1. Distracted driving is an increasing concern on Queensland roads with 70 per cent of Queensland drivers admitting to illegally using their mobile phone while driving. It is one of the fatal five driving behaviours and contributes to almost 20 per cent of serious injuries and 14 per cent of fatalities. In 2018, 33 people lost their lives on Queensland's roads which is 33.1 per cent greater than the previous five-year average. A further 1,358 were hospitalised due to serious injuries resulting from this issue.
2. The current penalty for illegally using a phone while driving in Queensland is $400 (3 penalty units) and three demerit points. The Queensland Police Service is responsible for enforcing these rules. In 2018, there were 14,287 drivers fined and 312 repeat offenders. Repeat offences attract double demerit points.
3. This non-compliance with the road rules relating to using a mobile phone while driving indicates the traditional methods of regulating, educating and enforcing are not achieving the desired outcomes.
4. Current enforcement practices rely on roadside police to identify if a driver is committing a handheld mobile phone offence. Detection of illegal mobile phone use can be difficult with drivers actively hiding their mobile phone out of sight of police.
5. Automated enforcement measures have been developed to address other 'Fatal Five' driving behaviours and reduce the road toll (for example, fixed and mobile speed cameras). Advancements in technology need to be investigated to determine their application in reducing distracted driving and not wearing a seat belt.
6. Cabinet approved the Minister for Transport and Main Roads to increase the penalty for illegal mobile phone use while driving from $400 (3 penalty units) to $1,000 (7.5 penalty units) demerit points from three to four via a regulation amendment.
7. Cabinet noted the Department of Transport and Main Roads would field-test camera-based enforcement technology from early 2020.
8. *Attachments*
* Nil.