



Honourable Steve Bredhauer MP
Member for Cook



Queensland
Government

Minister for Transport
Minister for Main Roads

15 MAY 2003

Min 22947

Mr Michael Yates
7 Marston Avenue
Indooroopilly Qld 4068

Dear Mr Yates

Thank you for your deputation to the Mt Ommaney/Indooroopilly Community Cabinet on 2/3 February 2003 about establishing local road safety trials.

On the issue of trials of lower speed limits in particular communities, speed limits on Queensland roads must be set in accordance with guidelines contained in the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). These guidelines have been developed to ensure that speed limits are consistent and credible, with the aim of achieving the highest possible levels of voluntary compliance by motorists. The guidelines also recognise that speed limits must be set to balance the needs of all road users and the people who live and work alongside the roads. This need for balance can sometimes result in speed limits which some motorists consider to be too low, while some cyclists, pedestrians and residents consider them to be too high. It is widely accepted by road safety practitioners that if speed limits are set unreasonably low, large numbers of motorists will disregard them, and safety for all road users will be adversely affected.

Local governments and the Department of Main Roads have the authority to set speed limits on roads under their control, provided they comply with the requirements of the MUTCD.

Within built-up areas, the MUTCD requires that traffic carrying roads generally have a speed limit of 60km/h or higher. Lower speed limits can be applied to traffic carrying roads under special circumstances, such as through busy strip shopping centres, on river or foreshore esplanades or past hospitals. Local streets will generally have a speed limit of 50km/h. A 40km/h speed limit can be applied to local streets if the design of the street supports the lower speed, or if traffic calming devices have been installed to physically restrict vehicle speeds.

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The 50km/h speed limit introduced on local streets in built-up areas in south east Queensland in March 1999 has been highly effective in improving safety. Fatal crashes on local streets have been reduced by approximately 18 per cent, with a saving to the community of in excess of \$26 million. The lower speed limit on local streets has improved safety for cyclists and pedestrians as well as improving amenity for the people who live alongside those streets. On 1 February 2003, the 50km/h speed limit was extended to local streets in all built-up areas in Queensland.

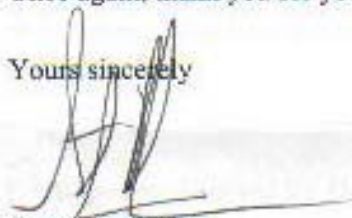
Queensland Transport has run a trial of a 30km/h speed limit in school zones. The government lowered the school zone speed limits from 40km/h to 30km/h at 13 sites in the greater Brisbane area, and increasing the hours of operation to 7.00am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday, during the trial period.

The government is considering the results of the trial and their impact on the draft School Environment Safety Guidelines which have been developed to provide for safety facilities for children near schools.

On the subject of encouraging cycling, Queensland Transport released the draft Queensland Cycle Strategy for public consultation in February this year. The strategy has identified a series of actions that will improve the safety and convenience of cycling. Implementing each action will be the responsibility of a number of government agencies, industry and bicycle user groups, all of whom have agreed to play a role in delivering the strategy. While the public consultation phase is now over, I encourage you to view the strategy on the Queensland Transport cycling website at www.transport.qld.gov.au/cycling. The strategy includes a number of actions where individuals and community organisations can be involved directly in implementation. Some of these relate to the issues you raised with me. For example, action 4.1e is to conduct, support and disseminate research on, and trials of, initiatives for bicycle safety.

Once again, thank you for your views on these very important road safety issues.

Yours sincerely



Steve Bredhauer
**Minister for Transport
and Minister for Main Roads
Member for Cook**