

Speech

House of Assembly - Thursday, 24 November 2011, Page 6147

**ROAD TRAFFIC (EMERGENCY VEHICLES) AMENDMENT BILL**

Mr BROCK (Frome) (11:02): I also rise to support this private member's bill introduced by the member for Stuart (Mr Dan van Holst Pellekaan), and I congratulate the member on bringing it up. This issue was identified by myself, probably back in July, and I spoke to the previous minister and brought to his attention the 2010 commitment from the Labor Party to bring that to fruition.

I take on board the member for Kavel's comment that the Liberal Party has brought it to the house, and it is a lesson that I have learnt that, if we feel very passionate about an issue, then bring about a change to the bill itself. We were trying to get it through the regulations and, unfortunately, we could not get through that way. There was a bit of a time bomb.

As the members for Kavel and Stuart have indicated, members of the emergency services out there deserve to have some protection, and I am very hopeful that this bill will get speedy passage through the house because, in my case, I have gone through it with all the relevant emergency services, including the CFS, the SES and the MFS and also the ambulance services, so everybody is in agreement with this.

Just recently, one of my volunteers came into my office. He was on leave and he went through Port Augusta, and as he went past the Port Augusta Gaol there were signs out there at 25 ks an hour because the inmates were doing some cultivating on the side of the road.

Mr Pengilly: Escaping.

Mr BROCK: They were not escaping.

An honourable member: What were they cultivating?

Mr BROCK: They were managing the grass there. His statement was that he risked his life to pick up people who are being injured and yet he has to have people going past him at 40 ks an hour currently. Let me also say that people need to use some common sense. I do not think our drivers in South Australia really understand what we should be doing. If you are on a road and you see an emergency vehicle—whether it be a police vehicle or whoever it is—on the side of the road doing their duty, you should slow down automatically even if there is no legislation in place. Common sense prevails. We should be very, very sincere about that and start to take it into account. This is why we need to reduce the speed limit to 100 km/h on some of the country roads.

I believe that driver education should go back to schools and that information made available. It should be part of the tuition of secondary schools so that all students are aware of what the regulations are, what the speeds are and how it is just common sense. Common sense is something that everybody should have. You see it all the time, when people reverse out of a parking space on a two-lane road, they will not go into the other lane on the other side if it is vacant. I know that there are other things that need to be done today, but I certainly 100 per cent endorse this and hope it gets speedy passage and gets implemented very quickly.