

Inquest into the death of Geoffrey George Candlin

Geoffrey George Candlin died on 29 March 2011 from injuries he sustained on the Bruce Highway when a trailer being towed by a prime mover collided with his car. The prime mover veered off the road and impacted with Mr Candlin's vehicle when the driver steered the prime mover violently to the right and then to the left to get back onto the roadway.

Coroner Jane Bentley delivered her findings of inquest on 23 January 2015.

The Queensland Government responds to recommendations directed to government agencies at inquests by informing the community if a recommendation will be implemented or the reason why a recommendation is not supported. Further information relating the implementation of recommendations can be obtained from the responsible agency named in the response.

Recommendation 1

The Department of Transport and Main Roads appoint a coronial liaison officer.

Response and action: the recommendation is implemented.

Responsible agency: Department of Transport and Main Roads.

On 22 September 2015, the Deputy Premier, Minister for Transport, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade and the Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy and Water Supply responded:

The Legal Services Unit of the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) currently undertakes a Coronial Liaison function.

Specifically, that office provides a central point of contact for the Coroners Court. This contact is typically managed by a legal officer who responds to requests for information or assistance as required by the Coroners Court including from counsel assisting the coroner. TMR views the 'duty to help investigation' as set out under section 16 of the *Coroners Act 2003* as a support and coordination role enlivened by a request from the Coroners Court, rather than an investigative role enlivened by a fatal incident. TMR is committed to providing timely and comprehensive responses to the Coroners Court and will continue to improve the processes underlying the existing coronial liaison function in light of the comments made within the body of the findings of inquest.

Recommendation 2

The Department of Transport and Main Roads and/or the National Heavy Vehicle Accreditation Scheme regulator consider mandating the attendance of transport inspectors at fatal road crashes involving heavy vehicles.

Response and action: the recommendation was not implemented.

Responsible agency: Department of Transport and Main Roads.

On 22 September 2015, the Deputy Premier, Minister for Transport, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade and the Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy and Water Supply responded:

A Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR), the Office of Fair and Safe Work Queensland and the Queensland Police Service (QPS) exists and is a robust and suitable response to the management of, response to, and investigations into fatal accidents, including heavy vehicle accidents on state-controlled roads. TMR remains committed to offering all reasonable assistance to QPS, when called upon to do so, including by investigating aspects of heavy vehicle fatal accidents. TMR does not have suitably qualified staff in a breadth of locations across Queensland to enable it to commit to attending every heavy vehicle fatal accident. QPS is best equipped to make decisions about the management of an investigation and to call in assistance when necessary.