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THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL SELECT COMMITTEE ON RURAL ROAD SPEED LIMITS MET IN COMMITTEE ROOM 1, PARLIAMENT HOUSE, HOBART ON ON TUESDAY 20 AUGUST 2013

Mr BARRY OLIVER, WAS CALLED BY TELEPHONE AND WAS EXAMINED.

CHAIR, (Mr HALL) - Good morning, Barry. My advice to you is that if you had been physically present here, you would be covered by parliamentary privilege but it would seem that when you are giving evidence by phone hook-up, even though it is going on *Hansard*, then you are not covered.

Mr OLIVER - Okay, it is not a problem.

CHAIR - We might make a start, Barry. We have a quorum. Obviously matters changed somewhat yesterday with the minister's announcement on the default limits, et cetera. Anyway, we will do you the courtesy given your experience in this field and take this last bit of evidence so I invite you to speak to the committee and then we will have some questions.

Mr OLIVER - I have a prepared statement, Greg, so I will go through it. Good morning and thank you for providing me with the opportunity to express my views and comments on this proposal.

First, I would like to establish my credentials. Between 1992 and the end of 2009, I operated Advanced Driving Techniques in Tasmania, which specialised in running one-day structured defensive driver training courses primarily aimed at the corporate and government sectors but was also available to the private motorist. During that time we conducted over 700 courses involving over 7 000 drivers. The course was not skidpan-based and consisted of three hours of theory sessions and the balance completing practical exercises. In addition, I have been a competitor in 63 tarmac rallies in Australia and New Zealand over the last 20 years, which has provided me with a real insight into the dynamics of the vehicle relative to speed, taking into account a huge variation in road conditions and topography.

Taking this into account, it is my firm belief that the overall driving standard is average at best, due in the main to a lack of coordinated and structured driving education criteria, which fails to look at a whole range of requirements for safe driving, such as: the importance of competent observation skills; hazard perception skills; correct following distances; vehicle maintenance; the importance of good tyres, pressure, condition, tread depth and wear; ergonomics; correct steering technique; breaking distances relative to speed; threshold breaking, especially in wet conditions; maintaining vehicle control in an emergency; and attitude towards other drivers and avoiding conflict. These are just some of the items that need to be addressed but in relation to the question of rural road speed limits, the real issue is that drivers must take responsibility for their driving and drive to the conditions, irrespective of whether it is a major highway or a narrow rural road or a gravel surface.

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It is my considered opinion that a reduction in the speed limit to 90 kph will have the potential to cause more problems than the proposal seeks to overcome. First, I believe there will be a tendency for drivers to adopt the attitude that they can maintain 90 kph irrespective of the conditions, and when a corner comes up they may be less inclined to slow down before and therefore increasing the risk of a crash.

Second, I believe that the imposition of the 90 kph speed limit on a number of roads nominated will lead to a loss of concentration by drivers, therefore increasing the risk. On that point, we are frequently reminded that inattention is one of the major causes of crashes but this proposal will only make the problem worse. As the RACT said in their submission, between 2006 and 2010, driving without due care and attention was the major factor in serious crashes with 732 instances, compared to only 61 for exceeding the nominated speed limit. First, I would suggest that the reduction in speed limit will have the effect of drivers more likely to take the risk of exceeding the nominated speed limit to make up for lost time, especially on roads that are out of the way. The premises that reducing the speed limits on certain roads, will result in the reduction of 100 fatalities and/or serious injuries over a six-year period seems fanciful at best and I would question the validity of such claims and the data that supposedly supports that view, had the people who produced this information and subsequent claims actually driven on these roads. As a tourist state, we are keen to see more people come into Tasmania but I have a concern that they may think twice if they are faced with the prospect of driving along the road at 90 kph, when it is fact in suitable for a higher speed.

We already have a proliferation of speed limits in the state, for example, 40 kph in school zones at specified times, 50 kph in urban areas unless specified at 60 kph - and that in itself has obviously caused some confusion in the driving community - 70 kph and 80 kph in some outer suburban arterial roads and a 100 kph open speed limit except for 110 kph on certain major highways. Is it any wonder motorists are becoming confused and frustrated? And now we are proposing to add further confusion to the issue. I have not seen any data that supports the in position on the 90 kph limit in the Kingborough municipality and from my experience of the topography of the area in question and the limited kilometres of road concerned in the experiment, I doubt that any meaningful data that could be substantiated was achieved.

I have discussed this proposal with many people and it is patently obvious that they have in the main no perception of the roads that are being listed as potentially reduced to 90 kph. When you ask the question they respond by saying, 'It is the little narrow country roads in farm areas.' When you explain that the proposal goes way beyond that, they are aghast. Based on the colour-coded maps that appeared in the *Examiner* on Thursday 9 May, there are some obvious anomalies with the selection of roads to have the 90 kph speed limit, which leads me to believe that those who came up with choices either did not drive the roads or were not given supportable advice or data. The Esk Highway from Conara to Fingal will remain at 100 kph, and so it should, but why would the section from Fingal to St Mary's be reduced to 90 kph? It is almost dead straight with a very good surface, so what is the data to support the change?

The road from Campbell Town to the east coast will reduce to 90 kph, as will the main east coast roads. Having travelled these roads on many occasions, I can see no valid or justifiable reason why they should go to 90 kph. The Murchison Highway from Burnie to the Cradle Mountain link road turn-off remains at 100 kph but then reduces to 90 kph;

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why? Why should the Cradle Mountain link road be reduced to 90 kph? It is possibly one of the best pieces of road in the state and I am not aware of significant crash data that would support the reduction in speed. The road from Zeehan to Strahan will remain at 100 kph, whereas the Queenstown to Hobart link, which like the east coast, is a major tourist road, reduces to 90 kph. While I acknowledge there are parts of this road, for example the Mount Arrowsmith section, that have very curvy sections. The fact is, on these parts it would be difficult to do 90 kph anyway; you drive to the conditions. The same argument would also apply, for example, to the Sidling and Hellyer gorge but why reduce the limit for the majority of the roads system? The fact is, we are going to impose the penalty on the majority of drivers who endeavour to do the right thing and for the sake of a small minority who will most likely ignore speed limits anyway.

In conclusion, I fully support the detailed submission to the committee from respected traffic engineer, Terry Eaton, and endorse the views and data that he has expressed, and in particular his six-point conclusion. Thank you very much.

CHAIR - Thank you, Barry. That was all-encompassing; that was very good. Any questions from the members or comments at all?

Ms RATTRAY - My comment, Barry, was I just wanted to say hear, hear. You know our roads fantastically well so I certainly appreciated that input. There are sections, you are absolutely right, of the Sidling that you cannot drive more than 90 kph but I think that the only crashes that we have there are Targa crashes, usually, when they are driving more than that and probably by people who do not know the roads so I appreciated the effort you have put into your submission. Thank you very much.

Mr OLIVER - Thank you.

CHAIR - Kerry has a question or a comment, Barry.

Mr FINCH - Kerry Finch here, Barry.

Mr OLIVER - Hello, Kerry, how are you?

Mr FINCH - Good thanks. Very impressive, thank you very much for that report. You mentioned early on a lack of driver education. Could you just give us some idea of what you think should be a program for young people as they develop their driving skills? We had some talk yesterday about a suggestion that maybe young kids could start at 13 - around that age - to begin building their driving skills. I wonder if you have got any thoughts on a process that the road safety advisory council might consider?

Mr OLIVER - Well Kerry, I have no problem starting it earlier to be honest with you, but I do think that in general, one of the aspects that we have to consider with our young people is that they need to spend more time behind the wheel with recognised, certified driving instructors. The current system really forces parents and family members to do the training because how many families can afford, for example, \$50 an hour for 50 hours of training? So the problem is that we are forcing the parents to do the training and having seen parents come through the course that I ran up until the end of 2009, I have to wonder if they are equipped to do it. I think we have to have a more structured arrangement and it needs to have some government funding.

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Ms RATTRAY - Good point. Following on from that, Barry, then I in my latter years did a Stay Upright course and got myself a motorcycle licence; I found that that was a terrific program for me as a vehicle driver as well and I completed that course. Do you know much about the motorcycle courses that are provided to get your motorcycle licence?

Mr OLIVER - I cannot say that I have done one but yes, I am very familiar with the course and I think that it is a great idea and it always made me wonder why, if we can go to the trouble of saying it is important and in fact a necessary part of your training to do it, we not doing it with cars. I pushed for many years that the sort of course that I was running, even if it was taken up over a couple of days, would be of great benefit and as I said, it was not skidpan-based. I do not know that that is necessary, to be quite frank with you, but any training that we can give our young people and forming better attitudes to their driving has to be good.

Ms RATTRAY - My experience was that the Stay Upright course to get my Ls was a two-day course and then once you were on your Ls for a certain amount of time, you went back for your licence. That was another full day to gain your provisional licence for your motorcycle and that was theory-based as well as driving or riding in this instance and as I said, I felt I was much more aware of what was happening around me in the vehicle after I had done that course. I have not been to one of the driver education courses, but I should avail myself of it some time and see if I am as good a driver as I think I am.

Mr OLIVER - I am guessing that you are a lot of miles, anyway.

Ms RATTRAY - Yes I am. Touch wood, I am trying to stay upright.

CHAIR - Tony Mulder has a question, Barry.

Mr MULDER - Hi Barry, I was very interested in your course but I must say that it was an awfully big syllabus for one day.

Mr OLIVER - It is amazing what you have to get through, Tony, to be quite honest with you. Without giving myself a pat on the back, we went to a lot of trouble to structure the program. We started at 8.30 a.m. and we did not finish until 5.00 p.m. but they had lunch obviously and a couple of short breaks, one in the morning, one in the afternoon and we limited it to a maximum of 12 people with two qualified instructors, so we worked on the six to one ratio and we covered all of the points that I mentioned in my submission.

Mr MULDER - Was it basically classroom-based, or was there a practical component?

Mr OLIVER - There was certainly a practical component - probably about three hours of theory sessions in class and there would have been about four and a half hours of practical exercises where they had to do threshold braking - understanding what happens if you lock up the wheels in an emergency. We did this on a wet road - we wet the road down. If they had a modern motor car with ABS, they got an opportunity to use the ABS and one of the things we are finding is that people just do not appreciate some of the features of the cars they are driving. We found many, many times that people would turn

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up and when you started talking about the ABS, they really had no perception of what it was all about, so we gave them an opportunity - and not at high speed - to use the ABS; to jump on the brake and see what happens in an emergency. We looked at steering technique, for example, by just taking them through a series of witches' hats at slow speed to get their steering technique correct. We did an emergency manoeuvre, where they had to swerve and brake to miss an imaginary vehicle. It was a mixture of theory and practical.

Mr MULDER - I am interested in the applicability of a similar course to the high school years. Yesterday we had Barry McDonald in, and Barry was talking about the problem you have with people who can get on the road for the first time when they are about 18 and that is exactly in the danger years and they spend the next three or four years gaining experience at the very time when they are in the danger years. The idea then sort of emerged that perhaps if we got them in at high school, and let them do their L training during their high school years, then when they are 18 and 19 and they get their Ps, they at least have a body of experience behind them more than just the 12 months. I am wondering just how adaptable an advanced course would be to run through school, because you could do it over several years?

Mr OLIVER - Yes, I have no problem with that idea - I think that concept would work. One thing we should remember, of course, is that Rotary runs a very good program for year 10 students. I know it is only one day but it is a structured program which looks at a whole range of areas from alcohol and drugs, to braking distances relative to speed, to the various things that you need to be aware of as a driver. That is one program which is currently in operation, but I am not sure that all schools participate in it. It is something that I have been involved in for the last five years.

Mr MULDER - The issue there is that quite often in schools we have all of these life skills based programs and we forget one of the most important skills. Poor driving skills take away the lives of young people, but driving is pushed out of that environment, whereas as we teach kids all sorts of other life skills. For the past 100 years, this has been a vital life skill that we really have not wrapped up into the school curriculum.

Mr OLIVER - I fully agree.

Mr MULDER - The other issue is the fact that learners have to log 50 hours in a car. I for one would not mind if you made that 300 or 400 hours - if we had a longer learning period. But what would be the issue with devising a course for people to assist learner drivers to fill up all those hours? Clearly I do not think anyone can afford a qualified driving instructor to supervise all their driving hours, although there should be a minimum component of that sort of supervision. So, I wonder if it is feasible to train parents so that not just anyone with a drivers licence can take on the role of learner instructor. They could have some basic skills to assist the learner driver.

Mr OLIVER - Well Tony, I would have hoped that the course I ran would have been a very good base for parents - to give them a base to work from when supervising their son or daughter. One of the problems with the 50 hours of driving is that you can put Johnny in the car and he will drive from Launceston to Hobart. He cannot exceed 80 kph, and on the Midland Highway there are very few turns of any significance. He won't have to

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pass anybody and he will get to Hobart and be able to claim three hours of driving. Then he can turn around and come back and claim another three hours.

The question I would ask is: what has he learnt in that six hours?

Mr MULDER - Especially if you have cruise control, you've done nothing.

Mr OLIVER - Exactly.

Mr MULDER - The way I did it with my kids, and that's where the idea comes from, is that one day a week they had a proper driving lesson, and then two or three days during that week I would take them out for an hour or two. I would get them to tell me what they had learnt from their last driving instructor's lesson, so that I knew what they were being taught and I could assist the driving instructor. It was that sort of partnership approach that we need to start using.

Mr OLIVER - That seems like a good idea to me, the way you did that. I have no problem with that.

Mr MULDER - I am not too sure the insurance record would confirm that it was a good idea.

CHAIR - Greg Hall, Barry. Just following on from what Tony is saying, and I think Tanya was mentioning it also, a few years ago I did a half-day course with John Bowe at Symmons Plains and I found that very instructive. It made me think of a lot of things, as a mature driver. Mind you, I did clean up a few witch's hats at one stage, I've got to say.

Do you think the government could encourage mature drivers like us, who are on the road a lot, to do a half-day course and get some of the basic things back in our heads, like the three second rule and the five second rule - all of those basic aspects that we tend to become very blasé about after driving for a long time.

Mr OLIVER - I think that would be a great idea to be honest with you, Greg. Unfortunately in that period of time that I ran defensive driver training courses, I had no support from the relevant ministers because they had been advised that skid pan based advanced driver training courses serve no real value. That is not what I ran, as I described in the first part of my submission. I ran a one-day structured, defensive driver course which is quite a lot different.

Even though a significant part of my clientele came from government departments, the relevant ministers over the years have not supported the concept, and that used to annoy me no end I've got to tell you.

CHAIR - Yes, okay. I think Ivan's got a question - it's the Vicar Dean, I'm sorry.

Mr DEAN - Thanks Barry, how are you going?

Mr OLIVER - Good Ivan.

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Mr DEAN - The Road Safety Advisory Council saw this as the answer to reducing crashes and deaths and serious injury on our roads - they saw this a silver bullet - and they are peeved off to say the least with the position taken by the minister yesterday and the comment in the paper today from John Gledhill, but I think they are meeting to discuss that position. What do you see as issues that could now be looked at to reduce crashes on our roads now that this one seems to have gone? Is there anything that really comes to mind from your point of view that they could look at or consider as a fix in this area?

Mr OLIVER - Ivan, a lot of the comments that have been made by all of us this morning reflect on the fact that education is very important. I am convinced that putting in a 90 kph speed limit on certain roads is not the answer. I don't believe that it was ever going to work and I can understand to a certain extent that the Road Safety Advisory Council might be well and truly peeved off, as you say, but it is not going to fix it. I think we have to get back to the education. There have been some very good ideas put forward this morning in our discussions about looking at perhaps doing courses for the older drivers or the parents who are going to take their children for driving lessons. I think all of those things are worthwhile to consider for the future.

Mr DEAN - Yes, that is good. If I can ask a question on that, the position raised was absolutely right, the average person cannot afford the money to employ driver trainer instructors to teach their kids to drive over that 50-hour period and a number of families have asked me if I would take their kids for driving lessons to try to avoid that.

It seems to me that we need to get some incentive there somewhere built into this and it may well be that a reduction in the licence application when it comes to that stage and/or, say, licence renewal over a period of time. There ought to be something there to give incentive to families to employ or engage driving instructors. Do you see something there, Barry, or not?

Mr OLIVER - Yes, I do see that. That would be a good step in the right direction to alleviate the sort of costs but the other thing which I mentioned earlier that you could still do - there is nothing to stop us from having the style of one-day course that I previously ran, and that would not be a great imposition to families - like spending \$2 500 or \$3 000 - to get them to do a one day course which perhaps could be subsidised by the insurance industry.

Mr DEAN - What we could do there, then, taking that a little bit further, that could be legislated or that could be a requirement of gaining your Ps or your learner's licence or whatever but you must do that one day course that you have just referred to.

Mr OLIVER - Yes, and, as I say, that could be subsidised and I think that would be a very good step in the right direction. Obviously, that is what I was promoting for 17 years - that we should be doing that because I can tell you that on the occasions when I ran weekend courses specifically for young drivers, and we got quite a few coming through, it really did concern me when we sat in the car drove with them and observed their driving skills, it was not very good. It was quite frightening on occasions. I am sure you would be aware of the Symmons Plains circuit but one of the things is we would do is take them out and do three or four laps; they have to treat it as a highway and not as a racetrack - we always specified that you are not on a racetrack, you are on a highway - and sit in the car and go around the circuit with them.

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If you go down to the southern end of the circuit, you have a hairpin and invariably when they got down there they had no idea of the speed they should be travelling at for that hairpin and frequently they were jumping on the brake in the middle of the corner because they suddenly realised that they were travelling too fast. They really did not have first of all that observation skill and, secondly, that awareness of the dynamics of the vehicle to realise that they needed to be going slower. They couldn't brake and change gear at the same time, so when they were changing down they were taking their foot off the brake and the car was freewheeling and therefore gaining speed. This happened on numerous occasions; it really worried me and I thought we had to be doing something more.

Mr DEAN - If I can take you to one further issue, Barry. You gave evidence to us at the Don Wing inquiry several years ago?

Mr OLIVER - That's correct.

Mr DEAN - The issue raised there was that one of the problems that we seem to have is that with P drivers for a start off in the early stages can only do 80 kph but then all of a sudden they are able to do 100 kph and on some roads 110 kph, supposedly without any prior training to do that. Do you believe that the 80 kph limit that these people have to comply with is reasonable in the circumstances, or should there be an opportunity for them to at least drive to the posted speed limits with proper instruction?

Mr OLIVER - I fully agree with you, Ivan, because it must be very frustrating for a P-plater on the Midland highway travelling at 80 kph with a kilometre of cars banked up behind. Yes, we should be training them to keep an eye on their rear vision mirror and when the occasion comes up, put the indicator on, pull over and let those faster cars go through - but I have always held the view that really we are not doing them a favour by restricting them to 80 kph, especially on major highways.

Mr DEAN - Thank you, Barry, and I could not agree more.

Mr FINCH - Something, Barry, that stood out in that conversation you have just had with Ivan was the fact that there may be, or should be, some consideration for a course for parents who are going to train the kids.

Mr OLIVER - Yes.

Mr FINCH - They come into the circumstance, of course, with their experience but they really are just showing what should occur and how to drive but not really getting into the mind of a young person - those messages that are going to be important for them when they get out on the road themselves on their own or with their mates or whatever.

Mr OLIVER - I believe that it is important for parents to be doing something similar to the one-day course which we have described a number of times and when you look at it now what happens, the only qualifications that are required to be a supervisor is that you hold a full licence, that you have had no suspensions or disqualifications in the previous two years and you are free to go. So all of your bad habits now are going to be passed on to junior and I see that as being quite wrong; we are not doing them any favours

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whatsoever. We probably, from my point of view, look at this two ways. We have the course for the parents to give them a better idea of what they should be passing on and follow it up in the licence process with the same cause for the junior.

Mr FINCH - Thank you, Barry, I am glad we went back over that. The question that I did want to raise with you is something that I want to explore to see whether you have some ideas. You mentioned earlier that the statistics show that most accidents are caused by people who drive without due care and attention. Do you have any ideas that might assist drivers, or young people in their learning, to help them drive with due care and to pay attention?

Mr OLIVER -The first thing I would say with young people is turn the volume down, because it never ceases to amaze me that they seem to think that they have to have the hi-fi going at full blast. There is no way in the world you can focus your attention on your driving - and do not get me wrong, I am not the first to having some nice music in the car when I am travelling - but by the same token I think we have to make sure that it is not at the stage where it is going to be a distraction. I think we must also to get them to realise that driving really is one of the most dangerous things they do in life; when you think about it, you are driving a missile. We have to try to somehow teach them to focus on their driving but it has to be a pleasurable thing that they are doing, not just a means of driving a motor car from A to B, but something to be enjoyed, which I have done all my life.

If you are carrying passengers, for example, keep your eyes on the road and do not feel that you have got to look at the passenger you are talking to - keep your eyes on the road, keep focused. Do not drive for any more than two hours than any one time, for example, don't have the car running too hot because that can make you drowsy, maybe drop the window down two inches and have some cool fresh air coming into the car which will keep you focused. Be prepared for a long trip and make sure you have liquids in the car, for example. I think there is a whole range of things that we can look at that to try to make people more observant on the road and pay attention to what they are doing.

Mr FINCH - Thanks, Barry.

Mr MULDER - I want to get back to the condition of our roads. The fact is, I think, that the Road Safety Council and DIER in particular were saying that the condition of these roads, if you take the Australian standard into account, is what requires them to lower the speed limit. I wonder what your view is. There is a view about the place that the reduction in speed limit is an excuse for DIER not to do their job properly and upgrade the roads to the standard they should be.

Mr OLIVER - There is no doubt there are some roads that need attention, but I go back to one of the early comments I made in my submission: drivers have to be observant enough to take note of the road conditions that they are on and drive to those conditions. This is part of their training, surely. We do not use our eyes well enough, we do not look far enough ahead, we do not pick up the obstacles, the broken edges, the lack of white lines, etcetera, so we have to be more observant. As I said before, people have to learn to drive to the conditions. Just because they have been on a road that is okay for 110 kph does not mean that the next piece of road they travel over is the same and we often say to people, 'In wet conditions, drop your speed by 10 kph.'

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Mr MULDER - I guess the thing that drives it a little bit is the fact that DIER admits that even at 90 kph some of these roads still do not meet the national standard in terms of carriage width, surface, shoulders and things like that would be required to travel at even 90 kph, so drive to the conditions is fine - but wouldn't it be great if we could use some of the \$14 billion collected in fuel excise to upgrade the roads so that it becomes user-pay - so that the standard of the road is driven, no pun intended, or is determined by how much traffic uses it rather than how much money we spend on it.

Mr OLIVER - I would agree with you. In the submission I made to the Don Wing inquiry, I believe I said there that the revenue that is raised from traffic infringements should be put back into training first of all - and we have talked about that this morning in terms of subsidies - and second, into our road system. I do not know where it goes at the moment; I am assuming it goes into consolidated revenue and is split up. Obviously some of it comes back to road safety but I am not sure that it is coming back as much as it should.

Mr MULDER - It is certainly into consolidated revenue except for those people who managed to use their influence to avoid having to pay the fines anyway.

Mr OLIVER - Yes.

Mr MULDER - There are some red faces in the room, Barry.

Mr OLIVER - I wondered about that comment.

Mr FINCH - What has Ivan been up to now?

Laughter.

Mr MULDER - My point, though, is that you could do that but I think the RACT produced the figures that something like \$14 billion is raised in fuel excise alone which is a real user pays fee because if you use the road you use fuel. The more fuel you use, the more road you use and the more excise you pay, but of that \$14 billion only something like about \$3.4 billion makes it back into the road system. If those figures are correct I think that is absolutely staggering and there is a huge amount of money which should be used to fix up our roads.

Mr OLIVER - I would totally agree with you. I was not aware of those figures; I will be quite frank with you, but it really disappoints me to think that so little is going back into the road system - it should be all of it.

Mr MULDER - It should be hypothecated with maybe 10 per cent to the government. The other issue was that if you had a pot of money like that you could not only improve the roads but you could set up dedicated off-road driving ranges, if you like, which have a range of road conditions and road features so people could practise all those things for which you have to take them to Symmons Plains; we have Symmons Plains and Baskerville, but you could put dedicated ones at some of our colleges or places like that.

Mr OLIVER - Absolutely.

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Mr MULDER - Then you could have the high school people doing their off-road training on these dedicated courses.

Mr OLIVER - I couldn't agree more.

CHAIR - Okay, Barry. Greg, just one question from me. The minister has mentioned that now they will be able to take a strategic approach, talk to all the councils and fix up all of these bits of road which are deficient in infrastructure - which, of course, is a no-brainer and should always have been the case, anyway - but I have one question with regard to road signage and road markings. Having just returned from the UK, I was pretty impressed with a lot of their more rural roads where by the use of a lot of arrows on the roads - in the north and the Midlands here they do that as well we you are approaching a crest or corner - and some very good and innovative road signage to say, 'There is a winding road coming up, take care,' that sort of thing. Are you a supporter of that approach as well?

Mr OLIVER - Absolutely. Anything that is highly visible that will assist a driver in realising that the conditions are about to change because of the topography, and as far as I am concerned, it is a good thing. It has to be done.

CHAIR - A no-brainer, in other words. I think we are just about done. Thank you, Barry. We wish you well and we will continue to finish off our report, even though with the changed circumstances yesterday that we have a couple of other matters that we have to deal with so I do thank you very much for your time.

Mr OLIVER - That is fine, Greg, I didn't get back from Western Australia until late last night and one of the first things that my wife said when I got in the car was, 'You will never guess, but the minister has had a change of heart,' and so I was not sure whether I was still doing a submission this morning or not.

CHAIR - We all decided that it was absolutely necessary, Barry, and I suppose we could describe the minister's decision as pragmatic.

Mr OLIVER - Exactly.

CHAIR - Thank you, Barry - all the best.

Mr OLIVER - Thank you.

THE WITNESS WITHDREW.