



Minister for Transport and Main Roads

Our ref: PET 38094

Your ref: A589429

9 September 2020

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Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to petition 3369-20 lodged with the Legislative Assembly by Mr Robert Molhoek MP, Member for Southport on 11 August 2020 about supporting local businesses by keeping practical driving tests open to driving schools.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) suspended all practical driving tests from 28 March 2020, to limit the spread of COVID-19 and comply with social distancing recommendations from Queensland Health.

Priority applicants had an opportunity to book a test between 8 June 2020 to 11 July 2020, and light vehicle practical driving tests opened to all customers on 13 July 2020. Driving schools can book practical driving tests for their students online at TMR's service website, www.service.transport.qld.gov.au/SBSExternal, or by calling 13 23 80 from 8.00 am to 5.00 pm, Monday to Friday.

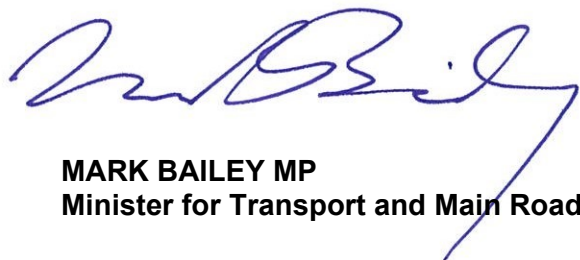
To test as many customers as possible in a safe and fair manner, TMR is employing additional driving examiners to increase testing capability. To ensure equitable distribution of practical driving tests, bulk bookings are currently unavailable.

Bulk bookings were previously only available to driving schools in South East Queensland, providing them with priority access to practical driving tests. Driving schools were allocated a number of bulk bookings based on their percentage of total bookings for the previous month. Some driving schools would also book additional, 'phantom' general public test slots by misusing customer reference numbers, such as their own employees, family members and friends. Driving schools who did not fill all their allocated bulk booking places would then either advertise these available places on social media or, allow them to remain unfilled without advising TMR. By not filling their allocated test booking places and creating phantom bookings, driving schools reduced the number of driving test places available to members of the general public. The suspension of bulk bookings significantly reduces wait times for all customers and provides equal access to driving tests.

TMR is currently reviewing the bulk booking process and the outcome of this review will be communicated to driver trainer industry bodies. Driving schools are still be able to book practical driving tests for individual students.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mark Bailey', with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right and then curves downwards.

MARK BAILEY MP
Minister for Transport and Main Roads