

ROAD SAFETY INITIATIVES

195. Hon RAY HALLIGAN to the Minister for Transport:

Will the minister inform the House of any recent government initiatives to improve road safety in Western Australia?

Hon M.J. CRIDDLE replied:

In the past 12 months the Government has initiated a number of road safety initiatives in Western Australia. These include -

- banning the use of hand-held mobile phones while driving;
- the introduction of a new graduated driver training and licensing system together with owner onus and other road safety related issues - the Road Traffic Amendment Bill 1999 is currently before Parliament;
- an enhanced road safety community education program;
- regional road safety strategies and initiatives;
- the introduction of a regulation to ban travel in the open load space of vehicles;
- the development of road safety resources for tourists;
- the establishment of an Aboriginal road users task force, plus funding for several road safety initiatives targeting Aboriginal people.

I will focus on a most recent initiative announced by the Premier on Sunday, 27 August 2000. This is the Government's new road safety strategy 2000-2005, which is an outstanding initiative that aims to dramatically reduce the road toll in Western Australia by 2005. This strategy includes initiatives such as -

- improving the safety of existing roads through a new state black spots program;
- planning a safer road safety system;
- reducing urban travel speeds;
- enhancing the speed enforcement program;
- improving enforcement effectiveness;
- improving coordination, enforcement and publicity through community education campaigns;
- improving vehicle occupant protection;
- promoting safer modes of travel;
- prioritising legislation; and
- monitoring strategy effectiveness.

In 1999 we lost 218 Western Australians on our roads. We consider that to be totally unacceptable. The strategy is indicative of the Government's earnest intention to significantly reduce the road toll in Western Australia. The strategy has involved the Government making a number of difficult decisions and significant funding commitments. This strategy sets a very clear and unequivocal path and is a sign of the Government's desire and commitment to road safety in Western Australia.