

**Submission
No 562**

MOBILE SPEED CAMERA ENFORCEMENT PROGRAMS IN NSW

Organisation: Snowy Valleys Council

Date Received: 9 July 2021

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Dear Lou Amato and the members of the Staysafe Committee

Thank you for providing Snowy Valleys Council with the opportunity to submit to the inquiry into mobile speed camera enforcement programs in NSW.

Snowy Valleys Council supports the use of mobile speed camera for the purpose of improving road safety when used to slow down vehicles in zones with high frequency of crashes but does not support the use of mobile speed cameras at sites with a perceived intention of revenue raising, that is sites with high volumes of traffic but lower numbers of road crashes.

Crash History of Snowy Valleys Council (SVC)

The SVC road network consists of the Snowy Mountains Highway, regional roads and local roads, both sealed and unsealed.

The majority of the 362 recorded road crashes from 2015 to 2019 occur on the Alpine Way, Batlow Road, Gocup Road, Snowy Mountains Highway, Tooma Road and Tumbarumba Road. The proportion of crashes on unclassified roads where the posted speed limit is 100 km/hour is 67 crashes out of the 362 reported crashes.

Speed is a factor in 166 of the reported 362 crashes. Tragically speed was a factor in 7 of the 14 fatalities (data is provided by the Centre for Road Safety from 2015 to 2019 "178TB19f").

Therefore, road safety strategies that target speeding and reduce the road toll are appreciated by the council community.

Appreciation of High Visibility Policing

Council has been involved with several road safety strategies that target speeding, has supported NSW Police with their Highway Patrol activities, and has accommodated the Transport for NSW (TfNSW) mobile speed cameras. Council has published numerous media releases commenting on speeding on roads notably around school buses and road work sites, these media stories typically contain comments from councilors, work staff, NSW Police, school students and parents encouraging motorists to drive at safe speeds. Support for the Highway Patrol includes discussions with officers at Local Traffic Meetings, the supply of traffic data, requests for enforcement and site maintenance for the patrol cars to operate speed cameras.

Current Locations of Mobile Speed Cameras

The location of mobile speed cameras in Snowy Valleys Council is provided by the TfNSW website: <https://roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au/speeding/speedcameras/current-locations.html>



These locations include roads with low incidences of reported crashes in the years 2015-2019. In Adelong the location of mobile speed cameras is published along the Snowy Mountains Highway, anecdotally located at Sandy Gully Road (25 crashes). In Gilmore the published sites of speed cameras are along Batlow Road (14 crashes) and the Snowy Mountains Highway (9 crashes). In Tumut the published sites are Gocup Road (6 crashes that also include the Minjary location) and the Snowy Mountains Highway (13 crashes) The 16 crashes recorded for the Gocup Road/Snowy Mountains Highway intersection are not included as speed cameras have not been located in proximity of the intersection possibly because of the road geometry and road usage.

The locations of the mobile speed cameras are sometimes on routes that appear justified according to reported crash data. The site frequently used on Batlow Road, Windowie is located within two hundred meters of a memorial of a fatal road crash.

Desired Locations for Speed Cameras

Comments have been made about sites where mobile speed cameras would have stronger impact in reducing speed in sites with high occurrences of crashes. Members of the community have made complaints to council about the speed of traffic along various routes and have requested sites for speed zone adjustments. The council responds to these complaints with a number of strategies usually resulting in the sharing of data collected from traffic counters with NSW Police, installing appropriate road signage and requesting speed zone adjustments from TfNSW. The website for requesting mobile speed cameras, <https://www.saferroadsnsw.com.au/haveyoursayspeedcameras.aspx> does inform the public that mobile speed camera sites can be nominated but the webpage makes it clear that the outcomes of such nominations will not be acknowledged and the only contact with the applicant will be limited to requests for further information.

Many of the regional roads in Snowy Valleys Council have high numbers of crashes but do not have speed cameras deployed along them.

Community Perceptions

Council staff were requested to anonymously supply thoughts about the use of mobile speed cameras. Opinions regarding the use of the mobile cameras include that they are a strategy for revenue raising for a cash strapped government, and the preference for mobile speed cameras to be highly visible and therefore promote the messaging about the enforcement of speeding. There were comments about the challenges in the process for requesting reviews about fines, the significant time delay between the time of the detection of the speeding offence and the arrival of the notification and the expense of fines compared to the household income.

The expense of an unexpected fine can be challenging for a household. The \$125 fine for under 10 km/hour and \$285 for between 10 to 20 km/hour are significant financial burdens to a household where the income is limited. For example the median household weekly income in Batlow is \$910, the weekly rent is \$150 and mortgage repayments are likely to be between \$1000 to \$1399 leaving between \$620 to \$760 for the rest of living expenses. Fines of under 10 km/hour were frequently mentioned with one excuse being the fitting of new tires to a car (new tires have a larger diameter and the increase of actual speed compared to indicated speed can be as much as 4%) and have caused hardship in low socioeconomic families. This financial burden is not as much as a deterrent in urban areas where the median family income is significantly higher and therefore the fine is a lower portion of household income.

The impact of fines and loss of license on many workers who are required to travel as part of their employment was made. Orchard hands, pine planters and shearing contractors made comments about the significantly detrimental affect that loss of license for unknown speeding offences from mobile speed cameras with respondents stating that they would rather be fined by officers of the NSW Highway Patrol. Several respondents (with two being former P plate drivers) admitted to the necessity of driving to work while unlicensed due to penalties from speeding.

Some respondents stated appreciation of role of speed cameras in reducing speed, and therefore road trauma and stated that the easiest way to avoid speeding fines is to drive slower.

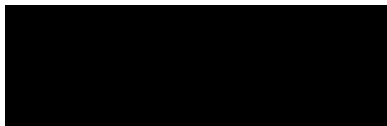
Other respondents have expressed frustration and cynicism that mobile speed cameras are not used on many of the roads with high occurrences of crashes, particularly along the Tumbarumba Road around Rosewood and are instead located in located at road sites that are perceived to be safe routes.

Concluding Statement

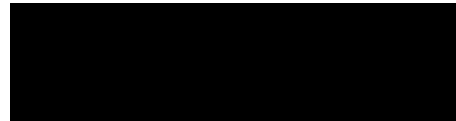
Snowy Valleys Council supports the use of mobile speed cameras when the cameras are operated at sites with high frequencies of road crashes where speed is the significant causative factor.

Snowy Valleys Council is willing to provide the Staysafe Committee with further details to support the inquiry into the use of mobile speed cameras.

Yours faithfully



Heinz Kausche
Executive Director Infrastructure



Anthony Carroll
Road Safety Officer