

**Submission  
No 169**

## **MOBILE SPEED CAMERA ENFORCEMENT PROGRAMS IN NSW**

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Both as an owner of a small business, and as an individual, I speak for myself and the few staff in my company by saying that I am quite critical of the approach taken by the NSW government to remove signage for mobile speed cameras.

I actually wouldn't mind it if they were catching and more importantly \*preventing\* people who were genuinely driving dangerously and deserve prosecution for endangering other drivers and the public. However it does seem that those mainly affected are otherwise safe "normal" drivers that have simply drifted slightly over the limit for predominantly innocent reasons.

Furthermore, I fail to see how receiving notification of a speeding infringement days after a speeding violation actually prevents any accidents or keeps the roads safer.

In my opinion, would it not be logical to conclude that for individuals who drive excessively fast to the point that they are posing a danger, will not have been prevented from causing an accident in any way at the time when an incident would most likely occur?

In addition, for individuals that that generally drive safely, but on occasion drift over the limit, the one indicator that may alert them to their speed (i.e. the camera signage) has now been removed, therefore nothing has been brought to their attention at the time when it is most required.

I would also like to mention the additional stress and paranoia that is being added to driving as a result of the recent changes. For example, my girlfriend, who has only recently learnt to drive and is still on her P's, recently received a speeding violation (less than 10kms over) by one of the new undisclosed mobile speed cameras, and when she received notification of it, it came a huge shock to her. She had absolutely no idea that she had done anything wrong. She is now very paranoid about driving for fear that she might lose her license. Her focus is less on the road, and more on who is hiding on the side of the road, and staring at the speedometer in constant anxiety. I also share this new concern while driving, particularly in news areas where it may be difficult to establish the speed limit. This is simply the reality of how the human psychology responds to these factors, which may (or may not) contradict the assumptions made by the National Road Transport Commission prior to implementing the recent changes.

I think it would be beneficial to look at how the UK handles speeding and road safety. Personally, like many NSW citizens and residents, I am originally from the UK where the speed limits are more "generous" than those implemented throughout of lot of Australia, yet the % of speeding related deaths and accidents relative to the population is not any worse than Australia. I'm not going to dispute the speed limits that are enforced in NSW, but what I'd like to point out is regarding a study that was conducted around 10-15 years ago, that looked into the effectiveness of speed cameras on road safety and the impact they have on drivers speed. The conclusion was actually the most effective method of improving road safety in terms of speed control, was using the LED signs boards that show the drivers speed as they pass-by, which also notify the driver to "slow down" if they are going over the speed limit. After this, we started seeing a lot more of these signs appearing on the UK roads, and some speed-trap cameras actually removed. There were significantly fewer minor accidents, which apparently were caused by drivers sudden over-reaction to spotting the speed camera unexpectedly, and less speeding over-all as drivers were being made aware of their speed very visibly and had time to adjust their speed according.

The exception to the effectiveness of this was on motorways, where the use of average speed cameras - accompanied with constant signage - have proved to be the most effective method.

The truth is, most people do not want to, or deliberately set out to exceed the speed limit. We just drive modern, quiet cars, with comparatively more powerful (than 50 years ago), and in conditions where the traffic is flowing freely, and the roads are relatively straight and quiet, it is very easy to drift over the limit. We are only human, unless we drive everywhere with cruise control on, or stare

constantly at the speedometer, it is very difficult to know exactly what speed we are doing all the time. But, signs really help with this.

The approach to remove signage, introduce more hidden cameras in the interest of road safety really does signify a far more sneaky or sinister approach to simply generate revenue. If the goal is to generate revenue, frankly, I think most people would rather just be told that a new road tax was being introduced. I don't think it's inspiring confidence with public to sugar-coat it under the pretence of "improving road safety" if that is not the primary goal (which is definitely the message that's being conveyed), whilst at the same time potentially impacting the livelihoods of those who need to drive frequently for work, and could quite easily lose their license.