

Question on Notice

No. 382

Asked on Wednesday 22 April 2020

MR D LAST ASKED MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND MAIN ROADS (HON M BAILEY)—

QUESTION:

With reference to farmers in my electorate and throughout the state preparing to harvest their crops and all practical driving tests being currently suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic and given the production of food and fibre is an essential service—

Will the Minister advise what arrangements are being made to ensure practical driving tests are available so that our farmers can undertake their harvest?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Burdekin for the question.

Please be assured that the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) did not take the decision to suspend practical driving tests lightly. The change in service delivery was taken after considering the guidelines for social distancing and hygiene practices, as recommended by Queensland Health, and the unique nature of the working environment for driving examiners.

The unique factors which raise the risk level for practical driving tests include the:

- unavoidable close physical proximity of the driving examiner to the customer
- enclosed nature of a vehicle
- extended duration of the driving test (typically 45 minutes).

TMR is following the guidelines for social distancing and hygiene practices as recommended by Queensland Health.

The Member will be pleased to note that, on 25 May 2020, heavy vehicle practical driving tests will resume in certain locations across Queensland, following a thorough review of this service and updated health advice. The decision to start heavy vehicle driving tests follows feedback from industry and again recognises the essential role transport and the heavy vehicle industry plays in keeping Queenslanders and our economy moving.

Heavy vehicle testing has been prioritised to support the transport and agriculture industries and to keep Queensland moving. Priority will be given to those who previously had heavy vehicle tests booked that were cancelled due to COVID-19, emergency service drivers, customers who require a heavy vehicle licence for employment purposes and those with exceptional circumstances.

As health and safety remains a priority, several measures will be put in place to protect TMR examiners and customers, including mandatory customer screening, the provision of antibacterial wipes and pre-test vehicle cleaning requirements.