

## Question on Notice

No. 1699

Asked on Wednesday 12 November 2008

MR WEIGHTMAN ASKED THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT, TRADE, EMPLOYMENT AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS (MR MICKEL) —

QUESTION:

Will he advise the House of the social and financial impacts that traffic fatalities and injuries sustained in Queensland have had on the community over the last four years?

ANSWER:

I am advised

Road trauma is one of Queensland's most serious public health issues due to lost productivity, property damage and costs to the hospital system, emergency services, and personal grief. This cost can be broken down into what is called the social cost of road crashes.

The social cost of a road crash is the average estimated cost to the community that can be applied to the crash type, crash severity or casualty severity outcome. Social cost approximations are based on the following factors:

- Lost future productivity costs
- Medical/hospital costs
- Rehabilitation costs
- Funeral costs
- Pain and suffering

Using Bureau of Transport Economics figures for 2007 dollar value the costs are:

- \$1,945,615 for each fatality
- \$421,550 for each person hospitalised
- \$15,565 for each person who receives medical treatment
- \$15,565 for each minor injury.

The number of fatalities as a result of road crashes within Queensland for the four year period from 1 January 2005 to 31 October 2008 is 1301. Using the social cost figure I have mentioned for fatalities, the cost to the Queensland community for this period is \$2,531,244,873. The total social cost for injuries is approximately four times higher than for fatalities.

Queensland has achieved significant improvements in road safety over recent decades with the introduction of key measures such as the speed camera program, the general blood/breath alcohol limit of 0.05 and random breath testing. These achievements are reflected in the sizeable reduction in the road toll over the past three decades. New initiatives such as the introduction of the new Graduated Licensing System for novice drivers, vehicle impoundment laws, fixed speed cameras and random drug testing will target dangerous drivers on Queensland's roads and reduce the road safety risk of young drivers and riders. This Government is committed to continuing to work towards reducing the unnecessary loss of life and the cost incurred by our community.