

Legislative Council

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ROAD SAFETY

The Hon. A. BRESSINGTON (15:18): Can the minister provide the council with information on how effective reducing the speed limit from 50 to 60 km/h has been? Is there any research or data which shows that it has contributed to a reduction in crashes or road accidents since the introduction of the 50 km/h speed limit?

The Hon. CARMEL ZOLLO (Minister for Correctional Services, Minister for Road Safety, Minister for Gambling, Minister Assisting the Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (15:18): Yes, I can do that. Research conducted by the Centre for Automotive Safety Research on the 50 km/h zone also shows that, on roads where the speed limit was reduced from 60 to 50, the number of casualty crashes fell by 20 per cent, so we had 330 fewer casualty crashes. The number of people injured in crashes fell by 24 per cent, which was 495 fewer casualties; and the number of people killed fell from 14 to eight. We know that speeding increases crash risk and impacts upon the severity of a crash. The risk of serious injury or death in a crash is twice as great at 65 km/h as it is at 60 km/h and four times as great at 70 km/h.

The Hon. A. BRESSINGTON (15:19): Can the minister provide some explanation of how it is decided whether a street will be classified as 50 or 60 km/h, given that in Elizabeth there are two streets running adjacently, one of which is 60 km/h and the other 50 km/h, and there is no difference in those streets at all? How is it determined which street will have a 50 km/h speed limit and which will be 60 km/h?

The Hon. CARMEL ZOLLO (Minister for Correctional Services, Minister for Road Safety, Minister for Gambling, Minister Assisting the Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (15:20): As we have heard, the 50 km/h speed limit for urban and built-up areas was brought in in 2003. The difference in the speed limit may be determined by whether it is a council road or whether it is an arterial road and the amount of traffic on those roads. However, if the honourable member wants to give me the names of the roads, I will have the matter further investigated.