

ROAD SAFETY NEAR SCHOOLS

212. Mr A.P. O'GORMAN to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

With our State's schoolchildren returning to school this week, can the minister inform the House what the Government is doing to improve road safety near our schools?

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS replied:

I thank the member for Joondalup for the question and for his keen interest in road safety. I acknowledge that in the gallery are students from the Aranmore Catholic College. I am very pleased to see them and to be able to advise them too of what we are doing about road safety.

On Monday morning of this week I announced a new road safety initiative, which will see flashing lights being placed above 40-kilometre school speed zone signs. The flashing lights will operate only during the hours when signs are operative; that is, 7.30 am to 9.00 am and 2.30 pm to 4.00 pm. The trial will determine how effective those flashing lights are in a selection of different road types where there are varying speed zones approaching schools. The five school zones include Murdoch Drive, Bateman for Corpus Christi College and Yidarra Primary School; Woodrow Avenue, Yokine, for Yokine Primary School and Carmel Primary School; Gordon Road, Mandurah, for the Assumption Catholic Primary School and Frederick Irwin Anglican School; Kintail Road, Applecross, for Applecross Primary School; and Angelo Street, South Perth, for South Perth Primary School. These school zones were chosen because they range from an area with a four-lane carriageway to an area with a speed limit outside the school of normally 70 kilometres per hour to an area with a two-lane local distributor road with a speed limit outside the school of normally 50 kilometres per hour.

It is a shame that the member for Alfred Cove is not present, because I inform the House that a new school zone is to be created on North Lake Road. This issue was highlighted by the member for Alfred Cove. I am advised that the new 40 kilometre per hour school zone will incorporate new 40 kilometre per hour pavement marking and is expected to be installed during November of this year. I also note that the traffic signals at the intersection of Marmion Street and North Lake Road are to be upgraded to include a pedestrian phase.

Road safety is very important. Well over 300 000 students daily use areas around schools where they are particularly vulnerable. It is very important that we get cars to slow down to 40 kilometres an hour. I am hopeful that the new initiative will get people to drive slower and that we can eventually roll out flashing lights to all 40 kilometre per hour school zones.