

**Submission
No 271**

MOBILE SPEED CAMERA ENFORCEMENT PROGRAMS IN NSW

Name: Mr Joseph Walsh

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To the committee,

When considering matters of public safety and particularly law enforcement, two things must be weighed against each other:

1. The rights of the public to safety and rule of law.
2. The rights of the public to conduct their daily business without undue interference from that law (and the government that proscribes it).

We all accept the need for speed cameras to enforce road safety and legal speed limits. In fact, many of us are glad to see visible enforcement on the roads knowing it will deter the dangerous habits of other road users.

Visible enforcement ensures that road users understand that their choices on the road are under scrutiny, and that even if they cannot self-govern their behaviour through an understanding of the risk they pose to themselves and others, they will learn to regulate their road behaviour based on the consequences for getting caught.

Unmarked, un-sign-posted mobile speed cameras serve no such purpose.

As an educator, and someone who has extensively studied behavioural psychology, I can tell you that the temporal correlation between behaviour and consequence has a massive effect on whether or not behavioural change occurs as a result of consequences. The sooner a consequence can be applied to a behaviour, the more of an effect it will have.

Being caught by a speed camera with a huge flash, by a police officer who pulls you over and reprimands your behaviour, by a sign-posted mobile speed camera that you know you've passed and realise your mistake - these things change behaviour.

What does not change behaviour is a fine in the mail 6 weeks later for an offence you don't even remember that was captured by a dark grey hyundai i30 parked by the side of the road.

This is not speculation. There has been precisely zero impact on the death toll on NSW roads since this new law was implemented. Behaviours are not changing.

What the NSW Government has created is "invisible" enforcement. You have removed the visibility of enforcement and in doing so, removed the effect on behavioural change.

What the NSW Government has also done, which does not go unnoticed, is massively increased its revenue from fines resulting from this invisible enforcement. 900%-1200% are the numbers I have seen. That is not laudable. Those fines are money out of the pockets of the people of NSW during an unprecedented economic shock. The NSW Government itself recognises the importance of disposable income to our recovery - the dine and discover scheme was created to stimulate household spending. I ask the committee, what is the economic cost of removing money from the households of hard working Australians. And for what reward when there has been zero measurable change in behaviour or danger to public safety.

To this end the government will likely fall back on the mantra of "anywhere, anytime". This vapid phrase is presented as a virtue. It is not.

As I opened this submission I laid out two measurable standards that must be weighted against each other in the matters of public safety and law enforcement. In an extreme hypothetical, crime would

be vastly reduced by the installation of Police CCTV cameras in every private residence. Yet no one would condone this Orwellian measure. I ask the committee why? What moral value is being considered when we all respond in the same way to that hypothetical?

My conjuncture is that it is very simple. We believe that the presumption of innocence means that citizens have a right to go about their lives without undue interference. Interference being only justifiable in the interests of public safety.

What is this current increase in fines if not undue interference? If it has not appreciable effect on public safety, is it not merely interference for its own sake? How can the government justify this scheme under the clear result that it does not save lives?

They can't. And the crux of it is simple. Having seen the numbers, having seen the lack of effect on public safety, if the government continue with this scheme they are admitting that they are doing so for the purposes of revenue raising. And that money is coming out of the pockets of everyday Australians as a result of invisible enforcement with no effect on public safety.

I urge the committee to consider reinstating the signage and visibility of mobile speed cameras. When used effectively in "black spots" these visible enforcement tools ensure that people's behaviour changes.

A unexpected fine in the mail 6 weeks later does nothing but interfere with financial health and stability.

Thank you for your time,
Joseph Walsh