

**Submission
No 551**

MOBILE SPEED CAMERA ENFORCEMENT PROGRAMS IN NSW

Name: Mr Michael Turnbull

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Mobile Speed Camera Enforcement Programs in NSW

07/08/21

To the committee chair, deputy chair and members:

I am writing to you to advise that I am completely opposed to the new rules that were applied by the NSW state government in relation to the sign posting and vehicle labelling of privately run Mobile Speed Camera's.

Why? The following reasons:

1. There was no mandate, no approval, no consent from the voting public to implement this
2. There is no evidence to support that by doing this, it reduces car crashes, or fatalities in black spot areas. I have seen privately run Mobile Speed Camera's operating on divided motorways where they would have least impact.
3. Most of the time, these cameras are not setup in black spot areas. If there are black spot's, why would you not just install fixed cameras as a permanent deterrent?
4. This was implemented during a pandemic and mostly affects people who need their licenses the most, and has no impact on people such as yourselves.
5. As evidenced in media reports, this decision has been nothing but a money making scheme for the government, and must be revoked immediately
 - a) I know of personal friends who have lost their licenses, not due to accidents, but due to passing an unsigned mobile speed camera, and by the time they received the fines, multiple fines have been issued and there was no way to contest these fines in a timely manner due to them being issued so close together and the time to mail them out and receive them to take action, alter behaviour etc.
6. If this is a money losing venture and if this decision was made to increase revenue to cover costs charged by this private company, the agreement with the private company should be torn up immediately.

Terms of Reference:

- 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 socioeconomic backgrounds and Indigenous people
- j) the impact on P plate drivers
- k) any other related matters

In the following paragraphs I will attempt to address all the points outlined in the Terms of Reference.

- a) The timing of this implementation could not have been worse. We are in the middle of a pandemic, and the government decides to implement measures to extort more money from tax payers, road users, voters and constituents. All in a time where most of the public have been financially impacted by the decisions made by government in relation to the pandemic. These financial impacts may vary from reduced work hours, loss of jobs or destruction of business, which all amounts to reduced income or complete loss of income. Then the NSW government implements this measure to take more money, possibly due to reduced revenues, and as a result, places more of the NSW public under more undue stress and fatigue to exacerbate the whole situation and make things worse for those impacted negatively due to the lockdown measure taken by the NSW Government. All this is all a result of decisions made by politicians and bureaucrats who have lost touch with reality as they are not impacted at all by the lockdown's and business activity restraints imposed by the NSW Government. All politicians and bureaucrats have remained employed. No one lost their jobs, no one had reduced or lost income.
- b) In the study I cite here, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3861844/> (from Arizona USA) the conclusion is that statistically, the number of motor vehicle crashes did not increase or decrease with the installation of speed cameras. In this study, there was a comparison to a control section road/highway with no cameras. This study did not take into account the severity of the accidents. But, all speed cameras in this instance were signposted, 1000 feet, approximately 300 metres before the camera.
 - i. Secondly, I refer to a study by Monash University in Victoria, <https://www.monash.edu/muarc/archive/our-publications/reports/muarc200> , where they state that *“First, the use of speed cameras in Victoria is largely covert and infringement notices issued as a result of speed camera operations are usually received one to two weeks after the offence occurs. In addition, speed cameras are able to detect large volumes of speeding motorists per enforcement hour. In contrast, an offender detected speeding by a mobile radar device is issued with an on-the-spot fine in a deliberately*

overt manner. Also, the volume of speeding motorists detected by mobile radar devices per enforcement hour is lower than that for speed cameras.”

- ii. Radar signs are more effective, refer to the link for more information (<https://www.radarsign.com/how-effective-are-radar-speed-signs/>) but the information shown, indicates a 50% reduction in speeding vehicles when these signs are implemented.
- c) I as a long time road user of over 20 years am completely opposed to what has been implemented by NSW Government, and everyone I speak to have said this is a blatant revenue raising scheme by the Government because of the financial trouble they are in due to the massive downturn in the economy due to government restrictions due to the pandemic.
- d) I would like to know what the contractual arrangements are between the private company running the program on behalf of the NSW Government, who wrote the previous report making the recommendations, and why the changes were made so quickly, without public consultation or a decent public education program before it was implemented?
 - i. Who makes the decisions on where these cameras are located because from what I have seen, they have been setup in locations of low accident occurrence, and in particular divided motorways where they would have least impact
- e) The projected impact on revenues is pretty plain to see as outlined in the article at the start of the year.
 - i. Story 1 from The Australian (<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/breaking-news/revenue-from-mobile-speed-cameras-up-millions-and-expected-to-keep-climbing/news-story/b34c0d400437edc9d14287c0fd158a9c>): *“The NSW government raked in almost nine times the revenue from mobile speed camera fines in January compared with the same month last year, and it’s set to get worse for motorists with operating hours of the speed detectors set to be tripled.”*
 - ii. Story 2 from The Sydney Morning Herald(<https://www.smh.com.au/national/monthly-fines-up-by-17-million-in-nsw-as-camera-revenues-boom-20210414-p57j3a.html>): *“Fines collected by the NSW government have skyrocketed by nearly 30 per cent since 2019, totalling a record \$81 million and rising higher than pre-COVID levels.”*
 - iii. Story 3 from News.com (<https://www.news.com.au/technology/motoring/motoring-news/revenue-from-mobile-speed-cameras-in-nsw-smashes-record/news-story/87c89e4bd1790c3912bd3f76be8cc2ff>): *“ The NSW government is set to rake in record levels of revenue from speed camera fines after it collected more cash in February than*

it did during the last financial year. More than \$6m in revenue from mobile speed camera fines was gathered in February, leapfrogging the \$5,743,994 worth of fines handed out last financial year. But February's record is expected to be broken, with the state government to nearly triple the number of hours that speed cameras operate – from 7000 to 20,000 hours each month.”

- iv. It is pretty plain and clear to see that this is a revenue raising operation by the NSW Government. As though the Government does not take enough from the NSW Tax Payer already, as though the situation was not bad enough as it was, Gladys and team had to do this?
- f) I have nothing to add on this point, but I would say that education would have to be the most important tool that the NSW government should be using.
- g) I think there is enough Police on the roads, we do not need anymore.
- h) I am sure farmers and their families and other people living in country towns would be dramatically affected if they were to all of a sudden lose their drivers license due to not being notified immediately of an infringement? And there is no fall back in a regional community, eg ability to access public transport to get to work etc.
- i) Those on low socio-economic backgrounds may be impacted due to language barriers. I have no numbers on this but, again this comes back to education by the Government, and not ruling with an Iron Fist.
- j) P platers would have no chance here with any minute infringement, no immediate notification, they have no chance of knowing they have done something wrong. Two surprise infringements come in the mail and they have lost their license. How is this a positive impact on the economy in times like these?
- k) Towards zero? What a cheap marketing campaign to hide the underlying bureaucratic red tape and inefficiencies, and lack of creative skills to look outside the box for a solution. Lets take a look at some stats below to see what is really going on.

In closing

People are human, not robots. Mistakes will be made. But, going off your own statistics, let's take a look at the proof in the pudding.

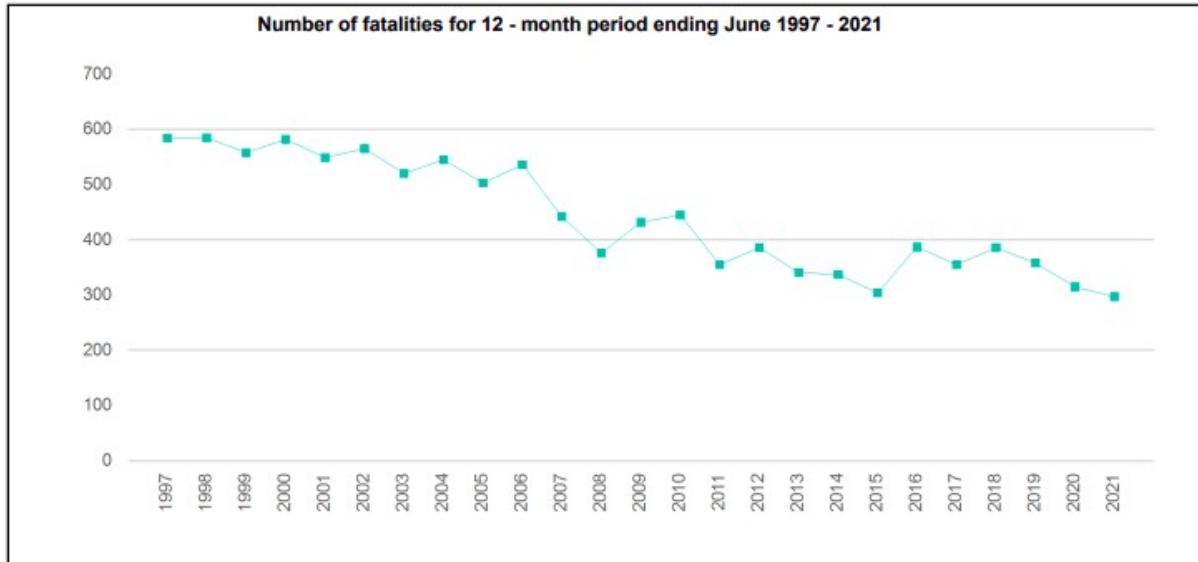
Below is a chart from the NSW Government monthly crash data.



Monthly bulletin of preliminary traffic crash data June 2021

Fatality rates for 12-month period ending June 2021

Year	No of fatalities	Fatality rate per 100,000 population	Fatality rate per 10,000 vehicles	Fatality rate per 100M vehicle kilometres travelled
2021	297	3.63	0.51	0.34

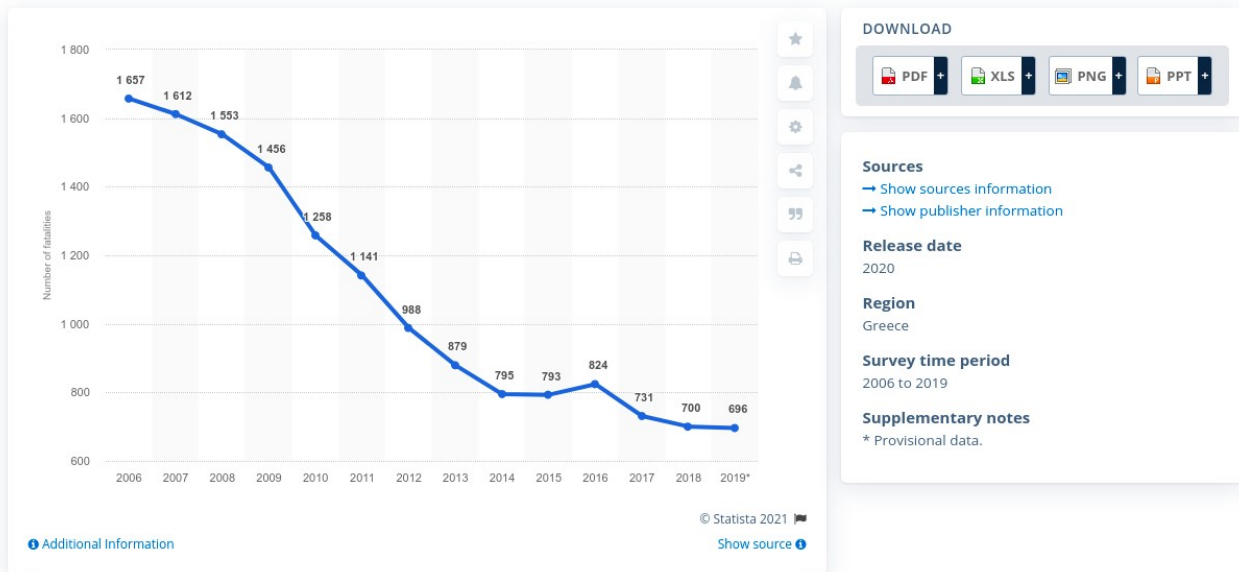


Sourced from <https://roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au/downloads/dynamic/nsw-road-toll-monthly.pdf>

There were 297 deaths in NSW, and it would probably be higher, if there were no lockdown's and no downturn in economic activity.

Now lets look at a country like Greece which has a similar population of approximately 10.5 million people, and has a land area of 131,000 square kilometres, as opposed to NSW which has a population of approximately 8.166 million people and a land area of 801, 000 square kilometres.

Number of road traffic fatalities in Greece from 2006 to 2019



Number of road deaths in Greece 2006-2019

Published by [Statista Research Department](#), Mar 4, 2021

This line graph shows the number of road traffic fatalities per year in Greece between 2006 and 2019. An overall decrease in the number of road deaths was observed within the time period shown. The highest number of road fatalities in this timeframe occurred in 2006, the first entry in this statistic. From 2006 to 2019, the number of road traffic fatalities decreased by 961. Since 2012 there were fewer than 1,000 road fatalities in Greece per annum.

From 2015 to 2016 the number of road fatalities increased slightly from 793 fatalities to 824 fatalities.

Sourced from <https://www.statista.com/statistics/437913/number-of-road-deaths-in-greece/>

Now, Greece has a smaller land mass, more densely populated land mass, has higher speed limits (They have 130km/hr speed limits over there), roads generally are not as good, there is much more treacherous terrain over there and is supposedly a much poorer nation than Australia.

Road fatalities in Greece in 2020 presented a significant decrease (16%) compared to 2019 figures, according to recently published ELSTAT data. This significant decrease is mainly attributed to the traffic restrictions due to the pandemic. (The same could be said for NSW).

During the last decade, Greece presented the most impressive road safety improvement in the European Union, with a decrease of 54% in road fatalities since 2010, achieving its target of halving road fatalities in 2020 compared to 2010. Serious injuries were reduced by 72% and the rate fatalities per vehicles was decreased by 56% since 2010.

There is more to it than enforcement of speed. Traffic on roads, driver training must be taken into account if the NSW Government and RMS is serious about getting us “Towards Zero”. You should not look to Victoria for a solution. With all the bureaucrats and Police on the roads with radars and

fully kitted out vehicles costing who knows how much. But, word is a fully kitted out NSW Police HWP vehicles costs the tax payer circa \$200, 000 AUD. How much is a private mobile speed camera vehicle costing the NSW tax payer? Probably a similar amount.

So lets put some math into the equation. So in Greece in 2006 their death toll was 1657. And in 2019 it was 696. That is a 58% reduction.

And in NSW, a first world developed nation, we had let's see, there are no data labels and no table so we don't know the exact figures, because NSW is so open and transparent with the data, so let's be generous and assume 520 for 2006, and 350 for 2019. That is about a 32% reduction over the same time period. I would be inclined to say the I am not getting enough bang out my buck. I would be inclined to say that the performance of the Government and The RMS has been below par, and performance needs to improve, dramatically.

It would be interesting to see how many bureaucrats and staff are employed in Greece, as opposed to NSW who run RMS, and traffic enforcement in NSW Police Force to see if the NSW tax payer is getting enough bang for their buck?

So, if Greece with a larger population, smaller land mass and higher speed limits, with a smaller budget no doubt, can do a better job in reducing their death toll, you have to ask yourself, what are you doing wrong?

Yours Faithfully,
Michael Turnbull
Engineer & Data Analyst