

## Question on Notice

No. 193

Asked on 21 February 2007

MR DICKSON asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (MR LUCAS)—

QUESTION:

With reference to a Question without Notice asked in the Legislative Assembly on 30 November 2006 regarding school parking—

What measures has the Government put in place to reduce the risk of road tragedies occurring around Queensland schools particularly those with Prep students?

ANSWER:

Since the beginning of the 2007 school year, prep students are a part of the primary school system in Queensland. Queensland Transport provides a number of road safety programs to improve road safety for primary school children that are delivered through the Safe School Travel program and these programs also apply to prep school children.

SafeST is a collection of programs, schemes and initiatives which aim to improve travel safety for school students. SafeST is an example of Queensland Transport's commitment to work in partnership with schools to improve road safety. Programs and initiatives include:

- School Crossing Supervisor Scheme which assists primary school aged and special needs children to cross roads safely on their way to and from school. Schools may apply for a supervised crossing under this scheme. As at 28 February 2007 there are 1,142 children's crossings located at 628 schools serviced by 1,730 School Crossing Supervisors. The current annual expenditure on the School Crossing Scheme is approximately \$7.6M compared to \$5.9M in 1997/1998 financial year under the previous government.
- SafeST Subsidy Scheme which improves road safety in the immediate vicinity of existing schools. Annual expenditure is approximately \$3 million, which includes \$2 million for bus set-down areas at existing schools and \$1 million for improved safety for children travelling to and from schools.
- Safe Walking and Pedalling (SWAPP) Program that reviews footpaths, bicycle paths and infrastructure that students use within a 3.2 km radius of schools. Annual expenditure for this program is \$200,000
- Safe School Bus Routes Program which aims to improve the safety of school bus routes. Annual expenditure under this program is approximately \$500,000.

The total expenditure for the current SafeST program is \$11.3M compared to \$9.5M in the financial year 1997-1998 under the previous government.

The School Environment Safety Guidelines have been developed as part of the Safe School Travel program to provide a systematic approach to the assessment and improvement of road safety near schools.

These guidelines have been developed to assist road and transport authorities, school communities, parent associations, educational authorities and police to identify road safety

problems near schools and to consider appropriate solutions. These guidelines are available on the Queensland Transport website.

The School Environment Safety Guidelines have a comprehensive section on improving safety in the vicinity of schools that includes the following:

- information about the Safe School Travel process and the Safe School Travel package;
- guidelines for the provision of road safety facilities around schools such as:
  - school pedestrian/cyclist and parking facilities,
  - school warning facilities, and
  - school zones.

Road safety near schools can be improved if motorists are aware of the presence of a school. To increase driver awareness of the presence of a school the guidelines include the following:

- consistent colour signage, including warning signs, is now standard for use at all schools. Consistent colour signs include fluorescent yellow/green on the sign face with a fluorescent orange border. This makes the signs more visible;
- the use of threshold treatments at the start of the school zone to reinforce the presence of the school zone. Threshold treatments consist of broad coloured bands across the road, with the words 'SCHOOL ZONE' or 'SCHOOL' superimposed on the band;
- the use of enhanced or changeable 'School Zone Speed Limit' signs at schools which comply with the criteria for the use of these high impact signs such as 'all day' school zones. These signs incorporate advanced technologies such as computer controlled flashing devices that are programmed to flash during the school zone hours of operation; and
- the use of 'School Zone Ahead' signs on roads with a speed limit of 90km/h or higher. These signs are similar to the 'School Zone Speed Limit' sign and are installed 300 metres in advance of the school zone and dispense with the need to install permanent lower speed buffer zones prior to the school zone.

Road authorities are responsible for installation and maintenance of appropriate signage in accordance with the guidelines. Main Roads and a number of local governments have already installed consistent colour signs while other local governments will progressively install these signs when the existing signs are due for replacement.

In addition to these initiatives, Queensland Transport, in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders has also developed the School Road Safety Education Curriculum (SRSEC). This is expected to be released by Queensland Transport on its website in 2007. The SRSEC's philosophy is to encourage, engage and involve schools and local communities to address road safety.