

22 November 2021

To: The Honourable Mark Bailey MP, Minister for Transport and Main Roads

Dear Minister,

Please thank Mr Dunn for his letter dated November 11 (MC120471\_final).

I am glad the Department acknowledges the dangers of slip lanes. However, Mr Dunn appears to have misunderstood my concern, although I'm not sure how that is possible without deliberate obtuseness. My contention is not that the existing crossings were safe, and therefore signalisation was unnecessary; my contention is that signalising slip lanes makes them no less dangerous, and the Department has adopted signalisation not as a safety treatment, but as a loophole to allow the continued building and operation of unsafe infrastructure.

Mr Dunn referenced the *National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020* in his letter as an influence on TMR policy. A federal inquiry in 2018 found that the strategy had failed to achieve its goals, because of:

*[...] the lack of focus on a harm elimination agenda. This means that sub-optimal outcomes are unintentionally achieved because some improvement in safety is often regarded as sufficient or is assumed. We accept making the roads, vehicles and users safer, but frequently miss the opportunity to make them SAFE. The distinction is subtle but vitally important (p.15).*

“Some improvement in safety is assumed” is definitely an accurate description of TMR’s approach to signalising slip lanes. Making intersections genuinely *safe* requires the removal of slip lanes—or not building them in the first place—while TMR policy continues to prioritise high-speed vehicle movement over pedestrian safety, backed by an unreasoned assumption that signalisation at least represents an improvement.

Mr Dunn also referenced the *Queensland Road Safety Strategy 2015-2021*, which targeted a 30% reduction in road casualties from the 2008-2010 average in accordance with the National Strategy. The reality is that, since the strategy began, road casualties in Queensland have continued to increase, and in 2021 will in fact exceed the baseline of 303 deaths and 6,670 hospitalisations, despite significant improvements in vehicle safety technology over the past decade. TMR’s implementation of “Safe System principles, processes and practices” is clearly *not* working.

As for Mr Dunn’s so-called investigation into the Webster Road crossings, it appears to be largely a restatement of the lies he told in his letter dated 18 June (MC120130). The truth is that no traffic analysis was done and no alternatives considered by the project team at Webster Road. Mr Dunn’s insistence that closing the slip lanes would require building additional lanes on both Gympie and Webster roads is an unsupported absurdity, but does clearly demonstrate where the Department’s priorities remain. Nor am I at all comforted by the idea that this intersection may be treated to a full \$30m upgrade at some time in the future—because we already have such a project in the Aspley area, at Strathpine Road in Bald Hills. In that case, a pedestrian trying to transit TMR’s new intersection will have to cross *four* dangerous signalised slip crossings of the same design as at Webster Road.

Minister, until your Department starts making safety a genuine priority, hundreds of Queenslanders will continue to be unnecessarily killed and maimed on our roads each year. And until the Department makes *pedestrian* safety and amenity a priority, our communities will continue to be locked in a cycle of car-dependency and traffic congestion that is impossible to break.

As always, I am available if you or your advisers want to discuss the issues and options.

Sincerely,

David Dallaston  
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