

Question on Notice
No. 655
Asked on 30 April 2008

MRS MILLER asked the Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Sport (MS SPENCE)—

QUESTION:

Would the Minister outline what measures the State Government has in place to stop 'hooning' in suburban areas?

ANSWER:

This Government has been and remains determined to make Queensland roads as safe as possible for all road users. 'Hooning' is a real issue for the Queensland public.

This Government will not tolerate the dangerous attitudes of some drivers who flout the law and put the lives of others at risk on our roads.

We have introduced some of the toughest legislation in the country to deal with irresponsible motorists and 'hoons' who repeatedly break the law in Queensland.

In 2002, this Government introduced 'anti-hooning' laws which gave police additional powers to combat 'hooning' behaviour on Queensland roads.

These tough but fair laws, which commenced on 4 November 2002, allow for vehicle confiscation for 'type 1' offences involving dangerous driving, careless driving, conducting speed trials, and making unnecessary noise or smoke by spinning the wheels of a vehicle. Police can confiscate vehicles used for these offences for a period of 48 hours. If a person re-offends within three years, a court may order impoundment of a vehicle for up to three months for a second offence, or its forfeiture for a third or subsequent offence.

From 4 November 2002 to 31 March 2008, a total of 4,376 vehicles were confiscated for a first offence, which meant the offending drivers lost their vehicles for 48 hours. During this period, 90 offenders were detected committing such offences on a second occasion. Seven offenders to date have committed a third offence of this nature.

These laws have clearly worked with only 90 of the 4,376 drivers who have had their cars confiscated caught a second time, and only 7 drivers detected for a third offence.

But we have not stopped there. In December 2006, the successful 'anti-hooning' laws were amended to allow for the impoundment of vehicles for repeat 'type 2' offences involving:

- driving a motor vehicle that is both unregistered and uninsured (compulsory third party);
- driving a motor vehicle while unlicensed or disqualified;
- driving under the influence of alcohol ($\geq 0.15\%$);
- failing to supply specimen of breath or blood; or driving under 24 hour suspension; and

- driving a motor vehicle that is non-compliant (or illegally modified).

These new laws commenced on 1 July 2007 and are currently being piloted in the North Coast, Southern and South Eastern Police Regions. It is planned to extend the operation of the new laws across the State from 1 July 2008.

The new laws provide for the impoundment for 48 hours of the vehicle of any driver who commits a relevant offence twice within three years. Any driver who commits a third relevant offence within the period will risk having his or her vehicle impounded for up to three months.

Persistent serial offenders, who are found guilty of a relevant offence committed on at least four occasions within the period, will risk having their vehicle permanently forfeited to the State.

As at 31 March 2008, 975 vehicles have been impounded under the new laws. In the event of an offender's vehicle being permanently forfeited to the State, it can be sold with the proceeds used to pay creditors such as towing companies and banks. Any remaining proceeds are transferred to consolidated revenue which funds our Road Safety Initiatives Package.

The final nail in the wheel for these 'hoons' is that they have to pay for any costs associated with the impoundment, including storage and towing fees. Previously, tax payers footed this bill.

This Government makes no apology for getting tough on 'hoons' and doing what is necessary to ensure the safety of the responsible motoring public.