

**Submission  
No 580**

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

**Organisation:** Cessnock City Council

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The Hon Lou Amato MLC  
Committee Chair  
Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety  
Parliament of New South Wales  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Contact: [REDACTED]  
Our Ref: DOC2021/098384

Dear Mr Amato

**Cessnock City Council – Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety Inquiry into mobile speed camera enforcement programs in NSW.**

Cessnock City Council welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the Joint Standing Committee regarding the Road Safety inquiry into mobile speed camera enforcement programs in NSW.

The City of Cessnock covers approximately 1,950 square kilometres within the Hunter Valley of New South Wales, approximately 120 kilometres north of Sydney and 40 kilometres west of Newcastle.

The City is bounded by Maitland City to the north, the Cities of Newcastle and Lake Macquarie to the east, and the Central Coast to the south and Singleton to the west.

Within the City of Cessnock's local government area boundaries are the traditional lands of the Wonnarua People, the Awabakal People and the Darkinjung People.

Council is aware that the NSW Government has undertaken significant research into the use and effectiveness of mobile speed cameras, both in NSW and in other jurisdictions. The research provided evidence that there has been a significant reduction in the number of serious injuries and deaths from speed related crashes in other States & Territories, by generating an "anywhere/anytime" expectation of being detected speeding.

From November 2020, the NSW Government implemented changes to its mobile speed camera enforcement program including an increase in enforcement hours, additional speed camera locations, and the removal of public warning signage and vehicle markings. These changes bring NSW in line with other jurisdictions' speed enforcement operations and it is anticipated that a reduction in road trauma will follow.

However, since implementation of these changes there has been an emphasis in media reporting on the staggering increase in speed camera generated revenue, much of which has been attributed to the changes.

Such media reporting has produced community scepticism as to the integrity of the initiative and a belief that the enhanced mobile camera program generally and in particular, the removal of associated signage on and around the camera cars is directly motivated by revenue raising, rather than a genuine road safety endeavour.

There has been significant media emphasis on the high number of infringements issued and the substantial fine revenue collected, rather than the fact that the number of fines issued is an indicator of an underlying and entrenched lack of compliance with speed limits.

This paradigm is being perpetuated by media reports which appear to be focusing on the increase in lower level speeding offences of less than 10k in excess of the speed limit, thus hindering community acknowledgement and acceptance of the fundamental road safety implications associated with speeding being the major causative factor in road crashes.

Obviously the intent of the changes to the NSW mobile speed camera enforcement program is to transform the culture and behaviour of drivers, such that as with previously successful anti drink driving campaigns – speeding is regarded as being socially unacceptable in the same way that drink driving is now regarded as abhorrent behaviour. To this end it is necessary to build the expectation that detection of speeding offences is extremely likely “anywhere/anytime”. Accordingly, ongoing communications to the public need to focus on the road safety outcomes in reducing road trauma and the proven speeding link to crashes.

Speed cameras differ from police enforcement, in that the consequence of being stopped by police is provided instantly, and therefore drivers are punished for their errant behaviour at the time of the offence. The delay that comes from a fine that arrives some weeks later can alter the public perception of the punishment for their behaviour and contribute to the notion of mere revenue raising. Unlike direct police enforcement intervention, delayed enforcement under the speed camera regime generally does not lead to a modification of driver behaviour on the particular journey where the offence takes place, as often the errant motorist is blissfully unaware that their offence has been detected.

Mobile speed camera activities and high visibility policing combine to act as a general deterrent not only to speeding but to general unlawful driver behaviour. To achieve an ‘anywhere/anytime’ expectation, the enforcement of other road rules (general non-speed related driving offences) and the high visibility of police on all roads, can contribute to an overall increase in general voluntary compliance with road rules across the network.

Data is generally not made available to Local Government regarding the number of drivers who have lost their licence due to driving offences, however it is considered that with the rapid increase in the number of infringements generated by mobile speed cameras there is potential for an escalation in the number of persons finding themselves subject to demerit point and/or fine default and licence suspensions or cancellations. Until such time as the ‘anywhere/anytime’ message cultivates widespread driver behaviour change, this situation will continue.

The risk of loss of licence could be more prevalent in areas with higher indigenous or low socio-economic populations, where the capacity to pay fines may be limited. This may also be the case for young drivers with their reduced number of demerit points on provisional licenses.

Continued support of education programs that not only highlight the road safety risks of speeding but also the ensuing social impacts of potential loss of license should be considered. A higher priority should be afforded to increased road safety education in rural and regional areas where the consequence of losing a drivers licence combined with limited

options for public transport and often the requirement to travel greater distances in these areas can be a major barrier to maintaining employment.

As mentioned above, statistically speeding continues to be the predominant risk factor for death and injury on our roads. Strategies to reduce the prevalence of speeding need be multifaceted, including detection by cameras, enforcement by police and supported by extensive road user education.

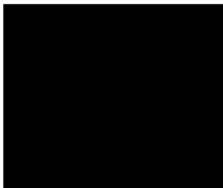
Key education challenges to increased voluntary compliance with speed limits include increasing the level of understanding of risk and how it relates to speed and community understanding that camera enforcement is about road safety and not revenue raising, through the promotion of the 'anywhere/anytime' detection expectation.

Local Government is ideally placed to assist implement localised education through participating in Council's partnership with Transport for NSW in the Local Government Road Safety Program.

Should you wish any further information, please do not hesitate to contact Council's 



Yours sincerely



Robert Maginarity  
Acting General Manager