

ROAD TOLL — STRATEGIC TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT GROUP

938. Mr R.F. JOHNSON to the Minister for Police; Road Safety:

Mr Speaker —

Mr J.M. Francis: Valedictory!

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: That interjection may be your valedictory, sunshine!

The SPEAKER: Member for Hillarys, I gave you the call. Just ask a question.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I got a rude interjection from the member for Jandakot.

The SPEAKER: I never heard it, so ask the question through the Chair.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: My question is to the Minister for Police; Road Safety. I am sure the minister is aware that the road toll to date is higher than last year's total of 161 deaths.

- (1) Does the minister accept that she has much more funding available to her than was the case with any previous minister—namely, about \$130 million per year?
- (2) Does the minister accept that her road safety strategy is not working and that there is still around \$100 million sitting idle in the road trauma trust account while people are dying on our roads?
- (3) Will the minister now accept my proposal, which has been endorsed by the WA Police Union and the RAC, to increase the strategic traffic enforcement group by 400 police officers, funded out of the road trauma trust account, thereby having a much bigger presence on our roads, which would save lives; and, if not, why not?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY replied:

I thank the member for Hillarys for this question on road safety.

- (1)–(3) It is true—the road toll this year is appalling. As members in this house will know, having lost a family member to a road crash, I have an intimate understanding of the trauma that that inflicts on a family for many years post an accident or a crash that takes a life or indeed causes a serious injury. What are we doing about it? This year we have allocated a record \$155 million from the road trauma trust account towards road safety initiatives. That is going towards addressing the major causes of road crashes, fatalities and serious injuries in the state. The funding is going, for instance, to regional areas—putting rumble strips in and sealing the shoulders on regional roads to try to prevent run-off-road crashes. I am expanding the fleet of red-light and speed cameras from 30 to 90 because we know that where we put those red-light cameras in at intersections, we get a 64 per cent reduction in crashes. We know they work. That is why we are expanding the camera fleet. We are putting \$4 million this year into education campaigns targeting the key target groups that we need to get to; that we know are represented in our road stats. They are younger men who are risk-takers. They are people who routinely speed. In relation to seatbelts, we have education programs going out targeting regional areas in particular where we have low compliance with seatbelts.

We have recommendations from my wheatbelt highway safety review and my motorcycle safety review that we are in the process of implementing. We are performing intersection upgrades wherever we can in metropolitan areas. We will continue with our commitment to the Towards Zero strategy, which aims to reduce fatalities and serious injuries on our roads by 40 per cent by the year 2020. I am not happy with the road toll this year. No-one can be happy with it, because one death is too many, but with \$155 million going into road safety initiatives, the government is doing everything it can based on the expert advice it receives from road safety experts as to what it needs to do to reduce the road toll.