



Minister for Transport and Main Roads

Our ref: PET 46300
Your ref: A925570

14 September 2022

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
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Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to petition 3694-22, lodged with the Legislative Assembly on 16 August 2022 about dangerous driving on Queensland roads.

In 2021, 277 lives were lost on Queensland roads as a result of road trauma. This is one less than 2020, but 29 more than the five-year average (2016–2020). Community engagement is a key element for the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) to help reduce the number of lives lost and seriously injured on our roads. During the recent Road Safety Week—22–26 August 2022—Queenslanders celebrated the many ways we all keep our roads safe every day. Two forums were held in Ipswich and Cairns to engage community stakeholders and road safety experts to discuss how road trauma could be addressed in Queensland.

As the petitioners have stated, existing community networks are well placed to identify local issues and needs and to positively influence behaviour on our roads. TMR recently released the Queensland Road Safety Strategy 2022–31 (the Strategy), which will guide the way we work over the coming decade, as we seek to eliminate deaths and serious injuries on our roads. One of the keys to the success of this strategy will be working in partnership with local governments, frontline practitioners, and community members to develop place-based approaches to grow capability over time, using co-design and other collaborative methods.

In the new Strategy, our first priority under the community's pathway is to empower local networks to lead targeted initiatives that support the health and wellbeing of members of their community. The Strategy is also supported by an initial three-year action plan that contains several projects that represent a significant change in our approach, signalling our shift from relying mainly on a one-size-fits-all approach to policy development, to a fit-for-purpose, localised approach.

For example, our Ride to Zero program to improve motorcycle safety (Action 15) has been built by working with motorcycle riders to understand their different riding needs. The next phase of this project will see us move towards setting up a sustainable framework to facilitate the ongoing co-design of solutions with motorcyclists. We will also emphasise using place-based approaches to road safety (Action 19) and have committed to working with both local governments and communities to tailor approaches to road safety that are driven by locally identified priorities. Over the coming years, this new approach will see TMR engage the community and local organisations to design and implement local solutions.

Petitioners can find further information about the strategy and action plan online at www.tmr.qld.gov.au/Safety/Road-safety/Road-safety-strategy-and-action-plans/Strategy-and-action-plans.

In relation to driving training, TMR continues to be involved in ongoing discussion and research both within Australia and overseas. Evidence shows that defensive driving training programs that focus on vehicle handling skills can contribute to a sense of over-confidence to cope with hazardous driving conditions and increased risk-taking without improvement of actual skills. Research findings show that these types of programs have failed to reduce crash risk for young drivers and, in some cases, have been counterproductive. As such, TMR has historically always provided advice that TMR does not support defensive driving programs, and this is reflected on TMR's website.

However, research indicates that controlled environment driver training programs that focus on developing 'higher-order' cognitive skills (e.g., hazard perception and response, insight and resilience) to avoid risks, rather than on advanced vehicle control skills, show promise.

TMR and the Monash University Accident Research Centre—together with industry and other driver training stakeholders—have developed the Controlled Environment Driver Training Guidelines for Queensland. The guidelines apply adult learning principals to assist driver trainers to develop and deliver training sessions for hazard perception training, insight training, resilience training and more. These guidelines can be accessed online at www.tmr.qld.gov.au/-/media/busind/accreditations/driverandridetrainers/Controlled-Environment-Driver-Training-Guidelines.pdf

While TMR does not currently intend to regulate this element of industry or mandate this type of training, the guidelines will assist with improving the quality of training products in line with TMR's broader policy efforts to support safe mobility for young drivers through non-regulatory interventions.

In relation to mandatory driver re-testing, there are no current plans to introduce this in Queensland. While practical driving tests are a useful step in assessing whether a novice driver has developed the skills needed to drive, driving re-tests at a point in time are limited in their ability to assess a person's future driving behaviour. This is because a driver will generally show good knowledge of, and compliance with, the road rules during a test. This point in time assessment is not necessarily reflective of road safety attitudes and is not a reliable indicator of future behaviour and compliance.

Safer roads are also a key priority for TMR, and road infrastructure is only one element of creating a safe environment for all road users. Safe vehicles, safe behaviours and safe speeds also play an important role in supporting reduced seriousness of outcomes when a crash occurs.

Queensland covers a large and geographically diverse area with a range of varying community needs. The Palaszczuk Government is deeply committed to providing safe road infrastructure across the Queensland network. Road safety treatments involve the application of engineering measures aimed at reducing crash risk:

- at a specific site or section of road
- along a route with high crash numbers
- area-wide, encompassing a collection of roads and streets that collectively have high crash numbers
- through mass action, where a known remedy is applied to a wide spread of locations with common crash problems.

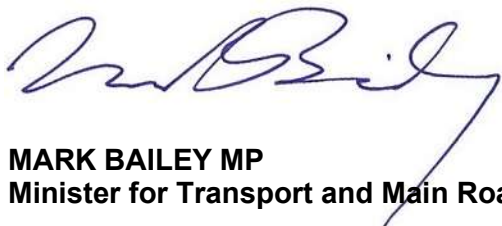
The Queensland Government addresses safety on Queensland's roads through the Targeted Road Safety Program (TRSP) which is administered by TMR. Funding for the TRSP is primarily sourced from revenue generated from the Camera Detected Offence Program and the Australian Government, which funds the Road Safety Program and the Black Spot Program. The TRSP aims to improve safety outcomes for road users and reduce the impacts of road trauma through high-benefit road safety infrastructure interventions and other safety initiatives.

Lifesaving infrastructure treatments delivered by the TRSP include works such as intersection upgrades, shoulder widening, safer roadsides, barrier installation, township entry treatments, flashing school zone signs, and wide centre line treatments. Since 2015–16 to 2021–22, the TRSP has funded over \$1.71 billion towards road safety projects on the Queensland road network. Over the next four years from 2022–23 to 2025–26, \$1.497 billion is programmed for delivery in the Queensland Transport and Roads Investment Program through the TRSP.

Petitioners may also be interested to know that penalties for speeding, seatbelt and red-light offences were increased from 1 July 2022. These penalties were chosen as these behaviours are major contributors to road trauma in Queensland. Combined, these behaviours contributed to 972 serious casualties (fatalities and hospitalisations) in 2020, a cost to the community of almost \$1.5 billion. An awareness campaign was run prior to the changes to inform people of the increases with the aim of deterring these dangerous behaviours. It is important to note that none of these are new offences, therefore motorists should already be complying with these road rules. Thankfully, the vast majority of Queenslanders do already, so these penalty changes will only effect motorists putting themselves and others at risk on our roads. The penalty increases, combined with effective communication and enforcement, act as a deterrent to these unsafe behaviours and are expected to have a positive impact on road safety. Even small changes in driver behaviour will result in significant road safety improvements.

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