

**Submission
No 153**

MOBILE SPEED CAMERA ENFORCEMENT PROGRAMS IN NSW

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SUBMISSION regarding changes to mobile speed cameras in New South Wales

The changes to mobile speed cameras in NSW were supposedly made in the context of they could be anywhere, anytime (no different to before), but with the removal of all signage (and how quick was that!) with the probability of saving 30-40 lives per year. Why then, with the HUGE increase in people being caught by these cameras is NSW already 6 deaths ABOVE the same time last year? There is absolutely no proof that unmarked speed cameras have had any influence on road deaths, however there has been an enormous change in the amount of REVENUE raised – maybe I'm just slightly cynical, but that appeared to be the outcome from introduction. And when do people know when they have exceeded the speed limit? Weeks later when they are notified. How does that change the driving speed/attitude at the time of booking? Some motorists will also already have demerit points – if booked by a mobile camera, they could be driving unlicensed for weeks – how does that work if they do happen to be involved in an accident (unrelated to the site where booked) in those couple of weeks – are they insured while driving 'unlicensed'?

The NSW Centre for Road Safety says that distracted driving is one of the biggest causes of road fatalities in the country and goes on to say that if you take your eyes off the road for just two seconds you'll travel blind for more than 33 metres when travelling at 60 kmh. This jumps to more than 55 metres when going 100kmh.

As the mobile speed cameras were previously, signage had to be placed before and after the speed camera and that was a visual reminder of the speed limit with a very quick look at the speedo (with minimal distraction) – as it is now, people wonder if 'that vehicle' up ahead is a speed camera and take longer focussing on it and/or their speedo leading to more distraction – doing exactly what the NSW Centre for Road Safety says will happen. Travelling blind for a distance while distracted – a problem created by the lack of signage. With all the electronic/radar systems available to (and installed in) mobile speed camera vehicles, why do the vehicles have to 'hide'? The justification doesn't even go close to passing the 'pub test'. And the 'pollies blurb' that has come out after a few months of hugely increased revenue is that the money will be returned to roads for improvements appears to only be an afterthought and also doesn't pass the 'pub test'. As an aside, what is the correlation between those booked for speeding by a mobile camera and accidents involving those drivers/vehicles? I for one would be very surprised if there were very many of the people booked by a mobile speed camera actually involved in an accident – but there have never been figures made public so at this stage that will just have to be my opinion.

I consider myself a careful driver, taking note of the conditions, traffic, type of road etc and have never been booked by a mobile speed camera, nor have I ever considered doing anything classed as 'road rage', but I can certainly understand people taking out their frustrations on mobile speed cameras.

I have driven a huge variety of vehicles (Bus, 4wd – work and private, a large assortment of cars with work including hybrid) and currently drive 15,000 to 20,000 km per year but over a lifetime of driving have covered close to 1.6 million kilometres in many other countries as well as Australia (Safari vehicle in Kenya, Zaire, Uganda, and many types of car and 4wd in Europe). I have driven thousands of kilometres in the U.K – England, Scotland & Wales, and on the 'wrong side of the road' since 1984 - Greece, Italy, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia Herzegovina and Montenegro, but mainly in the Greek Islands and mainland Greece. While there are different rules in different countries, I have had no problem driving in any overseas country and have never been booked – even for a parking infringement. It is actually a pleasure to drive in Greece (as opposed to Australia) – there are no mobile speed cameras, therefore less distractions and in my experience, a safer and more enjoyable trip as one's eyes aren't always on the speedo – and that is NOT to say that I have exceeded the speed limit in Greece or any other country just because there weren't any speed cameras, but one CAN concentrate on driving.

I cannot see that the removal of signage will have any influence on motorists other than to empty their pockets at a much higher rate than before and possibly instil a 'road rage' mentality against the government, but also maybe with a possibility of that rage being 'used' against other motorists? An unknown.

Even with signage on and around a mobile speed camera, if one was (or wasn't) exceeding the speed limit, an immediate speed correction would take place (and of course by the time the signage was obvious, it was too late anyway). But it was still a visual reminder of a mobile speed camera which does a lot more in slowing people down or keeping them near the speed limit in the area. The removal of signage is a very poor effort by the government to reduce road deaths, but obviously gets A+ for revenue.

I do NOT agree with the removal of signage for mobile speed (REVENUE) cameras – people are either distracted looking and wondering if 'that vehicle' ahead is one, or people will become blasé to vehicles parked on the side of the road (and at times almost hidden) – the removal of signage CANNOT reduce road deaths, but the removal of signage can and does have an effect on revenue raised.

As far as we have a great Local Member in this region, I for one will be voting against the Government in the next State elections as my stand against the removal of signage.

Ken Riley
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