

**Submission**

**No 10**

## **INQUIRY INTO SCHOOL ZONE SAFETY**

**Name:** Mr Peter Lenaghan

**Date Received:** 30/09/2011

Peter Lenaghan



### Submission to Staysafe Committee on School Zones.

Thankyou for the opportunity to make this submission.

I support the concept of the school zones and the 40kph speed limit provided research has shown a significant decrease in both accident rates and severity of accidents otherwise it is just feelgood legislation. Personally I do not want to be party to either injuring a child or being booked and so have no desire not to comply with the zone speed.

What I find frustrating is the difficulty I experience in remaining aware of the school zone. This issue has puzzled me since they were first introduced.

I believe driving is a subconscious activity in which we respond to common stimuli. When we drive we observe and respond to a certain field of vision from which we perceive a danger or hazard might arise. (The oncoming vehicle, the dog by the side of the road, the intersection ahead or a ball coming out from between parked cars.) Once we have dealt with the immediate issue we move on to the next one. We do not retain the previous memories.

For school zones this means the road environment must provide a constant reminder. A typical failure point would be complying with the zone only to be stopped at a traffic light or negotiating a round a bout and then reverting to the normal zone speed.

The patches were a failure, the dragon teeth are an improvement but only to alerting a driver they are entering a school zone. I would suggest that a traffic lane line throughout the zone creating a 2.5m or 2.7m wide traffic lane within the school zone would be more conducive to a 40kph speed zone. If the school fencing were of a safety colour rather than black this would help in improving the awareness of the school.

The consistency of application is another issue. The date based, time based approach is not suited for an immediate subconscious response. Why can't the zones be in place all year round between 8.00am and 4.00pm. There is currently a rapid expansion of religious based private schools and zones are cropping up everywhere so consistency of application is paramount.

I can sometimes be called out from work before 9.30am. I have no connection with schools so am unaware of the school year. At these times there is never any evidence of children so the fundamental nexus of traffic regulation warrants requiring a certain mix of traffic and children is not established.

The road system is designed to function around the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile driver behaviour. If a higher standard of compliance is to be achieved then work needs to be done to align the driving behaviour with the legislated behaviour. High booking zones are evidence of system failure and higher penalties do not deal with the problems. Not using such statistics to address the core issues is tantamount to negligence.

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission.

Yours Faithfully

Peter Lenaghan

30<sup>th</sup> September 2011