

Submission

No 26

DRIVER AND ROAD USER DISTRACTION

Organisation: Ministry of Health
Name: The Hon Jillian Skinner MP
Position: Minister for Health
Date Received: 3/05/2012



The Hon Jillian Skinner MP
Minister for Health
Minister for Medical Research

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P12/132

Mr Greg Aplin MP
Chair
Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety
Parliament of New South Wales
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000



Dear Mr Aplin

I welcome the opportunity to make a submission to the Staysafe Committee (Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety) Inquiry into Driver and Road User Distraction on behalf of the New South Wales Ministry of Health. Driver and road user distraction from mobile phones and other electronic devices is a significant road safety issue which leads to a considerable amount of trauma, death and disability and is thus a major concern for the Ministry of Health.

Whilst the Ministry of Health is significantly impacted by road safety, especially when it results in contact with the health care system, primary responsibility for policy in this area lies with Transport for New South Wales and specifically the Centre for Road Safety. However, the Ministry of Health has for a long time been active in gathering evidence related to road safety through its one-third stake in the Injury Risk Management Research Centre (IRMRC) at the University of NSW. The IRMRC is a major Australian injury research centre that is jointly funded by the Ministry of Health, Transport for New South Wales and the Motor Accidents Authority.

The Ministry of Health has conducted an initial scan of the literature to inform this response and supports the Centre for Road Safety submission with regard to driver and road user distraction. The Ministry also notes that evidence related to the impact of mobile phone use on road safety, a common source of driver and road user distraction, is limited and will continue to be limited, as mobile phone use is hard to identify in administrative data sets as it is not readily picked up in injury coding.

The Ministry of Health has requested that the IRMRC submit a high quality review of the evidence so that the Staysafe Committee can benefit from expert advice on addressing this major road safety issue.

The person to contact at the Ministry of Health for further information or assistance is [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

Jillian Skinner MP