

**Submission
No 367**

MOBILE SPEED CAMERA ENFORCEMENT PROGRAMS IN NSW

Name: Mr Nigel Sharp

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Dear Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety,

I've been on the road for more than 30 years and travelled over 3 million kilometres without a negligent driving charge, including all over America, Canada and Europe, predominantly in heavy vehicles. I've yet to see any road safety improvement in this country with the use of speed cameras.

As I'm sure you're aware, the overwhelming majority of crashes (therefore injuries and fatalities) occur at or below the speed limit. Therefore, this shows that speeding is only a minor part of road safety.

My concern is that the speed cameras do not stop the following behaviours:

- They do not prevent distracted driving (e.g. drivers on mobile phones).
- They do not teach drivers how to use their indicators properly, if at all.
- They do not ensure drivers have headlights on in rain, fog or even dark (it is a known fact that having headlights on in all conditions can reduce the chance of a crash by up to 50%).
- They do not give drivers proper lane control.
- They do not stop drivers turning left from the right lane or right from the left lane if they are not in heavy vehicles.
- They do not prevent drivers undercutting heavy vehicles that are turning.
- They do not prevent fatigue.
- They do not stop stolen cars.
- They do not stop impaired drivers.
- They do not stop people who do not have driver's licences.
- They do not make our roads better (e.g. wider, smoother, safer, better linemarking and signage).

Those are just a few of the road safety problems that contribute to accidents, injuries and fatalities that are not solved by road safety speed cameras.

I've been involved in a dozen or more crashes over the years and speeding was never a cause or contributing factor to the incidents I have witnessed or been involved in. These accidents, which included severe injury in one case and a fatality in another, were caused by bad road design; undertaking a heavy vehicle whilst turning; defective vehicle; fatigued driver; and, undertaking a heavy vehicle on a closing lane due to impatience. The list goes on, but none of them had anything to do with speeding.

Basically, speed cameras don't stop people from driving into things they shouldn't.

As has been noted, the majority of speed camera infringements are below 10 kms over the speed limit, which would suggest that the majority of the speed infringements are issued to drivers who are possibly just blipping over the speed limit for a moment for a gear change, or paying attention to the road and other traffic instead of the speedo, or because they are negotiating a slight change in terrain. To show how speed camera infringements actually improve road safety, it would be interesting to know how many motorists get booked by a speed camera and then crash, die or sustain injuries in the time period between speed camera detection and the fine actually being issued.

If the majority of speeding fines are being given for such small amounts over the speed limit, it is also questionable if these cameras are being located in places that make much difference to safety.

Perhaps MARKED cameras should be concentrated in locations where drivers are known to consistently go more than 10 kms over the speed limit and the road is known to be unsafe due to its design and/or lack of maintenance. This would look much less like revenue raising, be more likely to change behaviour and concentrate the use in places where safety is most compromised.

I believe the removal of the warning signs for mobile speed cameras is a blatant revenue raising move. I am sure that your statistics will show that after the removal of the warning signs, it will have no effect whatsoever on road safety. When the warning signs were present, it made people aware of their speed, and they would slow down if they were over the speed limit. Without the signs, people are not prompted to check their speed and alter their behaviour. By the time the fine is received, a person may have travelled up to 10,000 kms in a two- week period and may not remember the circumstances of the incident. If they were doing something so dangerous at the speed camera, maybe they should have been told there and then and not allowed to travel further.

Having recent experience with an unmarked speed camera, I have my doubts about their constant accuracy. I was recently photographed in inclement weather. Being a professional driver, I had spotted the speed camera car a couple of hundred metres off in the distance and I had checked my speed and even adjusted down a little. Two weeks later, I received a fine for doing 67 kph in a 60kph zone, which I know I wasn't. But I have no way of proving what speed I was actually doing. I note that my fine was for 67 kph, conveniently one kilometre an hour over my ADR 10% leeway. I also question why the speed camera was located there, as it is a wide, straight stretch of road with a good road surface, so unlikely to present safety issues. Side note: I made it home safely that day and continued to drive safely for the two weeks until the fine turned up, and I'm still alive today. I also know I am not the only driver who has had experience with the inaccuracy of speed cameras.

I also believe that your entire road safety ideology is criminally negligent and especially with the removal of speed camera warning signs, you are now obtaining funds by deceit.

Thank you for your time. If you have any questions in relation to my experiences over the years, please feel free to contact me either via email or mobile.

Yours truly,

Nigel Sharp

Road safety expert by definition and experience