

ROAD SAFETY INITIATIVES

951. Ms E. EVANGEL to the Minister for Road Safety:

The Liberal–National government is seriously committed to reducing road trauma in Western Australia. Can the minister please inform the house of the measures the government has put in place —

Mr P.B. Watson interjected.

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

Ms E. EVANGEL: The Liberal–National government is seriously committed to reducing road trauma in Western Australia. Can the minister please inform the house of the measures the government has put in place and is planning to help achieve this important commitment?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY replied:

I thank the member for Perth for her advocacy for her electorate, and her interest in road safety and policing matters. It gives me great pleasure to update the house on the achievements of the Liberal–National government in the road safety space. Members might be interested to know that since the implementation of our Towards Zero strategy, which covers 2008 to 2020, there has been a 23 per cent decline in the fatality rate per 100 000 population in Western Australia. Our target is a 40 per cent decline by 2020. That means that 11 000 fewer people will have died on our roads as a result of the government’s adoption of the Towards Zero strategy.

Members will know that a while ago the state government committed to placing 100 per cent of red-light infringement camera penalties into the road trauma trust account. A record \$110 million spend has been allocated from that account for this year. Part of that allocation went to our vulnerable road user group, so we have new media campaigns around cycling safety and motorcycle safety. A motorcycle review group and a wheatbelt highway safety review group are in action. Recently, cabinet approved the expansion of our red-light camera fleet from 30 cameras to 90 cameras. At just the 30 metropolitan intersections where those red-light and speed cameras have been installed, we have seen a 60 per cent reduction in serious injury crashes, which is why we are extending the red-light and speed camera program to another 90 intersections. Soon Western Australia will have its first point-to-point fixed-camera trial. We are in the process of determining where that will be. We are expanding our camera fleet by an additional 300 mobile hours across regional and metropolitan Western Australia.

Looking at the legislative reform, in September last year the government brought to Parliament amendments to the Road Traffic Act that changed and increased the penalties across 150 different offences under that act, to ensure that we could be contemporary and consistent with the penalties in other Australian jurisdictions. Legislation is before the house now to introduce a new penalty for careless driving causing death, grievous bodily harm and bodily harm, which will bring with it a potential term of imprisonment and an increased penalty. That is in response to coronial inquiries recommending that we do this, recommendations from Magistrate Colin Roberts and advocacy from the victims of road trauma. Part of that legislation will introduce a 0.05 per cent blood alcohol content restriction for supervisors of learner drivers—an anomaly in our legislation that has been addressed only by this government.

We are keeping the pressure on in the road safety space. There has been a 23 per cent reduction in the fatality rate in Western Australia since the adoption of the Towards Zero strategy. We will continue to keep the pressure on. We have an across-government approach to road safety, so the \$110 million from the road trauma trust account is not inclusive of the significant spend we have for road safety improvements in the Minister for Transport’s portfolio.

Mrs M.H. Roberts interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Midland, I call you to order for the first time. A quick wind up, please, minister.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to wind up with the community engagement that we have had in regional areas with our road safety alliances. Right across the Pilbara, south west, midwest and now goldfields–Esperance, those road safety alliances bring together the community, RoadWise committees, the corporate sector and transport companies to find a regionally relevant local solution to vexing road safety issues in those regions. They are very well received. We get great buy-in from the community and the corporate sector, and that is indicative of one of the many initiatives we have in the road safety space, so that we can reach our target of the Towards Zero strategy.