

**Submission
No 2**

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

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Date Received: 8/01/2014

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From: John Shingleton [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 8 January 2014 2:42 PM
To: Parliamentary Committees
Subject: Submission to Staysafe Committee

Bjarne, please find below a submission to the Committee for the inquiry into speed zoning and its impact on the demerits points scheme. Please can you advise me that you have received this.

Qualifications for making this submission.

I have been driving for 50 years. I have a totally clean NSW licence and I have never been responsible for a motor vehicle accident. My last speeding infringement was in 1984. I was formerly the holder of an International Motor Sport licence. I have competed in many motor sport events. In my working life I have been the CEO of JRA Ltd -importer of Jaguar, Land Rover and Peugeot cars at the time. I have also been for 11 years the CEO of Land Rover Australia importer of Land Rover and Range Rover SUVs and for 6 years I was the CEO of Harley-davidson Australia. I have also worked for the Ford Motor Company. I currently own [REDACTED]. I have driven all over the world including in excess of 10000kms in Canada/USA and France/Germany in the past 18 months. I have enormous driving experience in high performance vehicles.

I am very committed to the concept of absolute concentration when driving and I believe that this is the key to being a totally safe driver. I find that in Australia and particularly in NSW and Victoria that I have a constant distraction of having to watch my speedometer and check the applicable speed limit because

1. Speed zoning is irrational and inconsistent.

To cite an example from my local area. Terrigal Drive from Erina to Terrigal is a narrow winding two lane (one lane in each direction) road with heavy traffic volumes with a challenging complex interchange at one point yet it is zoned 70kph.

In parallel just a km or so to the north the Central Coast Highway from Erina to Womberal is a very recently completed very high standard dual carriageway road and yet it is zoned 60 kph. Why the inconsistency?

The rebuilding of the Central Coast Highway took 2 years as the contractor went into receivership and motorists using the road had to suffer roadworks and restricted speeds over the two year period but to rub salt into the wound the day after the road was finally opened the police had a mobile speed camera in operation on the longest straight section.

Now any reasonable person looking at these two roads for the first time could not say what the speed limits are. I am certain that they would say one was 60kph and the other 80kph-which is what they should be.

It is these sort of inconsistencies make driving in NSW so fraught and why so many lose demerit points inadvertently. An experienced driver should be able to look at a road as they drive along and know what the speed limit is -not to be guessing at the limit because of apparently irrational zoning

I have done a lot of driving in Quebec in Canada (my daughter and her family lived there until very recently) and I was very struck by how the speed zoning there was totally consistent. Time after time out in the country I was on a road and I knew what the speed limit was without seeing a sign(and there are few of those for that reason). Also I knew that the road would stay at that limit unless there is an obvious reason which brings me to point 2

2. Speed limit zones change for no apparent reason. The Pacific Highway north of Raymond Terrace to Port Macquarie is full of examples of this. You are driving along at 110kph on a beautiful new stretch of dual lane road and suddenly for no reason it changes to 100kph for a few kilometres and then back to 110kph. No obvious reason except as I drove south towards Taree and I entered such a zone and went up a slight rise down the other side there was a highway patrol car with radar gun and you see that so often. It is very difficult not to conclude that these inexplicable changes over short distances are there to entrap motorists and again lead to an inadvertent loss of demerit points. Harsh words but there can be no other explanation. There are many examples all over the state of these sharp speed limit changes for short distances no apparent reason .

My recommendations to the committee to consider are

1. Absolute consistency in speed limit zoning across all roads so that motorists "know" the limit by looking at the road and environs. And the minimisation of the number of zone changes on major highways .
2. Strong visual warning-not just a speed limit sign-when a zone changes - particularly on a major highway
3. Reduced number of speed limit zones -maybe 50-60-80-100-110 ie no 70 or 90 zones
4. Play fair with motorists and not use them as cash cows by using inconsistent speed zoning as a means of revenue raising. This is the most difficult to implement because I fear that we now have an ingrained culture of motorist entrapment and the resulting revenue stream is now an integral part of the state's budget. It just ain't fair and it is in fact morally reprehensible and it is a waste of police resources. Use the police to catch real speeding, mobile phone users(highly dangerous because of the loss of concentration) , motorists who hog the outside lane and tailgating(a growing problem) .

Implementation of these recommendations would, I believe , lead to greater levels of speed zone compliance by motorists, more concentration on driving not on speedometers and less cynicism about the enforcement practices .

John Shingleton

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