

**Submission  
No 24**

## **REVIEW OF ROAD SAFETY ISSUES FOR FUTURE INQUIRY**

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## Review of road safety issues for future inquiry

Staysafe Committee

NSW Parliament

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17<sup>th</sup> September 2018

Dear Staysafe,

Thank you for the opportunity to make submissions to your good selves on road safety issues for future inquiries.

Issues for future discussion could include;

1. Wire Rope Barriers (WRB);
  - a. Safety issues faced by motorcycle riders  
The posts draw the riders into the fence when impacted in an upright position where as a Jersey barrier or even a W Beam barrier has the possibility of the rider being able to escape major injury see page 13 for further details;  
<https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/ladocs/submissions/44825/Submission%2015%20-%20Inquiry%20into%20Motorcycle%20Safety%20in%20NSW%20-%20Redacted%20Version.PDF>
  - b. Other barriers are safer due to less upright posts
  - c. Industry intervention and funded research skewing perceptions of danger from WRB  
A researcher is fond of showing two film clips of a WRB “saving” a couple of motorcyclists yet a barrier of any type in those situations would have done the same
  - d. There have been two recent motorcycle fatalities from impacting WRB’s due to animal interference on the road and using Bell’s pyramid this can be extrapolated that for every fatality there are 10 serious injuries, 30 accidents and 600 near misses and these numbers are an unacceptable risk to riders
  - e. Are WRB’s truck proof?
  - f. Failure of RMS and councils to repair compromised WRB’s in a timely manner therefore rendering them ineffective
  - g. The fact that councils are installing 100 posts to save you from 1 post thereby increasing the chances of hitting a post from nearly zero to nearly certain
  - h. Poor Cost Benefit Analysis on the Capex vs Opex and risk factors of ineffective barriers for WRB over other less costly options
2. Is the focus of Police road safety efforts misdirected?
  - a. Lack of police enforcement on minor road rules, is it leading to disrespect for the law?  
Many drivers appear to have a blatant disrespect for the most basic of road rules and whilst high speed increases the impact, the root cause of the collision also needs to be addressed and targeted
  - b. Failure of police to book drivers involved in collisions resulting in actual injury  
I personally have been involved in two collisions leading to injury that have seen no booking of the other driver yet someone deemed a hoon, who injures no one, gets

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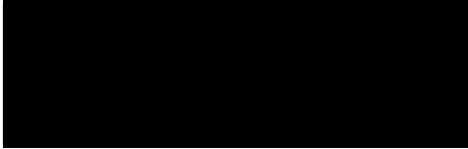
an instant licence suspension. It would seem that the focus is misdirected and those who cause actual harm need to be punished.

- c. Police focus on Speed and speed alone
3. The impact of animal strikes on the number of fatalities
  - a. Thunder bolts way is recognised as a road with a high fatality rate for wombats.  
Should a motorcyclist impact with a wombat the consequences are disastrous and no one would ever know, no evidence and put down as a single vehicle accident due to speed and speed alone  
<https://www.fourthcrossingwildlife.com/WombatThesis-NCrook.pdf>
  - b. High death rate on Thunderbolts way
  - c. Failure to clear back the recommended 9 metres from the edge of the road
4. Skills degradation of modern drivers
  - a. Loss of brakes on a steep hill is something that older drivers are aware of and shouldn't be happening in a modern vehicle but it seems the opposite is the truth, poor driver skills  
<https://www.theherald.com.au/story/5210961/the-12km-stretch-of-road-with-two-deaths-in-six-months/>
  - b. Casual observation shows some of the most fundamental skills appear to be lacking in modern drivers
  - c. Lack of knowledge of basic road rules
5. Placement of advertising signs that block the view at exits from alleys and service stations
  - a. City of Sydney Council's use of Telephone kiosks as advertising platforms
  - b. Poor placement of advertising signs leading to heightened risk
6. Councils not following recommendations for road construction and site lines
  - a. Garden beds next to pedestrian crossing that hide pedestrians until they step out in front of the traffic
  - b. Poor placement of road signage
  - c. Basic failures such as not turning reflective roadside signage out from the road line by 5 degrees to prevent glare from headlights
7. RMS staff following their own personal agendas and failing to work using an attitude of teamwork when involved in stakeholder consultation
8. The declining road toll, the plateau and subsequent rise of fatalities as on-board road safety devices now reach saturation point and no longer assist in sending the death rate lower
  - a. Have road safety strategies been as effective as the authorities claim or is it due to automotive design alone that the road toll has dropped?
  - b. Airbags, softer fronts of cars
  - c. Has the introduction of ABS lead to a rise in pedestrian fatalities?

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- d. The increase in rear end collisions in Subaru and Hondas due to overly aggressive panic braking by the on board telemetry? This is being quietly swept under the carpet by industry and is a real issue

The previous inquiries that I have been involved in have been a definite benefit in getting the decision makers to think about what they are actually doing, how they are applying their methods and the real efficacy of these decisions and I hope you can continue your good works.



Christopher Burns

