

**Submission  
No 515**

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

**Name:** Mr Noel Cook

**Date Received:** 6 July 2021

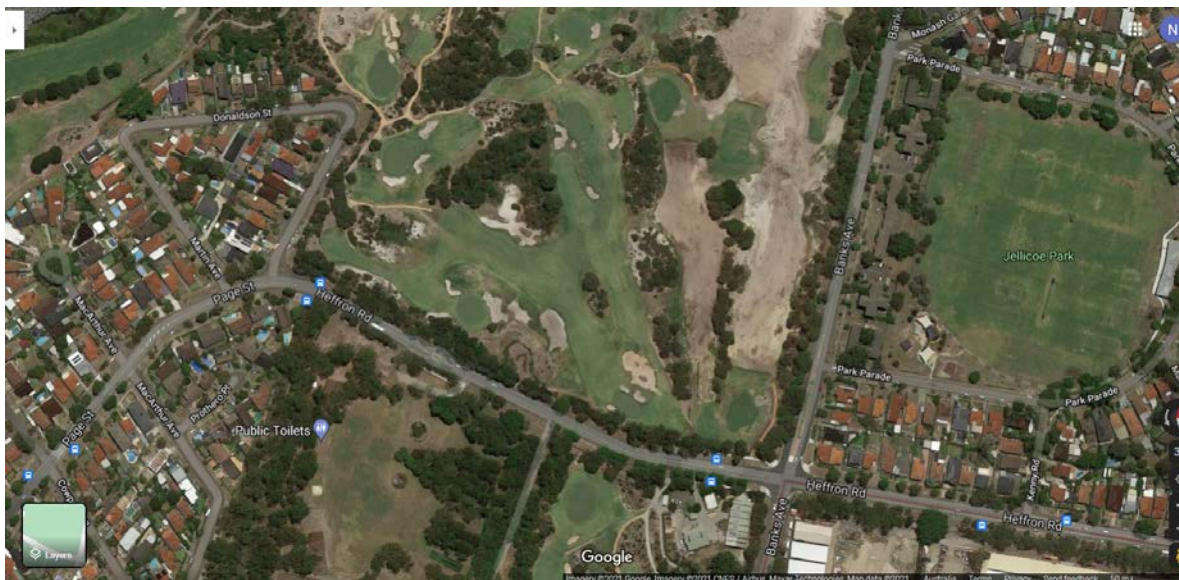
# Mobile speed camera enforcement programs in NSW

## Submission to the Committee

My submission is based on my driving, motorcycle and cycling riding experiences over 46 years since I obtained my licence.

From this experience I am convinced that the Mobile Speed Cameras, Mobile Phone Detection Cameras and the removal of the warning signs is an exercise in maximising revenue collection and nothing to do with road safety.

I can prove this via one experience alone. Some years ago while warning signs were still in use a location near my residence was used for a mobile speed camera. This was within 1 kilometre from where I live. The location was in Heffron Road, Pagewood outside Mutch Park, just after the intersection with Banks Avenue. This is not a built up area, as there is a large park on one side of the road and a golf course on the other side of the road as shown here:



I have lived in [REDACTED] for over 33 years and I have never seen or heard of an accident of any kind at this location let alone a fatality while using this location almost daily. So it was with amazement that one day I saw a Mobile Speed camera located there. I checked the website for listed locations at the time and sure enough this location shown. So on what basis would this location be used? I know from my experience that there is an almost zero/low accident record here as it's also a well-known site for Police RBT operations. It has a 50Km/H speed zone and was just after a speed hump/raised pedestrian crossing and a roundabout (since replaced by Traffic Lights). I could not fathom why the camera car was there until it dawned on me one day as I was going home in a peak period. My conclusion is that it was there purely based on Traffic Volume. This location has increasingly become more congested in peak periods since I started living in [REDACTED] and it is getting worse. So obviously their basis for locating the mobile speed camera there was based on the number of cars passing and not accident statistics. The more passing traffic the more chance of catching an inattentive driver being just over the speed limit. I notice now that this location has been removed from the list of sites and I conclude that it was not a financially viable site to operate. In other words they did get enough fines/revenue to justify the operation.

In addition to these conclusions was the fact that I live near a notorious intersection for accidents, being the intersection of Wentworth Avenue and Page Street. It is controlled by traffic lights but still is well known by locals and Tow Truck operators as having a high number of accidents over the years I have lived near it. So much so that the "towies" hand out their business cards to all the local residents to speed dial them when an accident occurs. So you would logically think that this location would be a prime candidate for a mobile speed camera but it has never been listed or used at all. Instead they located the mobile camera a few kilometres before this intersection on a secondary road. Where is their road safety logic here! Thankfully the accident record here has improved with a re-programming of the Traffic Lights to improve the sequencing but it still has the occasional accident.

If I had the resources available to me I feel I could prove my conclusion that there is no correlation between accident / fatality statistics and the location of mobile speed cameras. Even more so after I reviewed the current list of locations. I submit that the locations are based purely on traffic volumes and covert visibility alone to maximise the return on investment for the Government, i.e. the more vehicles pass by the more chance of issuing a penalty notice. This is the same LNP government that promised before they were first elected after Labour that they would not increase the number of Mobile Camera Cars if elected. That went out the window once they got in and they have been obsessed with the

revenue they generate ever since. Which brings me back to the removal of the warning signs.

The Covid pandemic had an enormous impact on revenue collected due to all the lock downs, less road usage and a lower road toll, so much so that the government was seeing the financial viability of these cars getting to point of making them operating at a loss.

So once road usage increased again the government needed to re-cover their losses and so they tried to sneak in the removal of the warning signs, bi-directional enforcement and tripling the operational hours while it citizens are dealing with a pandemic and in lockdown. Never waste a good pandemic as they say!

The true function of mobile speed cameras is taxation by stealth and the spin of road safety is just a smoke screen to convince the voters they are doing something about the road toll. The re-instatement of bi-directional enforcement and signage removal proves this. If they were truly concerned about reducing the road toll they would be building divided roads everywhere in this state, but they don't even do that for the well-known black spots. And why do place Mobile Speed Cameras on brand new Divided Roads where there is no Accident / Fatality record at all, e.g. the Pacific Highway Grafton by-pass section? The state of our secondary rural roads is diabolical as I have seen firsthand on my motor bike as well as in the car from my numerous trips around this state. Some no better than goat tracks!

Additionally, if the government and road safety experts were truly serious about reducing the road toll they would also have all highway patrol cars on the roads being visible to the driving public rather than hiding in the bushes. As everyone knows as soon as one is spotted everyone concentrates more to ensure they drive lawfully and safely. Any psychologist will attest to this. Their divisional name is an irony as it infers they are supposed to be "patrolling" our highways rather than being covert revenue collectors.

In conclusion, this government is obsessed with the revenue collection capabilities of this technology. No road toll in the world has been proven to be significantly reduced by mobile speed cameras. In fact it has made no substantial difference to any road toll figures in Australia. It's no use fining a motorist after they pass the camera if they are killed or kill others in a collision afterwards just down the road. No Mobile Speed Camera would have save my sister's life when she was killed while using a pedestrian crossing but a visible police car might have. At least educate motorists around the back spots with at least re-instating the warning signs, visible policing and building safer roads.