

SAFETY ON ROADS

5. Mrs J. HUGHES to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

Can the minister advise of the government's latest commitment to improving safety on our roads?

Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO replied:

It gives me great pleasure to say to the Parliament that the government is going to look at strengthening the hoon legislation that was introduced by the Gallop government in September 2004. Since then 578 vehicles have been impounded. The proposal I intend to take to cabinet includes taking vehicles off people who speed over the limit by 45 kilometres an hour, as well as using evidence provided by witnesses and others to help police go to court and have those people's vehicles impounded. Finally, people involved in road rage will also be faced with the possibility of having their cars impounded.

Interestingly, I thought the opposition would now see the light and support this proposal, but the Leader of the Opposition has gone against the police in his own district of Kalgoorlie, which is regarded as one of WA's hoon areas. The police are supporting this initiative. He has suggested that he does not support using evidence from others to support the police's position. Interestingly, this morning on radio, the opposition spokesman, the member for South Perth, said, "We support what the government is doing." It is interesting that the opposition does not seem to have a united position on this matter. The Leader of the Opposition made one very bad mistake by marking his front bench members on the number of times they get on TV or make comments in other media. He would be well aware that the easiest way to do that is for them to contradict their leader. They all seem to be doing that at the moment.

The member for South Perth has a further track record. Last week I announced that we were considering putting fixed speed cameras at school crossings. After the comments of the opposition that they want to double the penalties, I thought we would get support for this initiative because it is a matter of commonsense. The member for South Perth said, "Oh, no, this is only a revenue-raising exercise. We should have more signs." When did signs stop people speeding?

Mr R.F. Johnson: If you're serious about kids' safety, have flashing lights.

Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO: Flashing lights and signs are already in place at a number of locations. This is another way of trying to make sure people slow down. If people know a fixed camera is in position, they will slow down, and lives will be saved. This clearly shows that members of the opposition want to talk tough but do not actually want to catch anyone or do anything about the matter.