

ROAD SAFETY — SPEED ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM

398. MR N.W. MORTON to the Minister for Road Safety:

Can the minister please update the house on the enhanced speed enforcement program and its effect on road safety in Western Australia?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY replied:

I thank the member for Forrestfield for the question and for his continued interest in road safety matters and road safety improvements in Western Australia. In 2009, the Liberal–National government took steps to upgrade the speed camera fleet in Western Australia, which involved a long overdue move from wet-film to digital cameras. By upgrading that very old and dated technology that we found ourselves in possession of when we took government in 2008 there was a significant improvement in the efficiency of infringement management operations. The \$24.5 million enhanced speed enforcement program included the introduction of speed and red-light intersection cameras in Western Australia. Once again, this is a long overdue improvement in the road safety space, which, for a number of years, road safety experts had called for. We deployed those cameras across 30 sites. Those intersection cameras have resulted in a 60 per cent reduction in serious-injury crashes at the intersections where they are in place. We are very pleased with that. We are now looking at new mobile speed cameras, which are capable of measuring vehicle speed across four lanes of traffic and will allow us to significantly improve the efficiency of our mobile deployment. As a result, member for Forrestfield, in April, over 3.2 million vehicles were monitored for speeding in Western Australia, which compares with a five-year average of around 1.6 million vehicles. This has resulted in a major improvement in driver behaviour.

Ms M.M. Quirk: How do you know?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: It is interesting that the member for Girrawheen interjects. The increase and improvement in driver behaviour has been monitored and 23 per cent fewer drivers per 1 000 are posted as travelling above the speed limit compared with the five-year average. We have seen a significant improvement in driver behaviour: driver compliance with posted speed limits has improved, with a 23 per cent reduction in the number of drivers caught over the speed limit. There has been a reduction in road trauma in the state, which I hope will continue. We are doing everything we can as a government to try to ensure that this will continue. A record amount of money has gone into the road trauma trust account, which, as we know, this government is putting into improvements to road safety in Western Australia.

I find it really interesting that after estimates, it was put to me that the member for Midland, the person who would be Minister for Road Safety in this state, referred to the dramatic increase in the number of cameras and said that we tripled the revenue from speed and red-light cameras and that has effectively been—wait for it—a massive tax on those who speed or run red lights. A massive tax! The difference between members on this side of the house and members on that side of the house is that on this side of this house we say if a person breaks the law, it will result in a penalty.

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Armadale, I call you to order for the first time. Minister, can you wind this up, please.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: On this side of the house, we say that if a person runs a red light, they deserve a penalty.

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Armadale, I call you to order for the second time.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: A penalty is not a tax; it is a voluntary contribution to improving road safety in Western Australia. If a person runs a red light, they will get a penalty and it will go into the road trauma trust account. Members opposite might want to listen to the facts!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Butler! Member for Collie–Preston, I call you to order for the first time.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: The member for Collie–Preston might want to understand the facts before he interrupts. The fact is that speed cameras are about reducing road trauma in Western Australia. There has been a 60 per cent reduction in serious-injury crashes at red-light intersections where speed cameras are in operation. Fact: this year \$100 million has been spent from the road trauma trust account to improve road safety, including \$55 million on road safety treatments. Although it is not yet 100 per cent of the fund, what did members opposite spend when they were in government—\$14 million?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Butler, I call you to order for the first time. Minister, please wind this up.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: The fact is that this government has taken considerable steps to improve road safety in Western Australia: we are spending money on improving road treatments across the length and breadth of this state, we continue to keep pressure on motorists to obey the law —

Mrs M.H. Roberts: You have been a failure and we all know it!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: The member for Midland interjects, and I know that \$100 million may not seem a lot to the member for Midland —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Victoria Park and member for Midland, I call you both to order for the first time. Minister, I asked you to come to a conclusion.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Mr Speaker, I am coming to a conclusion.

It is all well and good for members opposite to interject, but when the member for Midland was the minister responsible for road safety, \$14 million was spent on road safety improvements in Western Australia. For a minister who was in charge of the Perth Arena project, which had a \$160 million budget and a \$550 million spend—a \$400 million overrun on one project—maybe \$100 million does not seem like a lot. But \$100 million compared with —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! Further questions.