

**Queensland Government Response to  
Transport and Resources Committee Report No. 12  
Inquiry into Vehicle Safety, Standards and Technology, including Engine Immobiliser  
Technology.**

## **Introduction**

The Transport and Resources Committee (the committee) tabled its report, *Inquiry into Vehicle Safety, Standards and Technology, including Engine Immobiliser Technology*, on 24 September 2021.

The Transport and Resources Committee Report No. 12 addresses a wide range of topics, reflecting the Inquiry's broad terms of reference.

In accordance with s107 of the *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001*, the Queensland Government response to the recommendations is outlined below.

## **Recommendation No. 2**

**The committee recommends that the Minister for Transport and Main Roads consider methods of how the key security message can be effectively relayed to vehicle owners.**

### ***Government Response: Supported***

Communication and education initiatives are part of the broad range of measures used to help ensure safe outcomes on Queensland roads. The StreetSmarts road safety public education program focuses on road safety issues and encourages better, safer road use through a range of communication channels, including social media. The Department of Transport and Main Roads will work with the Queensland Police Service to develop an education campaign within the StreetSmarts program, to improve community awareness about the importance of keeping keys secure.

## **Recommendation No. 3**

**The committee recommends that the Minister for Transport and Main Roads re-consider the proposed changes to the written-off vehicle scheme.**

### ***Government Response: Supported***

The Queensland Government notes the matters raised by stakeholders with regard to the proposed Written-off Vehicle (WOV) scheme reforms.

The Minister for Transport and Main Roads previously approved the following WOVS reforms:

- introducing a written-off heavy vehicle register;
- introducing a Quality of Repair (QoR) process for light and heavy written-off vehicles; and
- requiring all light vehicles deemed to be a total loss to be recorded as a statutory write-off (SWO), unless exempt.

These changes were developed in consultation with industry peak bodies, members of the vehicle repair community, inspection service providers, vehicle scrap merchants, enforcement agencies, and major insurance companies.

Submissions to the committee were predominantly supportive of the proposed introduction of a written-off heavy vehicle register and a QoR process for both light and heavy written-off vehicles. It is acknowledged however that there were concerns from stakeholders about the

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proposal to mirror the New South Wales approach whereby all total loss vehicles are deemed to be SWO vehicles. These vehicles cannot be returned to the road network, unless they meet strict exemption criteria. Concerns were focused on the potential for increases to car insurance premiums, environmental impacts, and increased fraudulent activities in the scrap metal industry.

In accordance with the recommendation, the Minister for Transport and Main Roads recognises that further consultation is needed. Further consultation will be undertaken to inform the future of Queensland's written-off vehicle scheme.

**Recommendation No. 4**

**The committee recommends that the Minister for Transport and Main Roads consider methods of strengthening the inspection process for repairable write-offs.**

***Government Response: Supported***

As a result of a comprehensive review of the written-off vehicle scheme, the Minister for Transport and Main Roads has approved the introduction of a quality of repair process that will require repairable written-off vehicles to be inspected at additional stages during the repair process. This will ensure the integrity of the repair process in addition to ensuring the vehicle complies with standards prior to re-registration. It is noted that there was widespread support for the introduction of a quality of repair process from stakeholders who contributed to the Inquiry.

**Recommendation No. 5**

**The committee recommends that the Minister for Transport and Main Roads consider introducing mandatory requirements that sellers of written-off vehicles notify prospective buyers of the vehicle's written-off history.**

***Government Response: Supported in-principle***

Consumer protections are in place for buyers of used vehicles. This includes legal obligations in the *Motor Dealers and Chattel Auctioneers Act 2014* that a motor dealer must inform a buyer if a vehicle is a written-off vehicle prior to sale. The motor dealer is also required to ask the buyer to sign an acknowledgement that identifies the vehicle as a written-off vehicle and stating whether the vehicle is a repairable write-off or a statutory write-off. The same legislation provides similar protections for buyers of written-off vehicles who purchase a vehicle through an auction.

In addition to these protections, the Queensland Government also recommends that prospective buyers of used vehicles research and inspect used vehicles. When buying a second-hand vehicle through a private sale, it is recommended that the buyer obtain a Personal Property Securities Register (PPSR) certificate for the vehicle. A PPSR certificate will show the history of the vehicle, including the written-off status of the vehicle. A PPSR certificate can be obtained through an online search for a small fee.

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There is currently no obligation in Queensland for the private seller of a written-off vehicle to disclose this information to a buyer. The Queensland Government will consider the merits of introducing a requirement that sellers inform a purchaser that the vehicle they are buying is written-off. This assessment will take into account the practicalities of ensuring compliance and enforcement. The merit of undertaking education activities to improve public awareness about the importance of obtaining PPSR certificates for used vehicles will also be considered.

**Recommendation No. 6**

**The committee recommends that the Minister for Transport and Main Roads consider investigating potential changes to the scrap metal industry with a view to improving conditions for reputable operators and curtailing profit-motivated theft for scrap.**

***Government Response: Supported***

Queensland Government agencies have participated in an expert reference group seeking to identify potential options to improve regulation of the scrap metal industry, and to address property crime, including the theft and disposal of stolen vehicles in Queensland. The expert reference group included representatives from the Department of Transport and Main Roads, the National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council, the Office of Fair Trading, the Queensland Police Service, the Motor Trades Association of Queensland and representatives from the scrap metal industry.

Options under consideration include the creation of new legislative powers to regulate the scrap metal industry, and the amendment of existing legislation to include scrap metal as a second-hand good. The Expert Reference Group has provided advice to government on its preferred approach for reform. The Queensland Government is considering its findings.

**Recommendation No. 7**

**The committee recommends that the Minister for Transport and Main Roads consider the suggestion that an agenda paper be prepared for the Infrastructure and Transport Ministers' Meeting with a view to seeking commitment from Australian Ministers to national harmonisation of vehicle modification standards.**

***Government Response: Supported***

It is recognised that that vehicle modifications are an integral part of in-service vehicle management, and that there are no nationally harmonised vehicle modification standards to manage them in a consistent way. There are significant community, business and regulatory benefits in achieving and maintaining a consistent vehicle modification regulatory framework. Queensland has commenced action to seek a commitment from Australian Transport Ministers to nationally harmonise light vehicle modification standards. A proposal for this harmonisation to occur was endorsed by the Infrastructure and Transport Senior Officials Committee for progression to Ministers in October 2021. It is expected that this matter will be considered by Transport Ministers in the first half of 2022.