



HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY 30th MAY 2017

STATUTES AMENDMENT (TRANSPORT ONLINE TRANSACTIONS AND OTHER MATTERS) BILL

Second Reading

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 12 April 2017.)

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (15:57): I rise to speak to the Statutes Amendment (Transport Online Transactions and Other Matters) Bill 2017. What is happening here with this legislation is that the government is making quite a few small changes to the Motor Vehicles Act 1959, the Road Traffic Act 1961, the Highways Act 1926, the Heavy Vehicle National Law (South Australia) Act 2013 and the Harbors and Navigation Act 2013. As has been indicated by the shadow minister, the member for Unley, the bill amends these acts to remove gender-specific language, reflecting the government's policy on gender identity and equality, evidently. From my count, in regard to gender-specific language there are 215 changes taking out 'his' or 'her' or 'he'; you will either be a 'person' or a 'commissioner' or something else.

The main focus of the bill is changes to the Motor Vehicles Act to modernise customer-government online transactions by removing barriers to the use of online processes so that vehicle registration transfers and notices of vehicle sales can be recorded online rather than with paper forms lodged in person. These new online options, via EzyReg, will continue in conjunction with the existing paper form methods. The government has estimated that there will be an extra 500,000 transactions made online each year under these amendments, and customers will also be given the option of receiving communications electronically or by post.

Licence renewal applications will also be able to be made over the phone. In a briefing received from the department, they advised that, in addition to standard online registrations by clients using EzyReg, there are now 275,000 accounts set up by customers on EzyReg, which allow them to use direct debit for payments—about 60,000 people use this option—as well as view their registration and demerit details.

In regard to what happens to the accident towing roster scheme, the bill also amends the act's provisions whereby holders of tow truck certificates will no longer be required to affix certification to their clothing. In regard to the Road Traffic Act, the definition of 'bicycle' will be updated to remove unicycles and scooters from this category. This will also achieve consistency under the Australian Road Rules.

There will also be some amendments under the Highways Act, which will address ambiguity which has arisen on a road being treated as a 'road' or a 'public road'. The Statutes Amendment and Repeal (Budget 2012) Act 2012 incorporated amendments to the Highways Act that provided for certain roads to vest in the Commissioner of Highways so as to enable the commissioner to enter into contracts to promote commercial activities on these roads. This has led to some ambiguity as to whether these roads are to be treated as 'roads' or 'public roads', and amendments in this bill will clarify that the commissioner has the same powers with regard to those roads as councils, which was the intention of the 2012 budget act.

Groups have been consulted in the transport sector, including the South Australian Freight Council, the South Australian Road Transport Association, the CCF (SA), the MBA and the Bicycle Institute SA, and no concerns were raised with the bill. I think it will certainly be a step forward to make it easier for registration processes online.

As was indicated earlier by the member for Mount Gambier, there can be very long queues outside registration offices. They are under Service SA now, so there are many complex arrangements that need to be dealt with. At times it can be frustrating, but I must say that, in my own arrangements around registration and certainly in the last couple of years with some personal matters I had to sort out, they were all very good and very keen to get the right result, which was good to see. With those few words, I support the Statutes Amendment (Transport Online Transactions and Other Matters) Bill.