

3.10 The Connétable of St. Martin of the Minister for Infrastructure regarding the recommendations of the Island Road Safety Review (OQ.107/2024)

Will the Minister advise what progress, if any, has been made in implementing the recommendations of the Island Road Safety Review (R.185/2021) and explain how the Strategic Road Safety Unit will help to deliver this work in tandem with the Sustainable Transport Policy?

The Connétable of St. John (The Minister for Infrastructure):

I thank the Constable for her question. I also thank her and my predecessor, Deputy Binet, for ensuring that funding is in place for us to carry out this important work. I am pleased to say that the work is underway across all 23 recommendations which are on the programme. At the start of this year a Strategic Safety Unit was established and with the support of this new team I will publish a collision and casualty reduction plan later this year enabling delivery of the safe system approach, identifying specific actions to help prevent collisions and reduce injury severity. We are committed to this work and, along with the Constable of St. Helier, I am working with the Infrastructure team looking particularly at vulnerable road users with crossings in and around St. Helier being one of our priorities. We are also working on the Roads Law Review Project and I recently signed a Ministerial Decision to draft legal limits for drunk-driving offences, as well as roadside testing to address high-risk behaviours on our roads and support the police and their network. I will be asking the Assembly to support those proposals when I bring them forward.

The Deputy Bailiff:

A supplementary?

The Connétable of St. Martin:

No, thank you. I am just heartened to hear that progress is being made.

3.10.1 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

In the Island Road Safety Review it says that D.V.S. (Driver and Vehicle Standards) aligns itself to U.K. new practices and standards in vehicle testing and the review states by 2024 they will achieve very close alignment. Does the Minister believe that this alignment has been achieved and, if not, why not?

The Connétable of St. John:

I thank the Deputy for her question. We are working closely with D.V.S. in terms of what they do and how frequently they do things. The road users in Jersey have a very different requirement than road users in mainland Europe and in the U.K., and so we are working closely to align ourselves and we will continue that work.

3.10.2 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I am sure I will follow up with a written question to get more details on that in the future. The review also talks about the actions required to support different levels of casualty reduction targets, those being 33 per cent, 40 per cent or 50 per cent by 2032. Given the news last week unfortunately on our casualty reduction not being met and being one of the highest in mainland Great Britain and many E.U. (European Union) countries, what target is the Minister aiming

for in his decision-making and what actions are to be done in the next 2 years around these different targets?

The Connétable of St. John:

I share the Deputy's concern about the statistics that were published last week. They are more than statistics, every collision that involves injuries impacts on an individual, on a family, on friends, colleagues, et cetera, so it is the human cost as well as the financial cost of those collisions. We are putting the report together and within that report we will put in targets. It is too early for me to pre-empt that, but within a couple of months I will be coming back with that report and with those targets.

3.10.3 Deputy J. Renouf:

Does the Minister accept that the question of road safety interacts with many other aspects of government policy, in particular the poor safety statistics represent a barrier to the adoption of more active forms of travel and that therefore we should be aiming for being better than relevant jurisdictions rather than considerably worse in these respects?

The Connétable of St. John:

I totally agree. In recent weeks I have been out not once but 3 times with Infrastructure colleagues on my bike to see different areas of the Island where we hope we can introduce improvements. Road safety is the responsibility of all of us, as States Members, but also as road users whether we are walking, cycling or driving a car. It is our aim to improve both the infrastructure and the education that we give to the community.

3.10.4 Deputy J. Renouf:

Does the Minister agree that there is potentially an issue when we find in social media comments being made that are derogatory about people taking active options such as cycling and indeed that this can legitimate behaviours that are dangerous on the roads such as what are called "punishment passes" and so on, on bicycles, riding too fast, too close to cycles because an atmosphere is created around this? Does he agree with me that we ought to have a responsibility to counter this kind of negativity around these forms of travel?

The Connétable of St. John:

Yes, I read similar social media to the Deputy and it does concern me. I do believe that is being generated by a minority. When talking to members of the public right across the Island, different demographics, there is an understanding that we do need to improve our road safety. I am pleased to say that we are working closely with Justice and Home Affairs and the police to ensure that we can bring this to bear.