

Regional Road Safety Forum, Bundaberg

Summary and key themes

Date: Wednesday 28 August 2019

Place: Sugar Country Motor Inn, Bundaberg

Background

On 28 August 2019, the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) hosted the 'Safe Road Use As We Age' forum in Bundaberg which focused on the key road safety issues affecting older road users in the Bundaberg/North Burnett local government areas. Just over 30% of the Bundaberg population are aged 60 and over, and over the last five years in this area older road users have made up more than 1 in 5 (21%) people seriously injured in road crashes. This is greater than the state-wide figure of around 16%.

The Honourable Mark Bailey MP, Minister for Transport and Main Roads, Andrew Mahon, General Manager (Land Transport Safety and Regulation) of TMR, and Mike Keating, Assistant Commissioner (Road Policing Command) of the Queensland Police Service attended the event. They engaged with 41 people representing seniors' organisations, health, police, local government, transport industry and service providers.

Minister Bailey welcomed everyone in attendance and TMR staff delivered presentations on the next *Queensland Road Safety Action Plan 2020-21* and local crash data, and Assistant Commissioner Mike Keating discussed community engagement and collaboration. There was an opportunity for participants to raise road safety issues throughout the day as part of both a general session and a smaller workshop session. Several notable themes emerged from the discussions.

Where to from here

The Queensland Government sincerely thanks all participants for their time and input. The themes and ideas discussed during the forum support the next *Queensland Road Safety Action Plan 2020-21* and inform the development of the next Queensland road safety strategy. Key themes, discussion points and a sample of specific ideas are outlined below.

Key themes

Note: The below summary aims to capture the key discussion themes raised by a range of participants at the forum and does not necessarily reflect the views of the Queensland Government or all participants.

Many related subjects were identified at the forum including:

- licensing
- self-awareness/assessment in regard to driving

- transitioning from driving – alternatives
- driving issues on the road
- vehicle safety
- mobility scooters
- road safety for pedestrians
- community/ organisational support.

Many discussions on the day centred around the licensing process and opportunities to improve education and reminders regarding the process for drivers aged 75 and over.

Self-awareness of driving ability as we age, assistance and tools to help drivers identify any concerns and changes to their driving were key themes of the day. Considering the change from driving to other forms of transport earlier to plan for the eventual transition was also a key recommendation flowing from this.

Availability, safety, cost and knowledge of alternatives to driving were raised as concerns.

Changes in driving environments from increased traffic, driving different routes due to changes in lifestyle during retirement, and the behaviour of other drivers towards older drivers and generally were identified as issues affecting safety on the road. Issues including failure to stop at stop signs/red lights, mobile phone use in cars, knowledge of the road rules, and negative attitudes towards older drivers were of highest concern.

Keeping up to date with changes in road rules and knowing how to use in-vehicle technologies when buying a new car were also raised as concerns.

Ideas

The forum generated several road safety ideas centring around increased education and training, changing behaviours and attitudes, addressing distracted driving, sharing the road and specific measures targeting road users as they age. The 'Safe Road Use As We Age' forum in Bundaberg is among the first in a series of consultation activities, designed to inform the development of the next Queensland road safety strategy. A sample of the ideas from the forum is provided below.

Ideas:

- Investigate / develop approaches to ongoing, whole of life, driver education.
- Encourage people to keep their road rules knowledge up to date.
- Identify opportunities to improve education to support drivers as they age. Improving knowledge of how aging affects driving ability, support services, licensing requirements and processes, and self-assessment opportunities were key.
- Investigate opportunities to improve education regarding loading and towing caravans and driving safely around trucks.
- Encourage more courtesy and respect for older drivers, especially reducing aggressive driving around older drivers. Consider S (for Senior) plates.
- Investigate additional driver education requirements and targeted road signage for international visitors.
- Deliver targeted infrastructure improvements and safety treatments on state controlled and local government roads. For example, longer pedestrian walk signals at crossings, footpath improvements for walking and motor scooters, more Speed Awareness Monitoring.
- Consider speed management threshold treatments aimed at reducing speeds at the transition from a high speed rural environment to a lower speed township environment.
- Continue to work with local governments to help design and deliver local solutions to road safety problems, including provision of local data and information.
- Encourage the use of public transport, park and ride options, community based transport, and taxis/ride share.
- Investigate training for using mobility scooters (including road rules) similar to what is done for motorised wheelchairs.
- Encourage road users to develop personal and environmental awareness to recognise signs of fatigue and distraction.