

**Submission
No 501**

MOBILE SPEED CAMERA ENFORCEMENT PROGRAMS IN NSW

Organisation: Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia NSW & ACT

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L12, 447 Kent St
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Parliament of New South Wales
Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety

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Response to the inquiry into mobile speed camera enforcement programs in NSW

The Institute of Public Work Engineers Australasia, NSW and ACT Division (IPWEA) has prepared this submission to the NSW Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety.

The submission provides our response to the inquiry into mobile speed camera enforcement programs in NSW.

We support the use of enforcement strategies to improve road safety outcomes and to ultimately save lives on our roads. A more holistic approach is required for such programs to be effective and accepted by the community. The current system could be improved significantly to increase compliance and improve road safety, without the need for speed cameras.

We would welcome the opportunity to provide further detail on the issues raised within this submission.

Please contact [REDACTED] in relation to this submission.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

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CEO IPWEA NSW and ACT

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Inquiry into mobile speed camera enforcement programs in NSW

Submission by

IPWEA NSW and ACT

5 July 2021

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I. IPWEA NSW and ACT

The Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia NSW and ACT Division (IPWEA) is the leading professional association representing Engineers and Public Works Officers engaged in public works and engineering, with most members working in, or providing services to, local government.

IPWEA is a charity with the purpose of advancing the public works excellence in Australia, particularly in NSW and ACT by:

- conducting and publishing research into improvements to the processes used in public works and services to enhance NSW and ACT Communities
- working with government at all levels to ensure that the interests of the community are represented regarding the public decision-making process relating to public works and services, and
- providing a forum for all people engaged in the public works to discuss best practice and enhancing the future of NSW and ACT Communities.

IPWEA has adopted a mission to enhance the quality of life of NSW and ACT communities through excellence in public works and services. This is achieved through our professional association that effectively informs, connects, represents and leads public works professionals.

II. Background

Mobile speed camera enforcement in NSW

The Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety is looking at the recent changes to the state's mobile speed camera program. Changes include increased enforcement hours, reduced high visibility livery on vehicles and removing warning signs.

[Mobile speed camera enforcement programs in NSW.](#)

The inquiry is considering the balance between using mobile speed cameras and direct enforcement by police. The inquiry will also look at the nature of enforcement contracts between the government and the private sector.

The Committee will inquire into, and report on recent changes to the mobile speed camera program in NSW, with reference to:

- a) the nature and timing of those changes
- b) research, modelling, and the evidence base of fatality and serious injury reduction
- c) the views of key road user groups, including the community views towards these changes
- d) the nature and oversight of compliance or enforcement contracts with government and private companies
- e) the projected impact on revenue generated by these changes
- f) the ongoing funding of road safety and the Community Road Safety Fund, both through fines and enforcement activities, and future government contributions
- g) enforcement activities, including the balance between direct police enforcement and camera enforcement
- h) the impact to people living in regional and rural areas
- i) those of low socio-economic backgrounds and Indigenous people
- j) the impact on P plate drivers
- k) any other related matters.

III. Response to the inquiry

1. National Road Safety Strategy for 2021-30

The Office of Road Safety recently publishes a draft National Road Safety Strategy for 2021-30 (Strategy), [National Road Safety Strategy 2021-30 \(officeofroadsafety.gov.au\)](https://www.officeofroadsafety.gov.au). We believe this Strategy should be incorporated by all jurisdiction in road safety strategies and action plans.

We welcome the recognition of local government in the delivery of the draft national road safety strategy.

Local government is the level of government most closely related to the community. Communities will always turn to councils to express concerns, share ideas, make complaints or ask for help.

The vast majority, around 85%, of the road network is operated by local government. The implementation of the Strategy will only be successful if local government is properly equipped – including adequate funding, resources, skills and capabilities – to deliver their part of the Strategy.

Councils as road authorities have the full range of responsibilities in relation to public roads as required of all road authorities. In NSW specifically, this is specified under Section 7 of the NSW Roads Act 1993.

Councils also have a duty of care under the Civil Liability Act 2002 to take precautions against any risk of harm.

Together with Transport for NSW (TfNSW), councils owe a duty of care to all road users by maintaining the highest safety standard that is practical for the road network under its care. Best practice is to implement the most cost-effective treatments that are feasible to address safety issues.

Recommendation: provide local government with the means to deliver the Strategy.

2. Human Behaviour

National and international research suggests that human behaviour is a contributing factor in 90% of crashes. In the current draft National Strategy, human behaviour is grouped into the priority area 'risky road use', including speeding, distraction, fatigue and other human factors.

Effective strategies for speeding, distraction, fatigue and other human factors are different and specific to each contributing factor. Programs to influence human behaviour include education, enforcement, human centric design and the implementation best practice speed limits.

Local government, as the closest level of government to community, are best placed to develop tailored programs to meet the specific needs of local communities, reflecting demographics such as age, cultural and linguistic diversity, socio-economic and other relevant factors.

Local government does not currently have the funding necessary to develop such programs. The funding of such programs needs to be recognised and made available as a critical component to address risky road use.

Recommendation: to support local government to develop and deliver tailored programs to their communities to address risky road use.

3. Mobile Phone Use Enforcement

Enforcement is one of the tools available to road operators to make sure road users comply with the road rules. The recent experiences with the automated detection of mobile phone use while driving suggests that enforcement can be very effective in changing the behaviour of road users.

According to TfNSW, since 2012, there have been 202 casualty crashes involving a driver/rider using a handheld mobile phone in NSW, resulting in 18 deaths and 271 injuries. Over the same period in country areas of NSW there have been 103 casualty crashes involving a driver/rider using a handheld mobile phone, resulting in 15 deaths and 132 injuries.

From July 2019 to June 2020, more than 62,400 fines were issued to drivers and riders in NSW for illegally using hand-held mobile phones whilst driving or riding, showing the problem is still prevalent.

The technology used for the automated detection of mobile phone use is also suitable to detect other risky behaviour (not wearing seatbelts) and speed.

Recommendation: to utilise the technology to detect illegal use of mobile phones to its full potential.

4. Point to Point Average Speed Enforcement

Current average speed enforcement is applied throughout NSW, but only heavy vehicles are included in this enforcement program.

Inclusion of all road users could result in a behavioural change and help saving lives on our roads.

Recommendation: to include all road users in the point-to-point average speed enforcement.

5. Speed limits

The application of speed limits in NSW is confusing and according to international best practice in some instances too high. Setting speed limits suitable for the road environment will improve safety outcomes, while consistent application of speed limits will increase compliance by the community.

Currently, road users have no means to recognise the speed limit based on the road environment. Speed signs are the only guidance available. This is confusing and results in a disproportional number of road users exceeding the speed limit.

NSW speed zoning Guidelines (2011) outline how speed limits are set in NSW. It is a system based on:

- Default speed limits, which are statutory speed limits that apply in the absence of speed limit signage and do not require signposting. There are two types of default speed limits: 50 km/h in urban (built-up) areas and 100 km/h in rural (non-built-up areas).

- Speed restrictions based on vehicle class (eg some heavy vehicles) or licence class (eg learner drivers).
- Speed zoning – areas requiring speed limits to be signposted. These include 60, 70, 80, 90 and 110 km/h speed zones on road lengths where those speeds have been assessed to be safe and 40 km/h speed zones and 10 km/h shared zones in high pedestrian areas. 40 km/h school zones are established on a section of one or more roads adjacent to a school with a part– time speed limit.

An overview of the current speed limits is included in the tables below.

TABLE 2.1 OVERVIEW OF SPEED LIMITS IN NSW

SPEED LIMIT	TYPE OF SPEED LIMIT	TYPICAL APPLICATION <i>(refer to Section 3.2.2 for more details)</i>
50 km/h	Default urban speed limit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Default urban speed limit in built-up areas. • May be signposted if unclear.
60 km/h	Length	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant urban undivided arterial roads (with direct driveway accesses). • Divided road with high volume where the lanes are narrow (less than 3.0 metres). • Rural residential roads in villages with minimal development.
80 km/h	Length	Urban high standard divided roads (generally without driveway access): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undivided arterial and sub-arterial roads on the fringes of urban areas. • Lower quality rural roads. Undivided rural roads with less than 5.6 metres wide sealed pavement or no marked dividing line <i>(refer to note below)</i> .
100 km/h	Default rural speed limit Length	Default speed limits for non-built-up areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban motorways (freeways/tollways). • Rural undivided road with sealed pavement wider than 5.6 metres. • Rural divided roads.
110 km/h	Length	Maximum allowable speed limit in NSW. Motorways (freeways/tollways) in non-built-up areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-quality rural divided roads. • Undivided rural road with low traffic volume west of the Newell Highway.

NOTE:

Excluding some higher quality arterial roads in remote areas which are constructed in a geo-textile base and may have edgelines without a corresponding dividing line.

TABLE 2.2 RESTRICTED SPEED LIMITS AND APPLICABILITY IN NSW

RESTRICTED SPEED LIMIT	TYPE OF SPEED LIMIT	TYPICAL APPLICATION
70 km/h	Length	Locations that do not meet the standard of 80 km/h speed limit.
90 km/h	Length	Locations that do not meet the standard of 100 km/h speed limit.

NOTE:

* These speed limits require the prior approval of the Chief Executive.

TABLE 2.3 SPEED LIMIT BY VEHICLE/LICENCE CLASS

VEHICLE/LICENCE CLASS	Learner	P1	P2	Road trains	Other heavy vehicles
SPEED LIMIT	80	90	100	90	100

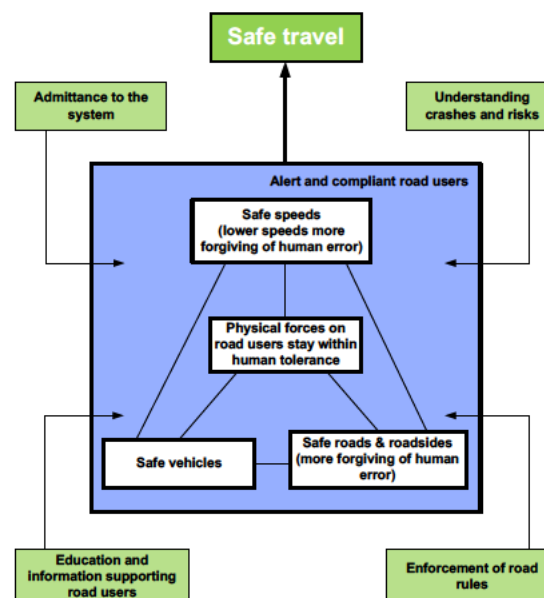
NOTE:

- For or further details, refer to Section 3.2: Types of speed limits.
- Lower speed limits are to be used on lengths with adverse crash histories or geometric limitations, such as steep and/or winding roads.

TABLE 2.4 SPECIAL SPEED LIMITS AND APPLICABILITY IN NSW

OTHER SPEED LIMIT	TYPE OF SPEED LIMIT	TYPICAL APPLICATION
10 km/h	Length or area	Shared zones including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • carparks. • reserves. Refer to Section 3.2.3 for more details.
40 km/h	Length or area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High pedestrian activity areas. • Local traffic areas. • School zones (prescribed times). • School bus blackspot zones. Refer to Section 3.2.3 for more details.
40, 60 and 80 km/h	Length	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • roadwork speed limits. Refer to Section 3.2.4 for more details.

The application of appropriate speed limits forms an integral part of the Safe System approach to road safety. The Safe System approach to road safety is based on the Swedish principle of Vision Zero and also draws from the experience of the Dutch Sustainable road safety strategy. The Safe System approach accepts that road users will make errors but this should not result in fatal or serious injuries. Its vision aims to provide road infrastructure and speed limits that will minimise this risk in the event of a crash. The Safe System concept consists of four key road safety streams: safe roads, safe speeds, safe vehicles and safe road users, illustrated in the figure below.



Source: Austroads.

Safe speed involves setting the speed limit appropriate for the road environment. This takes into account the road environment characteristics such as traffic volume, traffic mix, roadside hazards, carriageway width, road alignment and presence of cyclists and pedestrians. Harm minimisation is a core component of the safe speed concept.

Current speed limits in NSW are not aligned with what is regarded as safe speed limits. Compared to international practice, the speed limits in NSW are consistently higher than what are regarded a safe speed limits. The table below shows the differences compared to Europe.

Road environment	Europe km/h	New South Wales km/h
School zones	30	40
Residential areas	30	50-60
Urban roads, with vulnerable users		50-60
Urban roads, without vulnerable users		50-80
Rural roads (no shoulder, no wide medium)	80	100
Rural roads (shoulder, wide medium)	90-100	100
Motorways	100-120	100-110

Source: Austroads 2005, Balance between harm reduction and mobility in setting speed limits: a feasibility study, AP-R272/05, Austroads, Sydney, NSW.

Recommendations: to adopt the following speed limits based on international best practice, to achieve the required road safety outcomes:

Road environment	Current NSW Speed Limits km/h	Proposed NSW Speed limits km/h
School zones	40	30
Residential areas	50-60	30
Urban roads, with vulnerable users	50-60	30-50
Urban roads, without vulnerable users	50-80	50
Rural roads (no shoulder, no wide medium)	100	80
Rural roads (shoulder, wide medium)	100	90-100
Motorways	100-110	100-110

Recommendation: to implement a consistent system, with minimal exceptions, to make sure road users understand the applicable speed limit based on the road environment.

6. Locations for mobile speed cameras

According to TfNSW and backed up by international research, speed camera enforcement is one of the most effective, evidence-based measures to reduce speeding, save lives and prevent injuries. Best practice mobile speed camera programs with sufficient hours, a high number of enforcement sites, unmarked and unsigned operations and highly randomised deployment can deliver consistent, network wide 20-30 per cent reductions in casualty crashes.

Monash University Accident Research Centre's (MUARC) independent analysis (published on the TfNSW website, no date) identified that these enhancements to the NSW mobile speed camera program may save between 34 and 43 lives and prevent around 600 serious injuries in NSW each year.

According to the MUARC paper, there are 1,024 road segments on which mobile speed cameras can be operated and 2,493 specific sites on these road segments where cameras can be placed for operation.

Current guidance and legislation prevent the mobile speed cameras to be used anywhere on the road network.

Speeding in work zones is a national issue that compromises the safety of both the community and workers. In NSW, only the NSW police can enforce speed limits at work zones. The actual enforcement is limited due to capacity constraints and the fact that it is often unsafe for police officers to operate speed enforcement equipment in work zones. Mobile speed cameras could be safely deployed in work zones.

Mobile speed cameras are not effective in rural areas, due to the low traffic volumes and visibility of the camera on the network. Providing better roads to the community (see section 8), setting more appropriate speed limits (see section 5) and community education programs (see section 2) are more effective approaches to improve road safety in rural areas.

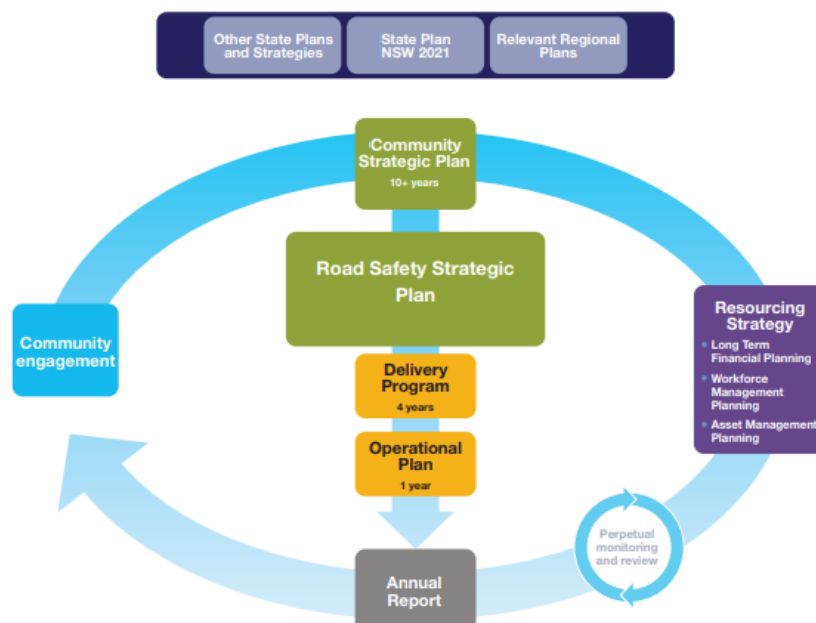
Recommendation: to allow the use of mobile speed cameras everywhere on the network

Recommendation: to recognise work zones as speed enforcement zones and allow mobile speed cameras to be used to enforce temporary speed limits

7. Integrating Road Safety Strategic Plans

IPWEA has developed a guide to developing council road safety strategic plans ([A Guide to Developing Council Road Safety Strategic Plans - Roads & Transport Directorate \(roadsdirectorate.org.au\)](#)). The purpose of the guide is to assist councils in developing road safety strategic plans and integrate them into the Local Government Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (IPRF).

The Guide is based on ‘best practice’ methodology developed through systematic investigation, consultation and feedback on the experiences of a number of NSW councils. These councils represented a range of large and small, rural and urban local government areas (LGAs) that had developed and implemented road safety strategic plans.



The IPRF recognises that most communities share similar aspirations: a safe, healthy and pleasant place to live, a sustainable environment, and opportunities for social interaction, opportunities for education and employment, and reliable infrastructure. It also recognises that council plans and policies should not exist in isolation - that they are inter-connected.

This framework allows NSW councils to draw their various plans together, understand how they interact and get the maximum leverage from their efforts by planning holistically and sustainably for their community today and into the future.

Council Road Safety Strategic Plans should link council and community activities in the achievement of road safety objectives within the broader framework of the council's Community Strategic Plan.

As a true Safe System approach, the incorporation of Road Safety Strategic Plans into the IPRF, elevates the importance of road safety as a broader community issue, requiring a whole-of-community response, and triggers important reporting mechanisms, achieving transparency and an informed community.

IPWEA recognises the value of integrating road safety in current practices as a means to achieve the goals set out in the Strategy. However, integrating road safety in IPRF's will lead to additional costs for local government. To avoid cost shifting additional funding and resources should be made available.

Recommendation: provide funding and resources to assist local government to develop and implement road safety strategic plans.

8. Funding for road maintenance

The funding available to local government across Australia and specifically in NSW, is insufficient to maintain local roads to the standard required to deliver safe, efficient and resilient road and bridge infrastructure and by extension safe, efficient and resilient transport services to the community.

The Road and Transport Directorate, a collaboration between IPWEA NSW and ACT and LGNSW, has been collecting asset performance data for NSW Local Government since 2006 (<https://www.roadsdirectorate.org.au/road-asset-benchmarking-project>).

The latest report shows that the current funding arrangements in NSW are inadequate to deliver safe, efficient and resilient road and bridge infrastructure to the community on an on-going basis into the future and are not sufficiently large enough to enact either specific or isolated road safety treatments and improvements, or wider network-based approaches. Of significance is the deteriorating condition of timber bridges on local roads, which poses a significant risk with the potential to isolate local communities and introduce long detours on roads of lesser standard in regional, rural and remote areas. The current funding gap for the maintenance of local road and transport infrastructure in NSW is estimated to be \$350M annually, based on the calculation of funding required and the level of funding actually available.

The results of the NRMA's Rate Your Road survey have been released ([Rate your road: Survey results | The NRMA \(mynrma.com.au\)](#)), indicating a link between the rate and cost of road trauma and poor road quality, particularly in rural areas.

The report found the road trauma cost in rural and regional areas could be almost double the amount of that in metropolitan areas, due to a lack of investment in road safety infrastructure.

Evidence provided by the Roads and Transport Directorate and the NRMA suggests that increasing funding for local roads could be a cost-effective contribution to achieving the Strategy.

Recommendation: increase funding for the maintenance of roads operated by local government.

9. Skills and capacity in local government

The latest benchmarking report from the Roads and Transport Directorate (see section 8) identified a decline in engineering capacity in local government. This is most prominent in regional and rural areas.

The Office of Road Safety also identified the need to build engineering capability in councils and to ensure stronger engagement on road safety between the state and local government sectors.

IPWEA has joined forces with both University of Technology (UTS) and Charles Sturt University (CSU) to assist with this issue. These partnerships are in early stages however undergraduate and graduate placement has commenced with councils in NSW.

Recommendation: introduce programs to increase skills and capacity in local government, particularly in regional and rural areas.