asked on Thursday, 30 November 2006

MR JOHNSON ASKED THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND MAIN ROADS (MR LUCAS)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the Queensland Transport discussion paper, *Queensland Youth: On the Road and in Control*, which suggested introducing more school-based driver education through the introduction of a pre-learner education package to be distributed to year 10 students through schools—

Will he identify which Queensland schools obtained the pre-learning education package to educate their year 10 students and will he advise how many times the Government appointed advisory panel on driver education has met and what recommendations have been made by the advisory panel which the Government has implemented?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Gregory for the question. As he correctly points out, a discussion paper *Queensland Youth: On the Road and in Control* was released by Queensland Transport for community consultation on 2 November 2005. The paper presented 22 possible initiatives to improve the safety of young drivers aged between 17 and 24. Consultation closed on 10 March 2006.

A pre-learner education package was proposed in the paper with the possibility of being distributed to young people 12 months before obtaining a learner licence. Possible delivery included to Year 10 students through schools or made available on the internet or on DVD or CD Rom.

The Honourable Member fails to understand that it was a "discussion paper" consisting of 22 possible initiatives. The adoption of the pre-learner education package was not supported given there is no research that indicates that pre-learner driver education reduces young driver crash rates and there is already an avenue for driver education to be covered within the existing curriculum.

To specifically address the question about an 'advisory panel on driver education', I am advised that the Member may be referring to the School Road Safety Education Strategic Reference Group. This Group was established by the former Minister for Education and chaired by Education Queensland. Its focus was road safety, including student driver education. Due to the wide reaching nature of the consultation associated with the discussion paper *Queensland Youth: On the Road and in Control*, the work of this group was placed on hold. There was consensus between agencies that the role of this Group be reviewed once the outcomes of the young driver package were known. I am advised that discussions regarding the ongoing partnership between Queensland Transport and Education Queensland are currently underway.

The work to develop the 22 possible initiatives and consultation that Queensland Transport has undertaken in the last two years to develop the young driver initiatives is far more comprehensive than what could have been achieved by a simple advisory panel alone.

Expert and Community Consultation

In response to the unacceptable road toll in 2005, the government responded by holding the 2006 Road Safety Summit (Summit). The Summit was tasked to develop a comprehensive range of initiatives that would address the six key areas identified including Young Drivers. Road Safety experts from around the country were brought together to share their knowledge with Summit delegates. Delegates included road safety experts from across government, industry and the community and although the public weren't invited they were able to view proceedings from the public gallery or from the live internet stream.

The outcomes from the Summit young driver discussion workshops were added to the hugely successful community consultation that Queensland Transport undertook from November 2005 to March 2006 on the young driver discussion paper, *Queensland Youth: On the Road and in Control*.

During the consultation:

- Approximately 2000 feedback forms either online or as hard copy. Over 75 written submissions including RACQ were received.
- Community Forums were held in Toowoomba, the Gold Coast, Mackay, Townsville, Cairns, Brisbane, Caboolture, Rockhampton, the Sunshine Coast and Logan throughout February 2006. 545 people attended the community forums.
- 29 driver trainers participated in eForum discussion on multiple occasions during December 2005 to March 2006.

Using the results of the community consultation, outcomes of the Summit and further policy development the suite of young driver initiatives were announced on 10 August 2006. These initiatives comprised the most comprehensive, far-reaching young driver package of any state in Australia. From July 2007 the graduated licensing system in Queensland will be changed to improve the safety of our Queensland youth, these changes will include:

- gaining 100 hours of certified supervised on-road driving experience for learners under 25 years of age, recorded in a logbook;
- education package for learner drivers and supervisors (parents);
- a split provisional phase (P1 and P2);
- compulsory P plates (a red plate for P1 and green plate for P2);
- restricting all mobile phone use, including hands-free, blue-tooth accessories, and loud-speaker functions, for learner and P1 provisional licence holders under 25, and restricting mobile loud-speaker functions for supervisors and passengers of learner and P1 provisional licence holders under 25 while under instruction;
- peer passenger restrictions (carrying no more than one passenger aged under 21) from 11pm to 5am for P1 drivers under 25 years of age;
- young drivers under 25 years of age disqualified from driving will return to P1, with a night driving restriction;
- high-powered vehicle restrictions for provisional drivers under 25 years of age;
- motorbike learners will be required to hold a provisional car licence for 12 months prior to obtaining a learner motorbike licence; and
- introduction of a hazard perception test following 12 months driving on P1, licence holders must pass to progress to a P2 licence.

Education Queensland and Queensland Transport have worked together to provide schools with a range of road safety education programs and teaching resources. Queensland state schools cover road safety in the Years 1 – 10 curriculum for Health and Physical Education (HPE) and Study of Society and Environment (SOSE). Topics covered include road use, personal and group road safety, exploring challenge and risk, and road rules and laws.

I am advised that Queensland Transport has developed a Road Safety website <http://www.roadsafety.qld.gov.au/> which contains a section on school road safety and incorporates student driver education materials for students and teachers.

The website also supports teachers in the delivery of a range of topics including pedestrian safety, embarking and disembarking from buses and vehicles, bicycle safety including the wearing of safety helmets, and respect for road rules.

The introduction of a new Queensland graduated licensing system recently announced by this Government is considered fundamental to addressing the risk driving poses to young people. As mentioned the graduated licensing system has evolved from one of Australia's most comprehensive reviews of driver training and licensing.