

**Submission
No 540**

MOBILE SPEED CAMERA ENFORCEMENT PROGRAMS IN NSW

Name: Mr Samuel Perkins

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I have held a car and motorcycle licence for over 10 years, I have a deep interest in safer roads and unfortunately the recent changes to remove signage from mobile speed cameras and increase operations leaves much to be desired.

From looking at the most recent NSW road toll statistics (6-July-2021) it can be seen that in the year to date the NSW road toll has actually increased from 149 in 2020 to 153 in 2021. Worse than this, and most likely due to more people using single cars to travel to work, the number of drivers and motorcyclists killed has increased 15.9% and 47.8% respectively. This is despite modern cars becoming safer every year.

Anecdotal evidence from friends, colleges and family members suggests many more near misses with drivers distracted by constantly checking their speed and with road users suddenly applying brakes if they see a suspected speed camera on the roadside. This is not from drivers who are intentionally speeding (though the number of these once again seems unchanged) but those who are already at the speed limit but can ill afford the heavy handed fines and potential loss of licence from minor infractions.

Public sentiment does not seem to agree with the changes, and the provided reasoning that “other states are doing it” or “it’s saving lives” doesn’t seem to stack up, given that there has not been a reduction in road toll corresponding to the 600% increase in fines. This would seem to simply be a case of justifying additional money to be paid to private companies to increase operations further under the guise of “road safety”.

If real change is desired, a better option would be to spend the money on driver education and training. The \$40m spent on speed cameras in 2019-20 could be used to provide free or subsidised training sessions with existing driver training providers. Sessions like these would help drivers who have developed bad habits or forgotten key skills to become safer on the roads. Increased signage on speed cameras would provide a warning to all drivers, instead of only reminding those who were speeding with a letter in the mail weeks later.

The statistics do not lie, the current NSW position of increased and more secretive enforcement is not having a measurable effect on the road toll, it is time to instead move toward creating safer drivers through education and training, both for new drivers and those who have held a licence for many years. Unfortunately the current system seems to only help the big businesses running the speed camera operations.