

**ROADWISE — GREAT SOUTHERN ROAD SAFETY CONFERENCE**

*Statement by Minister for Road Safety*

**MRS L.M. HARVEY (Scarborough — Minister for Road Safety)** [9.04 am]: I would like to inform the house about the recent Great Southern Road Safety Conference held in Cranbrook on Thursday, 16 June. Sadly, there have been 18 fatalities in the great southern this year, which is one and a half times more than during the same period in 2015. This is the second year that the conference has been held in the region. The conference was hosted by RoadWise and attended by approximately 70 delegates, who either work in road safety or are key stakeholders, with the aim of encouraging a collaborative approach to addressing and reviewing road safety issues in the region. Several government agencies were represented, including Main Roads Western Australia, WA Police, the Department of Health, the Department of Transport, the Department of Regional Development and School Drug Education and Road Aware. Also in attendance were community members, local government authorities and Mr Terry Waldron, MLA, member for Wagin. Vulnerable road users were well represented by motorcyclists, cyclists and the aged, and industry was primarily represented by Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd, a major grain mover in the great southern region. Many presentations were delivered throughout the day, including from the Road Safety Commissioner, Mr Kim Papalia.

The conference provided the opportunity to gain a better understanding of the issues and risks relating to road safety in the great southern region, in particular around heavy vehicle transport, which is forecast to increase 100 per cent in volume and capacity over the next 18 months due to the expansion of CBH grain silos. In light of this significant increase, an agreement was made to form a working group to assess the road safety risks and issues and to develop a plan for the future. This working group will be led by the Road Safety Commission. Also identified as part of the proceedings were a number of localised road risks, which may be developed into future submissions for road trauma trust account funding after further discussions with Main Roads and other stakeholders.

A key outcome of the conference is the intent to develop a statewide roadside rest area consultative committee to be facilitated by the Road Safety Commission. Roadside rest areas are crucial safety features of the road network in helping to manage driver fatigue, which is a leading cause of crashes, particularly in rural WA. In addition to the safety benefits afforded by roadside rest areas, planning for these to be well designed and in strategic locations will enhance the travel experience for the community, industry and visitors to our state, providing many add-on benefits beyond the original road safety outcomes.