



Hon Rachel Nolan MP
Member for Ipswich



**Queensland
Government**

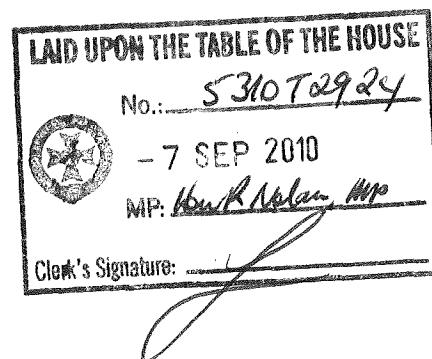
Our ref: MC51088

Minister for Transport

Your ref: Petitions

6 SEP 2010

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000



Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to the petition numbers 1493-10 and 1428-10 lodged with the Legislative Assembly by Ms Fiona Simpson MP, Member for Maroochydore, on 3 August 2010 about the cost of the new Queensland driver licence.

The government has been upfront about the fact that delivering the improved security included in the new Queensland driver licence and cracking down on fraud will mean some increase in cost. But this increase will be slowly phased in over five years to reduce the impact, and it will not make Queensland's licence the most expensive in Australia as the petition claims.

For example, in 2010-2011 a five year driver licence with the new card will cost \$96.05 compared to \$75.55 for the existing laminated product. A key factor in deciding to change to the new driver licence is that equipment used for the production of laminated cards has been in use since the mid-1980s and is becoming obsolete. Ageing technology, including camera equipment around 20 years old, cannot be replaced and investment in a new system is unavoidable. Quite simply, continuing with the existing laminated cards is, in the end, not a viable option.

The amount of \$96.05 is lower than current costs in New South Wales (\$153), Western Australia (\$116), South Australia (\$155) and the Australian Capital Territory (\$151). Even in 2014-2015, it is anticipated that the new Queensland driver licence will cost about the same as the current costs for driver licence products in New South Wales, South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory.

In fact, assuming licences in New South Wales and South Australia continue to increase with inflation, in 2014-2015 a Queensland licence will be about 12% cheaper than a licence in either of these states.

The progressive roll-out of the new licences throughout the state will begin in late 2010, with licence holders transitioning to the cards when their existing driver licence expires. Queensland driver licences are issued for a period of up to five years, so it will take between five and six years for all licence holders to replace their laminated licences with the new cards. During that time, both laminated cards and the new cards will be recognised licences, provided they are current. The new driver licence card is a big step forward in safety and security. Queenslanders will benefit from the latest technology, which makes the cards virtually impossible to duplicate.

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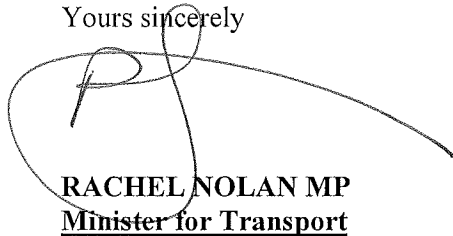
Relatively unsophisticated equipment can create fake laminated licences, and these licences may be used to commit a wide range of crimes such as identity theft, purchasing age-restricted products and driving illegally. Identity fraud is one of Australia's fastest growing crimes and the Australian Bureau of Statistics' National Personal Survey Fraud Survey (June 2008) showed there were 806 000 victims of personal fraud in Australia in 12 months, costing individuals a combined \$977 million. This included 124 000 victims of identity fraud. As a result, my department has an opportunity to introduce new cards that adopt global technology to strengthen the integrity of Queensland's licensing system.

Features of the new plastic cards include an embedded computer chip to securely store information, as well as various visual and embedded security measures such as holograms, watermarks and a reproduction of a digital photo and digitised signature. These improvements will provide increased assurance that the new card is genuine. It means Queenslander's will have a more secure licence that incorporates state-of-the-art technology and security measures, and greater protection for their identity and personal information.

I understand that any increase in cost has an impact. But this new five year licence will only cost 30 cents extra a week compared to the current cost. 30 cents a week is a small price to pay to avoid the enormous costs of having your identity stolen. It is an investment in better personal security.

Further information on the new Queensland driver licence can be found at www.transport.qld.gov.au/cards.

Yours sincerely



RACHEL NOLAN MP
Minister for Transport