

**Submission
No 299**

MOBILE SPEED CAMERA ENFORCEMENT PROGRAMS IN NSW

Name: Mr Lachlan Elworthy

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To the committee on Mobile speed camera enforcement programs in NSW, the recent changes to the Mobile speed camera program have only served to disadvantage road users from all sectors of NSW society and have not yielded any improvement to road safety, but on the contrary have actually increased stress of road users on NSW roads.

The use of speed cameras on roads that see regular violations of the traffic rules in place on NSW roads does at first glance provide a deterrent effect, decrease traffic violations and provides a means to punish road users who are breaking the rules. When taken as a whole there is a good argument for the use of speed cameras, particularly with regards to road safety (which is after all the cornerstone for road regulation). However looking below the surface of this issue, any academic, traffic or safety expert worth their salt will tell you that for all of these effects to be achieved (especially improved road safety) a specific number of conditions need to be met.

The key condition that needs to be met is the public's awareness of the fact that a speed camera is operating in a particular area. If a road user is aware of a speed camera operating along a particular stretch of road they will almost certainly be more cognisant of their driving, and this has been proven by statistics listed in the 2018 Annual speed camera programs review¹ where fixed cameras were noted as decreasing crashes within their locations and this could at least partially be attributed to their prominent signage and public awareness of their locations. By removing the warning signage of mobile speed cameras, the program has successfully removed any deterrent factor that it had and this is evident in the massive increase in revenue from mobile speed cameras since signage was removed.

An unfortunate side effect from the removal of signage is that it actually puts more stress on some road users, who are now so concerned when driving that they will encounter a mobile speed camera that they consistently drive significantly under the posted speed limit causing frustration amongst other road users, and leading to a more unpleasant and dangerous experience for other road users.

The final issue with the removal of signage for speed cameras and the use of unmarked speed camera vehicles is one of the safety to road users and the speed camera operators. Vehicles that pose a hazard to road users and pedestrians must use their hazard lights, however mobile speed camera vehicles seem to park in hazardous areas with no warning signs or lights and this is acceptable? Often these vehicles are parked around blind corners, in dips in the road in an effort to catch drivers out before they detect the camera. How is it fair to the road using public that another set of rules applies for the enforcement of speed on the roads than it does to them, under the guise of safety, when it is actually a violation of NSW own road rules to operate in such a manner? From purely a legal point of view, why is the Work Safety Method Statement or equivalent document not available to the public for scrutiny? If a private business were to operate any kind of business activity along a roadway, especially a highway, there are a huge number of safety requirements that must be adhered to, warning signs, high visibility markings and clothing, traffic controllers, Safety officers, site inductions, just to name a few and the entity responsible for operating mobile speed cameras follows none of these requirements from what I can determine from my observations and research into the program.

To conclude there is a serious problem with the Mobile Speed Camera Enforcement Programs aim and method to improve road safety if that is indeed its goal. If it is just revenue raising at the expense of NSW road users who already pay more on average for registration, tolls and other on-road costs than any other state or territory in Australia then the program is doing an excellent job. If however it is to improve the safety and usability of NSW roads then it must do something to address the lack of deterrent and safety factors resulting from the lack of signage, and address safety regulations and safe work methods that the operators must adhere to, and bring them into line with every other road user in NSW.

1 Speed Camera Programs: 2018 Annual Review