

Question on Notice

No. 868

Asked on 25 May 2006

MS NELSON-CARR asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (MR LUCAS)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the Townsville Bulletin of 25 May 2006 in which there is a report on James

Cook University's research into survivors of motor vehicle crashes in rural and remote north Queensland, in which 24 per cent of male crash victims admitted they had recently been drunk behind the wheel and 70 per cent said they were heavy drinkers and despite the stringent measures being taken to keep drink drivers from repeat offending—

Do those startling statistics show that the enormity of the problem is even greater than realised, particularly in the more remote regional parts of the State where offenders may think they have less chance of being caught?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Mundingburra for her question-

The Rural and Remote Road Safety Study is being undertaken by James Cook University in conjunction with the Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety – Queensland. Queensland Transport has provided \$81,000 in financial support to this study over the past three years.

The Government has announced its commitment to cracking the "tough nuts" in the community who repeatedly flout the laws and jeopardize the safety of other road users following the Road Safety Summit in February 2006. Measures targeting high risk drink and drug drivers included:

- vehicle impoundment for repeat drink drivers,
- a requirement to fit an alcohol ignition interlock after a second high BAC offence recording 0.15% or higher, and
- introduction of roadside testing for illicit drugs.

These measures are due to commence during 2007. In addition, Parliament recently passed legislation providing for the immediate suspension of drink drivers with a BAC of 0.15% or more, as well as lower level BAC repeat offenders.

Drink driving is unacceptable, wherever it occurs. As the article in the Townsville Bulletin noted, "changes are needed" to a culture that accepts drink driving. The new drink driving measures aim to change the culture by targeting drink drivers, regardless of whether they live in urban South-East Queensland, or rural and remote North Queensland.