

## **WHEATBELT HIGHWAY SAFETY REVIEW**

*Statement by Minister for Road Safety*

**MRS L.M. HARVEY (Scarborough — Minister for Road Safety)** [2.02 pm]: Today I would like to table the report emanating from the wheatbelt highway safety review. This review was a key road safety initiative designed to immediately respond to high levels of road trauma experienced on the worst performing routes in the wheatbelt. The review focused on travel routes with the greatest number of serious casualties per kilometre, rather than on every local road. This maximises the potential for saving lives and preventing serious injuries. This report contains detailed information about the nature of the key road safety issues present on three crucial routes: Toodyay Road, Great Eastern Highway and Great Southern Highway between Chidlow and York. Road safety outcomes on these routes were found to be well below target. Significantly, the review found that drink-driving, speeding and failure to wear a seatbelt were only minor contributors to serious crash outcomes on these routes. In many cases, mistakes and simple errors of judgement have had tragic consequences. The report contains recommended actions to address the identified issues in the immediate term and into the future.

Importantly, the report reminds us that our responses to road trauma must extend beyond traditional education and enforcement efforts targeting behaviour. This demands a strong focus on infrastructure improvements and on the management of travel speeds where this is not possible. In February this year, I announced that the government had already allocated \$3.8 million from the road trauma trust account to commence works on Toodyay Road. The funding allocated to Toodyay Road will enable environmental clearances to be sought, services to be relocated, land to be acquired, and design and preconstruction activities to be commenced. The report also provides clear direction on infrastructure improvements required on Great Eastern Highway and Great Southern Highway. These include shoulder widening and sealing, installation and upgrading of audible edge lining, safety barriers, signage and line markings, removal of roadside hazards, and improvements to road surfaces. These works will be delivered through staged implementation using funds from the road trauma trust account.

Driver issues like unsafe overtaking, fatigue and inattention still received focus in this review, indicating that more needs to be done to engage and encourage safer driving behaviour within this region. In response, the report recommends greater use of roadside advertising and media, and better use of existing road safety resources and local networks.

I look forward to working with agencies and the community to deliver the initiatives recommended by the “Wheatbelt Highway Safety Review: Summary Report” and to achieving the expected improvements in road safety for visitors to and people living in the wheatbelt. I commend the report to the house.

[See paper 3923.]