

Submission
No 8

DRIVER AND ROAD USER DISTRACTION

Name: Mr Peter Maher

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STAYSAFE COMMITTEE



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BJARNE NORDIN
N.S.W. PARLIAMENT
JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ROAD SAFETY

RE INQUIRY INTO DRIVER AND ROAD USER DISTRACTION.

DEAR BJARNE

I AM A N.S.W. LICENCED DRIVER WITH MANY YEARS EXPERIENCE. IN THE PAST I HAVE REPRESENTED THE NATIONAL SAFETY COUNCIL ON THE STAYSAFE COMMITTEE. AS AN EX PILOT I AM AWARE OF THE NEED TO "SEE AND BE SEEN" WITHOUT DISTRACTIONS.

I ALSO APPRECIATE THAT TRAFFIC DENSITIES ARE NOW MUCH HIGHER THAN IN THE PAST AND DISTRACTIONS HAVE RISEN ACCORDINGLY.

I WISH TO SUBMIT THE FOLLOWING POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION

A COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING SIGNAGE

I FEEL STRONGLY THAT DISTRACTION (MAJOR) OCCURS WHEN SIGNAGE IS DISPLAYED ON OVERHEAD BRIDGES OR PEDESTRIAN OVERHEAD CROSSINGS. THIS SIGNAGE IS IN THE DIRECT LINE OF VISION OF THE DRIVER. A TYPICAL EXAMPLE IS THE OVERHEAD PEDESTRIAN CROSSING OVER PENNANT HILLS ROAD AT PENNANT HILLS. AT ONE TIME THIS CROSSING DISPLAYED MODELS IN UNDERWEAR - A SURE DISTRACTION. OVERHEAD SIGNS SHOULD ONLY BE DIRECTIONAL OR TRAFFIC INFORMATION

B NEON SIGNAGE MOVING OR STATIONARY

WHEN THIS SIGNAGE IS THE SAME COLOUR AS TRAFFIC LIGHTS IE RED, GREEN, AMBER IT IS A SERIOUS DISTRACTION. A TYPICAL EXAMPLE IS THE RED MOVING NEON SIGN ADVERTISING

BAULKHAM HILLS BOWLING CLUB ON OLD NORTHERN ROAD AT BAULKHAM HILLS. THIS IS PARTICULARLY DISTRACTING AS THERE ARE 3 SETS OF TRAFFIC LIGHTS WITHIN 250 METRES AT THIS POINT.

C TRAFFIC LIGHTS TOO CLOSELY SPACED

A STRANGE SITUATION EXISTS HERE AS ONE SET OF LIGHTS PROVIDES A DISTRACTION FOR THE OTHER. MANY TIMES I HAVE SEEN WELL INTENTIONED DRIVERS STOP FOR THE FIRST SET OF LIGHTS AND THEN DRIVE THROUGH A RED ON THE SECOND. AN EXAMPLE IS ON BARENJOEY ROAD AT MONA VALE. I DON'T HAVE AN ANSWER ON THIS ONE.

D TINTED WINDOWS (CAR)

I AM NOT SURE IF THIS IS A DISTRACTION BUT IT IS A MAJOR HAZARD. WHEN MOTORISTS MEET AT AN INTERSECTION OR CONVERGE IT IS ESSENTIAL TO ESTABLISH EYE CONTACT TO CONFIRM DRIVERS INTENTION OR AWARENESS. MANY CARS NOW HAVE HEAVY TINTING ON WINDOWS INCLUDING THE DRIVERS WINDOW. IT IS THEN IMPOSSIBLE TO ESTABLISH EYE CONTACT AND DETERMINE THE DRIVERS INTENTION.

E TALL VEGETATION (PLANTINGS) ON ROUNDABOUTS

THE DISTRACTION AND CONSEQUENT HIDING OF ANOTHER VEHICLE IS OBVIOUS. THE SAME APPLIES TO DENSE TREES / VEGETATION IN HOUSES AT AN INTERSECTION.

F TALL VANS AND 4WD VEHICLES

THESE ARE A MAJOR DISTRACTION AND OBSTRUCTION OF VISION IN PUBLIC CAR PARKS. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR A MOTORIST TO LEGALLY AND SAFELY BACK OUT OF A PARKING SPACE ADJACENT TO THESE HIGH VEHICLES. DEDICATED PARKING SPACES FOR TALL VEHICLES / VANS COULD BE AN ANSWER.

G NOISY SOUND SYSTEMS IN CARS. (DOOF DOOF MUSIC)

THESE MUST BE A SERIOUS DISTRACTION FOR THE DRIVER. AS HE CAN NO LONGER HEAR SIRENS OF EMERGENCY VEHICLE, CAR HORN OR OTHER PERTINENT TRAFFIC SOUNDS

H ADVERTISING SIGNS GENERALLY

DISTRACTION OCCURS WITH ANY SIGNAGE. THAT IS ITS INTENTION. ROAD SIDE SIGNAGE IS BAD ENOUGH BUT EXTENSIVE SIGNAGE ON THE SIDES OF BUSES AND TRUCKS (AS WELL AS ON THE BACK) IS A SURE DISTRACTION. SPECIALLY BUILT TRAILERS DISPLAYING LARGE ADVERTISEMENTS AND TOWED THROUGH PEAK TRAFFIC AREAS ARE A MAJOR DISTRACTION THEY SHOULD BE BANNED.

I HAVE NOT SUBMITTED COMMENTS ON MOBILE PHONES, TEXTING, BREAKFAST ON THE WAY TO WORK, MAKE-UP APPLICATION ETC AS I FEEL THESE POINTS WILL BE WELL COVERED BY OTHERS

HOPING FOR A SAFER DRIVING ENVIRONMENT

YOURS FAITHFULLY



(PETER MAHER)