

**Submission
No 14**

**INQUIRY INTO SPEED ZONING AND ITS IMPACT ON
THE DEMERIT POINTS SCHEME**

Name: Ms Margaret Barlow
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From: Margaret Barlow [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 12 February 2014 10:50 PM
To: Parliamentary Committees
Subject: Inquiry into Speed Zoning comments

Dear Sir,

I would like to respond to the Inquiry into Speed Zoning agreeing with 2 very pertinent observations of others, and one of my own experience.

1. Most drivers do not wish to endanger themselves or others, so they naturally self limit their speed to what they believe to be safe, regardless of the posted speed zone.
2. 'There is an implicit assumption in speed limits that there will be a certain level of deaths and serious injuries as the price paid for convenient travel. The vision of the National Road Safety Strategy (i.e. that "no person should be killed or seriously injured on Australia's roads") is not only unobtainable, but irrational.' (- David Leyonhjelm)

The road from Orange to Cargo, which was a 100mph zone for as long as I've lived in Orange (over 30 years) was recently reduced to 80 for most of the way, and some 90. I had a number of trips to Canberra and, on the first trip, kept to the 80 and 90 limits. I had to stop for a break further into the trip as I could feel myself wanting to sleep. Crawling along at a 'just out of town' speed for mile after mile on a country road is just mind numbing. For subsequent trips I sat on a reasonable speed, but still slower than I felt was necessary (about 10 km over) in order to stay alert, and didn't suffer the same need to drop off.

When looking at reasons for accidents, yes, speed is sometimes a factor, but it cannot be treated in isolation. Falling asleep at the wheel also needs to be addressed, and straight roads and slow limits do not help that factor.

Further, I am also a motorbike rider, and I'm even more aware of how much faster than the speed zones one can ride safely. I know all motorbike riders don't have the benefit of over 40 years riding, but compared with a car, motorbikes are more capable of travelling safely at faster speeds, because of their agility and their width on the road.

At least a trial of the 85th percentile formula would prove whether drivers can be counted on to drive safely at higher speeds or not.

I hope a mature decision can be made which will benefit all.

Regards,
Margaret Barlow