

**Submission**  
**No 22**

## **DRIVER AND ROAD USER DISTRACTION**

**Organisation:** Australian Transport Safety Bureau  
**Name:** Mr Martin Dolan  
**Position:** Chief Commissioner  
**Date Received:** 1/05/2012

---



**Australian Government**  
**Australian Transport Safety Bureau**

**Chief Commissioner**

Our reference: ATSB11/433  
Contact: [REDACTED]



27 April 2012

Mr Greg Alpin MP  
Chair  
Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety  
Parliament of New South Wales  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr Alpin

**Inquiry into Driver and Road User Distraction**

Thank you for your invitation on 6 March 2012 to provide a submission to the Committee's Inquiry into Driver and Road User Distraction.

The function of the Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) is to improve safety and public confidence in the aviation, marine and rail modes of transport through excellence in:

- independent investigation of transport accidents and other safety occurrences;
- safety data recording, analysis and research; and
- fostering safety awareness, knowledge and action.

Accordingly, the ATSB does not conduct investigations or research into road safety matters, with the exception of some investigations into collisions at level crossings between road vehicles and trains. The topic of road vehicle driver distraction associated with mobile phone use was cited in one of the ATSB's investigation reports (reference 1).

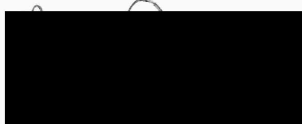
Distraction in a broader sense has been cited in several of the ATSB's investigations, and a summary of these types of distractions was provided in a 2005 research report (2). However, distraction associated with mobile phone use or similar factors in the aviation, rail or marine industry in Australia has been relatively rare, with only a few known cases (for example, 3 and 4).

The ATSB had a road safety research and analysis function up until March 2008. At that time, the function transferred to the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government (now known as the Department of Infrastructure and Transport). As well as producing reports on road safety statistics, the Department's road safety section also published reports associated with driver distraction prior to and after 2008 (5 and 6).

The ATSB is also aware that many research reports associated with road user distraction have been published by other organisations (for example, 7 and 8).

Although the ATSB has not been able to directly address your terms of reference, I hope the information we have provided is of assistance to your inquiry.

Yours sincerely



Martin Dolan

## References

1. ATSB 2007, *Level crossing collision between XPT Passenger Train ST24 and Passenger Car, Thurgoona Road, Albury, NSW, 5 June 2006*, Rail Occurrence Investigation 2006/006. Available at [atsb.gov.au/publications/investigation\\_reports/2006/rair/rair2006006.aspx](http://atsb.gov.au/publications/investigation_reports/2006/rair/rair2006006.aspx)
2. ATSB 2005, *Dangerous distraction: An examination of accidents and incidents involving pilot distraction in Australia between 1997 and 2004*, Aviation Research Investigation Report B2004/0324. Available at [atsb.gov.au/publications/2005/distraction\\_report.aspx](http://atsb.gov.au/publications/2005/distraction_report.aspx)
3. ATSB 2000, *Independent investigation into the grounding of the Malaysian flag container ship Bunga Teratai Satu*, Marine Safety Investigation Report No. 162. Available at [atsb.gov.au/publications/investigation\\_reports/2000/mair/mair162.aspx](http://atsb.gov.au/publications/investigation_reports/2000/mair/mair162.aspx)
4. ATSB 2012, *Incorrect aircraft configuration - Airbus A321-231, VH-VWW, Singapore Changi International Airport, 27 May 2010*, Aviation Occurrence Investigation AO-2010-035. Available at [atsb.gov.au/publications/investigation\\_reports/2010/aoir/ao-2010-035.aspx](http://atsb.gov.au/publications/investigation_reports/2010/aoir/ao-2010-035.aspx)
5. Walsh, SP White, KM Watson, B Hyde, MK 2007, *Psychosocial factors influencing mobile phone use while driving*, ATSB Research and Analysis Report, Road Safety Grant Report 2007-06. Available at [infrastructure.gov.au/roads/safety/publications/2007/Grant\\_Report200706.aspx](http://infrastructure.gov.au/roads/safety/publications/2007/Grant_Report200706.aspx)
6. Nevile, M Haddington, P 2010, *In-Car Distractions and Their Impact on Driving Activities*, Department of Infrastructure and Transport, Road Safety Grant Report 2010-001, Available at [infrastructure.gov.au/roads/safety/publications/2010/incar\\_distractions\\_att\\_10.aspx](http://infrastructure.gov.au/roads/safety/publications/2010/incar_distractions_att_10.aspx)
7. Kircher, K Patten, C Ahlström, C 2011, *Mobile telephones and other communication devices and their impact on traffic safety – A review of the literature*, Swedish National Road and Transport Research Institute (VTI) report 729A.
8. Young, K Regan, M Hammer, M 2003, *Driver distraction: A review of the literature*, Monash University Accident Research Centre Report No. 206.