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New Road Safety Measures are Tough but Necessary – KENNEDY

TOUGH NEW measures are being introduced to save lives on our roads, according to Dublin North Deputy Michael Kennedy, who has called on the RSA and the Department of Transport take action as soon as possible.

Deputy Kennedy said: “The new measures are part of the Road Safety Strategy 2007-2012 and will see major restrictions being put on learner drivers primarily, whilst also addressing concerns over seat-belt use and the launch of Safety Camera Network. In all 126 specific measures will be implemented by the end of 2012.”

“As a member of the newly-formed Dail Transport Committee, I am delighted to see that this strategy is being launched and my only disappointment is that all of the measures are not effective immediately.”

“I do, however, understand that the changes launched today are drastic. We will need time to mould them into our current system effectively and for our drivers to become familiar with the new system, so the aim of implementing the entire strategy by 2012 is entirely appropriate.”

“In my private life I am an insurance broker and I am always mindful of the dangers posed on our roads. And on account of my own background, I must also say that these reforms will have a positive affect on the insurance industry as fewer claims are lodged.”

“The bulk of the changes are related to the learner driver sector, which is in dire need of reform. In many ways learner drivers are equal part vulnerable and dangerous when driving on our roads, and by introducing the first raft of changes from midnight October 29th the Government is showing it is serious about tackling road deaths.”

“Among the changes being introduced from Monday are:

- The replacement of the provisional license with a learner permit to emphasise the fact that the driver is still training to drive.
- Existing provisional licenses will operate until their expiry date, at which point they will be replaced by the new permit system.
- The holder of a second provisional or learner permit will now be required to be accompanied by a fully licensed driver.

“From December 1st, learner motorcyclists must wear the letter L on their bikes, whilst provisional drivers/permit holders will be required to hold their license/permit for six months before taking their tests.”

“Road safety is a major issue in my own constituency of Dublin North and thankfully, the number of fatalities on our roads remains low in comparison to

other areas of Ireland. However, it is clear that our attitude and driving habits need a major re-think and these reforms will facilitate this revolution,” Deputy Kennedy concluded.