

Submission

No 3

INQUIRY INTO DRIVER AND ROAD USER DISTRACTION

Name:



Date Received:

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Partially Confidential

Speed cameras can be inherently a dangerous distraction to drivers, eg the camera located in President Avenue Gymea. I have been driving past this location a minimum of two times a day for over thirty years, and for over eight years sometimes twenty times a day whilst working as a local NSW Police Highway Patrol officer during the 1980s. During that time I attended a number of accidents at the intersection of President Avenue and Gymea Bay Road about 50 metres East of the camera location. Each and every accident I attended at this non black spot location, had been caused by distracted and inattentive drivers going through a red light. Now adding to that distraction, a speed camera was positioned on the immediate approach to the intersection, meaning that drivers at the exact point where they should be looking at the lights, the intersection, cars and pedestrians instead have as a priority the dashboard behind their steering wheel so that they do not inadvertently exceed the speed limit. This camera was identified by the new state government minister as one contributing mostly to revenue with little or no contribution to safety, however it appears that agitation by well meaning but ill informed people has led to its reactivation and once again a source of distraction for drivers. Please note that the primary motivating force for this camera was a campaign by an unfortunate local mother whose young daughter was crushed between two parked cars around the corner outside the entrance to the school in Gymea Bay Road some years ago. It happened when another young girl turned the key of one parked car to activate the airconditioning for her grandmother, the car was in gear, jumped forward and killed a girl walking between the cars. This accident had nothing whatsoever to do with speed, road conditions or even drivers and horrific as it was should not be used to justify making this intersection more dangerous by distracting drivers with a speed camera placed immediately on the approach.