

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS BEFORE

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ROAD SAFETY

**INQUIRY INTO SPEED ZONING AND ITS IMPACT ON THE
DEMERIT POINTS SCHEME**

At Sydney on Thursday 5 June 2014

The Committee met at 9.00 a.m.

PRESENT

Mr G. J. Aplin (Chair)

Legislative Council

The Hon. R. H. Colless (Deputy Chair)
The Hon. W. Secord

Legislative Assembly

Mr C. D. Holstein
Mr R. J. Park
Mr D. J. Webber

CHAIR: Good morning and thank you for attending this public hearing of the Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety on its inquiry into speed zoning and its impact on the Demerit Points Scheme. The public hearings being held today and tomorrow are exploring a range of issues surrounding the process of determining speed limits on New South Wales roads and the imposition of demerit point penalties for speeding offences. This inquiry is particularly timely, given the increase in pedestrian fatalities and the recent announcement that speed limits in the Sydney central business district [CBD] are being lowered in areas with significant pedestrian traffic.

I remind everyone to switch off their mobile phones as they can interfere with Hansard recording equipment. If your phone is on silent, please switch it off completely.

I welcome our witnesses from Transport for NSW and the NSW Police Force appearing before us this morning. Thank you for appearing before the Committee today.

STEVEN HEAD, General Manager, Network Management, Roads and Maritime Services, and

EVAN DANIEL WALKER, Principal Manager, Safe Systems, Centre for Road Safety, affirmed and examined, and

STUART GEOFFREY SMITH, Acting Assistant Commissioner, Commander, Traffic and Highway Patrol Command, NSW Police Force,

TIM PETER REARDON, Deputy Director General, Policy and Regulation, Transport for NSW, and

MARGARET JOAN PRENDERGAST, General Manager, Centre for Road Safety, sworn and examined:

CHAIR: I draw your attention to the fact that your evidence is given under parliamentary privilege and you are protected from legal or administrative action that might otherwise result in relation to the information you provide. I also point out that any deliberate misleading of the Committee may constitute contempt of the Parliament and an offence under the Parliamentary Evidence Act 1901. Time is always limited at these hearings and the Committee may wish to send you some additional questions in writing, the replies to which would form part of evidence and be made public. Will you be happy to provide written evidence to any further questions?

Mr WALKER: Yes.

Ms PRENDERGAST: Yes.

Mr SMITH: Yes.

Mr REARDON: Yes.

Mr HEAD: Yes.

CHAIR: Before we proceed with any questions would you like to make a brief opening statement?

Mr REARDON: I will make a brief opening statement on behalf of the group. The Centre for Road Safety is responsible for the New South Wales 2021 goal of reducing casualties and road trauma in New South Wales. In response to that, it produced the NSW Road Safety Strategy. The NSW Road Safety Strategy 2021 guides our activities across a range of areas. We have a range of sub-action plans and strategies for motorcycles, pedestrians, cyclists, a speed camera strategy. One of the main features of all of those is that speed remains the single largest cause of casualty crashes in New South Wales. It is still around 40 per cent. So our safe speed limits and the submission we put in around a whole range of areas that we are happy to discuss today are a fundamental part of the Safe System approach around safer people, safer vehicles and safer roads to improve the safety of the community in New South Wales.

In part of that, around that safer speeds area, which encompasses all of the safer systems, we launched a website in 2011 and that was to encourage and enable the community to highlight directly to us their concerns that they might have about particular speed limits and signs. We also adopted an approach to review the top 100 speed limits in New South Wales and received a lot of feedback from that process, which resulted in us changing some speed limits. Some went up; some went down. In all, it was about empowering the community to

provide us with direct feedback on what they thought about speed limits. As I said, the submission we put before the Committee prior to today outlines a whole range of areas which we are happy to take comments on, but I thought I would give that as an opening statement.

In terms of the people here, as I said, I am the Deputy Director General responsible for areas including road safety. The General Manager of the Centre for Road Safety is here. We have experts within the Centre. Evan Walker is responsible for the Safe System approach. We have the NSW Police with the Acting Assistant Commissioner, Stuart Smith, and Steven Head from Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) who is responsible for network management. We are here collectively to answer questions from the Committee but that is an opening statement from ourselves.

CHAIR: Thank you all for appearing today and for a comprehensive report that you submitted to the inquiry. The submission states that there is generally a lack of understanding of the safety implications of low-level speeding and that came about presumably after the 2009 change, which you particularly referred to in the submission. Can you elaborate on that? What has been done to address that lack of understanding and what have been the key results?

Mr REARDON: I will make some brief comments and then hand over to Ms Prendergast and Mr Smith. Basically, in 2009 the change made to the demerit point scheme reduced the number of demerit points to one for low-level speeding. Since that time it has seen some changes in terms of the social acceptability of that low-level speeding and that is an issue we need to focus some attention on, where we are just above the prevailing speed limit. Higher level speeding is being addressed somewhat but low-level speeding, coinciding with that demerit point change but not only that, there may have been other factors that we can talk about. But it is certainly a key issue for us in the NSW Road Safety Strategy to focus on the social unacceptability of low-level speeding.

Ms PRENDERGAST: We know that 10 kilometres [K] makes a difference. We know that the community does not understand that low-level speeding is a great risk. We are doing a lot of work nationally to work out what we can do to address low-level speeding. There is a major Austroads project about to be embarked on. Queensland has recently done some communications in this space, really highlighting the issue of low-level speeding. I am not sure whether you have seen the New Zealand advertisement "Mistakes". What this is really about is that speed, if you are travelling above the speed limit, will lead you into a crash. You will not be able to take that corrective action to get out of the crash and then the outcomes would be more severe. The other thing we know from a Safe System approach is that people make mistakes. The faster you are going, the harder it is to accommodate those mistakes.

The New Zealand advertisement clearly shows that someone has made a mistake and because the other person was travelling above the speed limit they could not take the corrective action and therefore the outcome was very severe. It is the issue about the system. Mistakes happen the faster you are going. What we know from the Neilson model—and that is all in our submission—is that 10K makes a difference. If you hit a pedestrian at 50 kilometres an hour they are twice as likely to die as if you hit them at 40K. So in a way our speed limit setting is all about managing the risk.

Mr WALKER: What we know about people's attitudes to low-level speeding, we do continual tracking of drivers' attitudes. We know that pre-2009 there was a certain level of acceptability of certain levels of speeding in the community, and we know that since 2009 we have watched the acceptability of low-level speeding grow. But we have also seen road toll improvements in that time because we have focused on other approaches like a really strong, high-visibility enforcement approach. It has counterbalanced that to some extent, from my point of view.

Mr SMITH: If I can add to education about speeding, last year we had 141 deaths out of 339 which we directly related to speed, and the others where it is a contributing factor. With the Centre for Road Safety we developed an educational campaign called Operation Momentum. We are travelling to 37 regional shows and major events with Operation Momentum, which is a way to engage with the community and get highway patrol talking directly to and answering questions from community members. We expect about two million people will come through those shows throughout the country. The theme is speed; the theme is "don't rush". Additionally, we have 416 marked vehicles with high-visibility marking. So we make no bones about being able to see a highway patrol car these days. They have road safety advertising on them, and 25 per cent of those have speed advertising campaigns on the rear bumper.

Lastly, with the Centre for Road Safety, we have a Facebook site now at Traffic and Highway Patrol Command. We are allowing members of the community to actually engage in posts on speed, speed detection, crashes that happen and we have motorcycle riders, pushbike riders, truckies all having a debate. It is not just a debate by individuals who feel they are aggrieved or something or other in relation to speed. We have surgeons from casualty wards now discussing the benefits of helmets on the Facebook site. Our reach is now 625,000 a week. What we are probably doing is what we used to do in the way of a survey is just letting them engage about the issue of speeding and other casualty crash-related stuff. What we are trying to do is do what we are all struggling with, that is, getting them to understand that any speeding is dangerous.

CHAIR: Transport for NSW and RMS have a program—you have touched on that—to ensure the consistent application of speed zoning guidelines, including the 2011 changes to rationalise speed zones across the New South Wales road network. Can you give us more detail about that program and how it is implemented?

Mr REARDON: In terms of the speed zone guidelines, as you indicated, we reviewed them and they were updated in 2011. One of the keys that we undertook that I mentioned previously was giving the community the opportunity to look at the top 100 speed zones that concerned them. It would not be surprising to the Committee to understand that a lot of responses were around making sure that things were more consistent along a route. There was no strong direction about minor increases or minor decreases in speed limits and we subsequently introduced some in both directions. A lot we left the same and a lot of submissions were about leaving speed limits the same. As I said, we put that on to a website and it gave the community the opportunity to engage directly with us. Since that time Roads and Maritime Services has continued that process.

So we did the top 100, we produced the results and implemented those. RMS continues to look at speed zone reviews periodically now, almost as an ongoing process and our website remains live for anyone who has a suggestion or a query, complaint or a compliment about what they might want us to do with speed limits. So it is open, it has been since that time and will remain so while we continue to take feedback, feed that through to ourselves and to RMS to look at where people want us to focus our attention on speed limits.

Ms PRENDERGAST: I would like to add that technically the determination of speed limits is a scientific process. It is not always obvious to the driver what the risks on that road are, and that is one of the key issues. You may drive along the Hume and think, "Wow, I could be going at 130, 140 and I'd be okay." That is, first, because the driver does not think they are going to crash and, second, they cannot actually see what the risks are. The risk could be a driveway, the alignment, the elevation—it is a number of things. When we set speed limits—and this is what the guidelines embedded in policy—we look at road design, lane width, alignment, road quality, sight distance, crash risks, crash history, the complexity of the road network, how many intersections, driveways are coming into that, and what is the land use adjoining. One of the issues is if there is pedestrian activity or cyclists we know that we need to protect those people.

We are seeking to rationalise the variability. We acknowledge that from community feedback that we need to look at rationalising the variability and that we need better consistency. The problem we sometimes face in setting speed zones is that we try to zone a lower speed just around the risk point. So you are trying to keep the higher speed for the longer length but around that risk point you are trying to put in the lower speed to mitigate that risk. What that then does is work against consistency. So it is a delicate balance. We know that we can sustain higher speeds as in up to 110 on major highways but we know that if you pass through an urban area, given the activity, we have an ageing population, we must adopt 50. I think drivers are used to that change in urban areas but we apply limits via the speed zone guidelines. I do not know whether Mr Head wants to add about the process.

Mr HEAD: Ms Prendergast has covered the majority of the steps in the process. I indicate to the Committee that we have undertaken close to 600 additional speed reviews since the top 100 routes were identified in 2011. Part of the process, as Ms Prendergast outlined, is for us to rationalise where it is possible to do so in order to have consistency in the speed limits. The vast majority of those reviews have indicated either a minimal change or a reduction in speed limits. There was a very small number where we felt there is a possibility to increase speed limits.

CHAIR: Ms Prendergast, you mentioned the Hume Highway, and I was going to ask this question later but it is opportune to do so now. It brings together many elements that this inquiry is investigating. You will recall that last year there was a media stunt conducted by *Wheels* magazine. The article stated, "We drove from Melbourne to Sydney at 130 kilometres an hour—didn't die and didn't get booked. A British journalist

behind the wheel, Ben Oliver, slowed for more than a dozen speed cameras and stuck to the limit in all other speed zones except 110 kilometres an hour sections." That was intended to raise public comment on the suitability of the 110 kilometres an hour zone. It also raises questions as to why that person eluded speed detection. Clearly there were no mobile cameras in play at the time.

I would like your comment on how that could be better managed if it was to be adopted. We are looking for two areas of interest here: the suitability of various highways for consideration of increased speed limits, as was being sought by *Wheels* magazine; and secondly, point to point or speed averaging cameras for lighter vehicles. I realise that they are in place for heavy vehicles.

Ms PRENDERGAST: First, 110 kilometres an hour is the World Health Organisation's best practice for the higher speed limit. We previously had discussions, in the context of that *Wheels* event, about higher speed limits. If you doubled the price of a road and that road potentially had no horizontal or vertical curvature, if it had no super elevation, if there were no access points at all, if the pavement was of a sufficient friction and quality, if the lane width was very wide, and the gradients were such, it may be considered appropriate. At the end of the day no road that we know of is like that. There are always risks at play, there are always curves, alignments, shoulders and no other country except Germany with the autobahns has lifted the speed limits to that degree.

If we use the autobahn example of allowing whatever speed limit you want—we know that Germany have gone the opposite way and reinstated speed limits on the autobahns. Over one third are covered now. We also know that their fatality rate per billion kilometres travelled on those motorways is far higher than adjoining countries such as the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom [UK]. We know that the UK sets speed limits similar to ours and they control it with point to point speed cameras for all vehicles on those highways. The issue is that the travel time gained is actually minimal while the risk is very high. We know that increasing speed limits will increase fatalities and injuries on our roads.

Mr SMITH: In addition, while not trying to cast any aspersions on journalists, the reality is that they did not acknowledge in the article that they could not speed in the other direction without running into numerous highway patrol cars. It is great for a piece but obviously Highway 31 is one of our operations on the Hume where we see six to nine cars. We cannot be there 100 per cent of the time. We have to provide a high visibility presence as best we can with 565 cars on 185,000 kilometres of road system. It would have been nice if they had acknowledged the difficulty in travelling at that speed. Obviously the article did the trick by making a grandiose statement.

Ms PRENDERGAST: I would add that *Wheels* also said that high speeds alleviate boredom. There is absolutely no evidence to that effect. Speed plays a critical role in the severity and likelihood of a crash and lower speeds give the driver more ability to correct and control the vehicle and take corrective action if something happens: particularly a mistake.

Mr RYAN PARK: What did you say to them when they said that?

Ms PRENDERGAST: There is no evidence to support that.

Mr SMITH: The use of mobile phones engages brain activity apparently.

CHAIR: I saw the police response and the public were mostly in favour of that at the time. Will you comment on, first, in relation to the Northern Territory's trial at the moment in terms of leaving people and allowing them to settle on the speed limit; and secondly, you are absolutely correct that that driver took steps to avoid being detected where there were known mobile cameras or point to point cameras in Victoria. The question that has not been asked is why do we not consider speed averaging cameras in New South Wales?

Ms PRENDERGAST: Let us talk about the Northern Territory first. The piece of road they have applied that to has absolutely no land use activity on the side of it. In fact, it has nothing. But that is not the issue: The fatality rate for the Northern Territory is over 16 per 100,000 of the population compared to ours that is sitting under five.

CHAIR: We wanted that on the record, thank you.

Ms PRENDERGAST: It is compelling to say that there is a different mentality at play. We know that—whilst not on that particular stretch—there was a crash two weeks ago on the Sturt Highway where five people were killed in a single crash in a single vehicle. They collided with another vehicle and all five occupants died because of the speed they were travelling, which was in excess of 130 kilometres an hour.

Mr REARDON: The speed camera program that we have out there has four types of cameras. The community are aware we are rolling out fixed cameras, red light, mobile speed cameras and point to point. We put that out there. We are clear on the criteria that we have and what they were targeting when it comes to point to point; they are targeting heavy vehicles and that remains the case. The programs themselves, where we have taken them in the last couple of years, remain fairly new and we will continue to monitor how they go in terms of point to point for trucks but at this point in time we are aware where point to point is being used around the world and we monitor it.

CHAIR: In the submission it did state that, but it gave no reasons as to why there was no consideration, particularly in light of the point I raised here, as to why we are not considering speed averaging for light vehicles as opposed to just for heavy vehicles.

Mr REARDON: They are being used to target various road users and at the moment we are using them to target trucks and we continue to monitor what is being used around the world.

CHAIR: Do you have any evidence from overseas as to the efficacy?

Ms PRENDERGAST: They have the average speed enforcement in Victoria and Queensland for all vehicles and we have been monitoring the results and effectiveness closely.

CHAIR: Do you have any reports to date that the Committee could be advised of?

Ms PRENDERGAST: I am not aware of any evaluations but there is an analysis happening nationally and we will table that evidence and give the Committee more evidence to consider.

Mr SMITH: In relation to the heavy vehicles space the camera point to point system is running and we have, arising out of a dreadful fatal that happened at Menangle, clamped down on the activity of speed tampering inside trucks. We can see the point to point system making changes. The behaviour of over-speeding 105 kilometres seems to be tapering off. There must be a study that looks in that that is the reason. What we found is about 10 per cent of the moving fleet and heavy vehicles have some form of speed tampering on them. We targeted that.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Transport for NSW, Have you provided any advice to the Minister on point-to-point cameras for non-heavy vehicles, meaning average normal drivers?

Ms PRENDERGAST: No.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: You have not?

Ms PRENDERGAST: No, we haven't.

Mr SMITH: We have basically put the New South Wales speed camera strategy together and the specific cameras are there to target specific road users. We have articulated the criteria for those.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Do you think there is a case for point to point cameras to be expanded to all drivers?

Mr REARDON: We have put the criteria together in the speed camera strategy that we have got targeting the road users. I indicated that the program itself is fairly new, it is relatively new. We will continue to monitor the effectiveness of the point-to-point program for heavy vehicles.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Aren't you the Centre for Road Safety, aren't you New South Wales' expert body on road safety, you must have an opinion on point-to-point cameras for all vehicles?

Ms PRENDERGAST: In 2012 we published the speed camera strategy and that is what we are currently rolling out. We are only mid roll-out for a lot of our camera programs. We are establishing effectiveness and trying to get education and awareness out about the risk of speeding and we will consider all aspects, together with other jurisdictions and based on evidence.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: You misunderstood my question. I asked you about point-to-point cameras applying to all vehicles.

Mr REARDON: The response to it is that the criteria we are applying for point-to-point at the moment is to target heavy vehicles. We have a program that is relatively new and we will continue to monitor it in terms of its effectiveness and evaluation over the next couple of years; that will tell us how effective it is for trucks as the targeted road user. I also indicated we are well aware of what is happening internationally and we will continue to monitor the effectiveness of those programs. As you asked for, Chair, as reports become available we will be happy to furnish those.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: I ask the same question to the Acting Assistant Commissioner Stuart Smith: What is your view on point to point cameras applying to all vehicles?

Mr SMITH: I have not formed an opinion. It has been two years since we restructured Traffic and Highway Patrol Command. On 24 January 2012 three people were killed by a runaway heavy vehicle. We changed game plan on that day. It was an expectation from Government that events like that would not occur again. We made arrangements with Roads and Maritime Services forming the joint heavy vehicle task force. Ever since that time we have been focusing heavily on the industry and the 10 per cent of the industry where they want to tamper with speed to get an unfair competitive advantage. Until that physical evidence of how the tampering occurs, because it is very broad—it might be a chopper wheel that confuses a computer or it might be a whizzer in a gear box—until that data is compared with point-to-point we cannot say that is going to be of value.

It will cause a total change of behaviour because they know what will be sitting behind an audit for point to point speed. We will be coming to visit a company near you and we will rip apart 200 trucks to find out what was tampered with. We are very early days in getting a definitive answer and an understanding by industry that if they speed in point-to-point something physical will happen: police and Roads and Maritime Services are going to turn up on their doorstep and start pulling trucks apart.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: The social acceptability of speeding is something I have discussed with Gen X and Gen Y. I am asking from the angle of how the Government should approach this generation. I am commonly hearing about the robust driver licencing system, the red/green P system that they have gone through that their parents and grandparents have not, and there is almost a boast that they are a higher quality of driver than previous generations. The quality and manufacture of build of a vehicle is of a higher standard than previously and very slowly the New South Wales road network is improving. I am trying to get to the core for this generation. Do you have any suggestions as to how Government should be approaching that generation in terms of meeting their expectations?

Mr REARDON: We have many suggestions, many of which are recorded in the NSW Road Safety Strategy. A couple of areas targeted for younger drivers that Government asked us to look at in particular were a Safer Drivers Course. So we pulled together a fairly significant task force with a whole range of stakeholder representation to come up with a process to get the right balance with what you were saying about how we put them on to the road and the progression between L and P plates. That resulted in a Safer Drivers Course being part of the total package of how you progress from an L to a provisional licence. Ms Prendergast can talk about some of the feedback and effectiveness of that to date. The early signs are encouraging from what young people are saying about that. Giving them that awareness in a classroom setting and a structured peer to peer discussion is quite effective.

More broadly, we are trying to target our advertising campaigns, as you may have noted. We have tried to introduce just enough humour and use some punchy taglines to target a certain group. We are cutting through reasonably well for mobile phones, we are going okay with Plan B and we continue to evaluate the effectiveness of those programs but they are clearly targeted at those groups where they have—and we have sat in discussions here previously about driver distraction—a lot more distractions in front of them than the previous generation. We are trying to use their language, trying to go directly to them, and trying to use their distribution channels such as YouTube, Twitter and every other way we can capture their attention. First, is a policy setting of how

we have changed some of the L and P plate safer driving and, secondly, the advertising campaigns. Ms Prendergast can expand on that.

Ms PRENDERGAST: I understand where you are coming from. The issue is before we introduced the graduated licensing scheme in 2000, and enhanced it again in 2007, there was a woeful record for young drivers; we were killing too many people on our roads. Since the separation of P1 and P2 came in in 2000, there has been a 50 per cent reduction of young driver involvements. Since the regime in 2007 where we added a lot of extra really important measures—zero tolerance to speeding, zero alcohol, not using mobile phone at all for P1's, 120 log hours—there has been another 30 per cent reduction.

Last year 17- to 20-year-old fatalities were down 24 per cent. Our young driver under 26 years of age were down 20 per cent. Even though 2014 is actually not going as well as we would hope—we are 13 up today on last year, which is 10 per cent—what we know about this year is that our fatalities involving P-drivers are down 47 per cent and our fatalities of 21- to 25-year-olds are down 38 per cent. It is a difficult one because we do not want them becoming complacent thinking, "Wow, I have got training, log hours, the safer drivers course" and we are getting better more robust training—even motorcyclists are getting rider training—and to start thinking they are really good. They have got to realise where we came from to actually get to this point.

As Tim said, we are trying to communicate differently with Gen Y and X. I do not know about X because I am slash-X baby boomer so I do not put myself in that category. I am in that year that cuts over. The issue is that we are trying to talk to them in a different way because the old ways of telling them not to do something just does not work anymore with the young generation to be quite honest. So we are using all the digital media, social media. Stuart has talked about engaging through Facebook. Plan B was a classic case. The evolution of that advertising campaign commenced with "RBT [Random Breath Test] is here. Every police car is an RBT." It moved through with a horror one, you know, a potential consequence—you could hit a little kid. It moved through to "Be paranoid, RBT could get you". You know enforcement is there, you need to change behaviour—right through to now where we have been taken along the evolution path to "RBT means you need a Plan B. You need another option."

It is just a different way of engaging. We know Plan B has been successful because for a decade 20 per cent of our road toll contributing factor was alcohol. Since 2012 when we introduced Plan B, in 2012 and 2013, it is 15 per cent alcohol contributing to our road toll. In fact, fatigue has now surpassed alcohol. We know that sort of way of engagement—because we knew that that was traditionally a young thing. One of our biggest challenges these days is actually communicating to the middle aged. We are seeing in our speeding, fatigue and alcohol crashes these days is a stronger and stronger prevalence of the 40-to-60-year-olds, including motorcyclists. We know that is very prevalent in motorcycle crashes. We have to segment our communications and we are getting the help of the young to help us talk to the youth and to young people. But we actually need to work out how to engage with the middle-aged as well because they are the ones who are probably a bit set in their ways and are less likely to listen to messages.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: This is not exclusive to a generation but I suppose when we are talking about fatalities on roads the common view seems to be that as soon as you hit Urunga heading north the poorer road conditions seem to lead to fatalities whereas roads south and towards the city seem to be in much better condition. What is the expectation and management of them from the Government's point of view? The former Government and this Government have done enormous things—and you are to be commended for your work in the obvious reduction in fatalities. However, I am seeing an increase in expectation from the driver's point of view when they do not have all the facts but they gets bits and pieces from publications like *Wheels* with open speed borders in the Northern Territory and Holden telling them they have the most advanced car in the world. Managing the expectation from a government's point of view seems to be getting harder and harder and as the fatalities come down even harder.

Ms PRENDERGAST: You are spot on. It is a catch-22. The more the road toll comes down the people start thinking maybe it is not as great a risk. We talked about the Hume Highway and the demand for "Why can't I drive whatever speed I want to?" The issue is that there are still fatalities on the Hume Highway. We still look at our maps and see those red crosses and know that even though this is a state-of-the-art piece of road there are still fatalities and serious injuries occurring. We have brought down fatalities over the last decade since the early 2000s by 31 per cent. We cannot have complacency. We know that it is underpinned by better roads. We know that it is underpinned by safer vehicles. We know that it is underpinned by better post-crash response care and medical advancements to actually treat people, but at the end of the day speed is the critical factor.

It is the law of physics: the faster you are going you cannot take the corrective action and the outcome will be more severe. It is behavioural, it is that compliance and willingness to comply. We have seen what road development is bringing us. The Pacific Highway this year alone is nearly 50 per cent down on fatalities from last year. It is quite phenomenal. We know that road development helps but even so there is still a compliance issue. Just going back to the whole higher speed demand, even with additional driver training, and all the GLS provisions, even with safer vehicles, there are limits to the amount of force that a person could sustain, and the impacts with other vehicles. That is really what road safety is about; it is that system and knowing that when two objects collide, or a car collides with a tree or something, that speed will actually determine the outcome.

Mr REARDON: In terms of focus and what people understand—and we have put in a submission—we get customer feedback on most things we do in terms of the campaigns we run and all things we do. Most people get it and understand that they should not speed. Most people get they should not hold their mobile phone but there are targets within those groups who we are after. They are the ones we are trying to focus on. That is not easy. The Pacific Highway continues to be upgraded to dual carriageway but there are certain areas that are not, and we continue to work on those.

In terms of the other two planks, that is Safer Roads, Safer Vehicles and Safer People, I think for what the community is seeing in the last couple of years with the joint operations between the Centre for Road Safety and the police, working with RMS as well, even having the education badging on highway patrol cars for Plan B and all of those other initiatives, it is very powerful out on the road which is where we are targeting our efforts. I think we are getting cut through with that type of message. Understand that in the behavioural and education areas our compliance and our education is a lot more balanced, integrated and consistent across the State. So I think we are getting there with that.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: When I drove down the M1 last night at about 110 kilometres per hour cars sped passed me clearly at 130 kilometres per hour and over. Sometimes I see several highway patrol vehicles which are clearly seen from the back but not always from the front in modern days, but at other times they are not there. Sometimes even trucks pass me when I am doing 110 kilometres per hour in my Commodore. As the M1 is upgraded is there a definitive idea as to whether the speed limit will be increased on the M1? I know many people will speed and they will be targeted.

Mr REARDON: I go back to all the comments we discussed previously about road design. If we have very good horizontal and vertical alignments like very flat countries such as The Netherlands or Ireland, if you think about the wide shoulders and lack of access points on their motorways they are the reason they consider higher speeds. If they are compared with the alignment of the M1, notwithstanding other efforts to put into it that is how you gauge what speed limits will be on it. The vertical and horizontal alignments that are through that area, notwithstanding areas that might be widened, would tell us what speed limit we would place on that road. The road design on that route has some vertical and horizontal alignment challenges, as we are all aware, and they are not overcome easily with the cuttings and the fill that we have on that alignment.

Ms PRENDERGAST: As the Pacific Highway is upgraded there are areas going from 80 to 100, and some are being upgraded from 100 to 110. That is a consideration of all those factors that Tim just alluded to. There was a section just south of Taree that was 100 and people could not understand it. We have recently reviewed that and put it up to 110 and that was a factor of some land use changes and access points being closed off that enabled that. But there are works and things that have to be done. I think Tim touched on one of the key issues in Australia that differentiates us from Europe and even the United States and definitely the Northern Territory is roadside objects—it is very large trees, it is poles in metro. If you do make that mistake, and we know with fatigue or a speed crash you are more likely to go off to the left, panic and over-correct, go into an object or indeed end up in a head-on, it is those objects that they encounter which is actually where we are seeing the most dramatic injuries and fatalities.

Mr SMITH: In answering the police end of things, in the orbital network we have 36 cars every day. On day shift, afternoon shift we will load that road system in at peak times to get people to and from work. We have made some significant gains. What we are trying to do under Goal Seven and the State Plan from two years ago with the Transport Management Centre is to get everybody travelling at the posted speed limit and we will get you there. When we started before the command was restructured, and obviously the RTA was restructured, we were losing the F3 once or twice a day. The reality was it was more about the travel time for people so we have focused on that. We put those marked cars there not to run around hiding in a tree line and writing up a ticket but to visibly deter and to get everybody travelling at the posted limit.

We have improved some times. We have seen the M2 improve by six minutes. Every day is a battle. Driver behaviour on the F3 was very similar to a goat track but the reality is in the road system those cars are loaded in every day and every night to get people to and from work safely. We have seen some significant impacts. There were still 2,700 motorists last year realised that over 45 was very bad in and around the system and we will continue to give those people a time out.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: I understand the vertical and horizontal alignment issues that were raised. What is the effectiveness of the speed zone north of Brooklyn that is changed from 90 to 100, depending on weather conditions? Is that unique? How effective is it? What facts do you have in regard to its effectiveness in bad weather?

Mr WALKER: That is a reasonably unique speed limit. It is not something we do typically, it is based on the alignment and the curvature of the road and the fact that we know that we do get areas of wet weather in that space. We have looked at it. I do not have the exact figures in front of me to pass on what is the evaluation, so that is something I will take on notice.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: I am interested in looking at that.

Mr WALKER: My understanding of it is it has been reasonably effective.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: It is unique? I have never seen it anywhere else when I have travelled around Australia.

Ms PRENDERGAST: There is a fog one down on the F6. We have a fog warning so that you give that indication and it is something we are exploring for more of. The other issue too is even lower speed limits in high pedestrian areas. I know that Victoria has trialled this around lunchtime so you actually bring in zones in certain really high pedestrian areas, just variable for a couple of hours. That sort of thing about adapting to wet weather because you know what the F3 is like when it rains, potential skidding and the potential consequences of a crash so that, like the fog one we are looking at, we are looking at those and at broader applications because that is another way to manage risk. We know that in certain conditions even the prevailing speed limit is actually too high. So we actually try to manage it with those tools.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: Earlier you spoke about the 2009 decision when the demerit system became more lenient in the lower range speed offences, and became stricter in the higher range of speed offences. What are your thoughts about the current demerit system, the thresholds, and their appropriateness and effectiveness? What is the evidence of the impact of double demerits and the justifications of that aspect as well?

Mr REARDON: I will make some comments and then pass to Margaret and Stuart. In terms of policy settings, it is a balance between enforcement and rewards. For certain things the Government has basically asked us to put in a discount for safer driving so it is a positive thing for a licence holder with no infringements during five years, they will get a discount for safer driving. On the flipside, the Demerit Points Scheme is there. It has had several changes over the last few years—not just the low speed one; there has been a point added to the scheme as well. So, again, taking into account certain road users is what it should do. My personal view in terms of opening comments is that all we know is that in the last five years there has been evidence that behaviourally there is a social acceptance of low-level speeding, and that is something we need to continue targeting. So however the regime might look, and it may have been increasingly harmonised around 10 kilometre an hour increments et cetera, there is an issue that we need to keep on top of—that is, low-level speeding and the social acceptance of it. That is the key for us.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: And can I read into that that you are saying the demerit points which are on the lenient side might need to be reviewed if you are to target low-level speeding? Is that what you are alluding to?

Mr REARDON: No, I am basically saying that, over the last five years, if there is a coincidence here then so be it. But we need to look at a whole range of measures, not just demerit points. That is what I am saying. So I am thinking in terms of our education campaigns such as our Don't Rush campaign. If that is where we need to put in more effort then so be it. It is about having a Safe System approach. What we are about is the balance of education, enforcement and safer roads. It is not about having just one of those approaches; it is about having a balanced approach across the lot.

Ms PRENDERGAST: I will pick up on that point and then hand over to Mr Walker for some more detail. The Demerit Points Scheme is actually based on a national scheme. So it actually applies in every State, with slight variations. What we know is that there have been two significant changes to the scheme. Before 2009 there was a very high level of infringement for lower level speeding and the community were not satisfied. In a way, to actually get the message across to the community about the danger of low-level speeding the system needs to be fair. So what the 2009 changes really set out to do was to reinstate fairness in the system. It reduced demerit points for low-level speeding from three to one. It also crimped the bands from 15-kilometre bands to 10-kilometre bands. In 2010 there was again an increase in demerit points. So there was an extra point for professional drivers and for all drivers. So what we have actually seen over time is that the prevalence of low-level speeding has reduced from those pre-existing levels. What we also know is that the level of excessive speeding has reduced. Demerits act, albeit that they are a penalty, as a disincentive. They encourage people to do the right thing, and they have been quite successful at doing so.

We believe that the demerit points system is actually in the right space now. We believe, as Tim said, that we need to do more education and awareness. If we look at the alcohol journey, we can see that it is similar to what we are doing with speeding and distraction. We need the community to understand the risks. We need to message them effectively and to get them to acknowledge the risks before they will be prepared to change behaviour. That is the space we are in. We are at the beginning of the journey on this. The “Little Pinkie” campaign a few years ago raised awareness among youth. We are now trying to raise awareness amongst those middle-aged and working out how we can get that messaging out. So we think it is actually pretty right.

We have been focusing lately on repeat offenders. What we know is that that group is a larger risk—there is a group of people who will do this over and over again. As they get up near the top of their points there is a disincentive. That is why, together with the alcohol interlocks, we are introducing a system where if you lose all your demerit points twice in five years—and this was based on NRMA petitioning us with a very sensible piece of policy—then you will go to a traffic offender type program. So we will give you that direct education and try to change that behaviour. We have done survival analysis, and Mr Walker will talk further about this. When the normal driver gets a demerit point—or, indeed, three demerit points or whatever according to the offence—it actually does change their behaviour. Nearly 50 per cent will not offend again within the next five years. It is enough of a disincentive for the normal, compliant citizen to actually change their behaviour. But there is another group who will reoffend, and that is who we are targeting at the moment.

Mr WALKER: Going back to that demerit point change, in 2008-09 if you considered all the drivers in New South Wales they had accumulated two million demerit points amongst them. They now have about 600,000 points. So that change brought an incredible level of fairness to drivers for something that people did not perceive as a significant road safety risk. It has also allowed us to target high-level speeding and those kinds of issues. I would point to where the road toll is at the moment and where speed-related fatalities are. In 2009 there were about 207 speed-related fatalities, and last year it was down to about 140. Despite that change and this acceptability of low-level speeding we have been able to also introduce things along the way that have got us a really good road safety result at the same time. Some of that is around education and some of it is around the high-visibility enforcement approach we have taken. It has really had a strong road safety benefit. In terms of the thresholds—the 10-kilometre an hour bands—we set those up around road safety risks. So we know there are increments of risk associated with speeding. It doubles at five kilometres an hour in urban areas and at 10 kilometres an hour in rural areas. So we set the bands linked to risk. I think that makes a lot more sense to drivers as well.

Ms PRENDERGAST: On page 43 of our submission we actually detail how we fit into the national context. So you can actually see there that our low-level speeding demerit is akin to those of other States.

Mr SMITH: Obviously from a policing point of view Government provides me with the legislation, and certainly the Staysafe Committee, the Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety, gives me the tenor in which laws are to be applied. If we look at last year, we see that for speeding 10 kilometres over the speed limit we issued 158,000 infringement notices. Last year we only issued 29,616 infringement notices for speeding of less than 10 kilometres above the speed limit. If you read the 2009 legislation, the tenor and the intention behind it was about the difference between accidental and intentional speeding. Intentional means they have hit the 10 kilometre mark above the speed limit. You know they are going to be reckless. Government set the tenor with that particular change to the system in 2009. What we have learnt since, certainly in the heavy vehicle space, is that the difference between going 100 kilometres an hour and going 105 kilometres an hour is almost 20 metres of stopping distance. It goes hand-in-hand with speed tampering and bad brakes. So we go from being

able to stop in an emergency braking situation, for a good truck going 100 kilometres an hour, in about 88 metres. But that increases to 100 metres stopping distance if the truck is travelling at 105 kilometres an hour. So we know that even small incremental increases in speeding, certainly for heavy vehicles, are quite dangerous.

Mr REARDON: In terms of the lower levels of speeding that we talked about, it is about a range of factors. To help that out in terms of education, we put out for the community an intelligent speed adviser that they can pick up as an application on their phone. I think that has worked reasonably effectively—just to give it to a broader section of the community. Many people have had those in their cars for a long while, and that is fine. But there are a lot of people who have not. They now have free access to an app to actually give them those speed limits as they change around the network. The take-up of that has been reasonably strong.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: The other part of the question I asked was about the evidence around the impact of the double demerit points. Could you give us some information on that?

Ms PRENDERGAST: We have been tracking double demerits since they were introduced in 1998. They have been one of the most successful measures. We know that, since their introduction, there has been a 30 per cent reduction in fatal crashes on holiday weekends. It is quite compelling, it is well accepted and people do change their behaviour.

Mr SMITH: Although radio stations may never get correct the actual time when double demerits start. I have tried every holiday period to change the way we explain double demerits but, for some reason, radio stations seem to get that wrong.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: Where I come from they seem to get it fairly right in letting people know when the school zones are operational.

Mr SMITH: So far as gazetting goes, that is not a matter for the New South Wales Police Force. But we try to get out and tell the public that a double demerit period is in place the day before. We certainly give the public an indication of what we have found during that period so that people will learn that this is not the time to be engaging in any risky behaviour.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Mr Chair, can I ask a few quick questions?

CHAIR: I just have one quick question that directly arises.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: We are almost an hour into this hearing and we are still on Government questions.

CHAIR: We are working our way around the table. My question arises directly from that last answer. It was raised with me by my colleague, and I was looking for an opportunity to raise it during this inquiry. The relevant facts are that the last normal pupil day for any New South Wales public school last year was Wednesday 18 December. The person concerned was fined for doing 54 kilometres an hour in a 40-kilometre an hour school zone on the morning of Friday 20 December 2013. They thought it was not a school day. Friday 20 December was a gazetted school day, contrary to public understanding. Roads and Maritime Services decided that 20 December was also part of the Christmas holiday period and therefore that double demerit points applied. The person concerned therefore received not only a fine of \$319 for speeding in a school zone but also a double demerit point penalty of eight points. They consider that this is unjust. Is there any opportunity to review that?

Ms PRENDERGAST: Following on from the previous question in that vein, we advertise very heavily about double demerit periods and that school zones are in play. This Friday is a classic example—we are coming up to a long weekend and Friday is a day where double demerits apply and also a day where school zones are in operation. So we have live radio reads and radio messaging out there highlighting the fact that double demerits come in at midnight Thursday and that school zones will also be in place. We have gazetted school days based on education because there is no control over which school is in or out on any given day. Whilst the Department of Education and Communities largely has standard pupil-free days they are not actually standard across all schools. It is up to the discretion of the local school. For example, on December 20 last year there were schools in session. The first day back this year, straight after the Australia Day long weekend, all the Christian schools went back. We assume that we know when schools are in but we actually do not know

because it is up to the schools themselves. So we run with the gazetted school days. It makes it very clear and very consistent. It is well advertised—and flashing lights are working, when there are flashing lights there.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: I think the Chair is referring to the day when in fact no advertisements were placed.

Ms PRENDERGAST: That was actually Australia Day this year not in December last year.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: But it was still a bungle by Roads and Maritime Services.

CHAIR: The particular day I am talking about is 20 December last year.

Ms PRENDERGAST: Schools were in on that day. There were schools which still had activities on and which had children attending on that day. Schools were definitely in on the Thursday. I know, because my kids were there. You cannot assume that all schools are out because it is up to the schools themselves. What Mr Secord is referring to is the Australia Day weekend, where the wrong date went in. We actually did not apply fines for those days because of that miscommunication.

Mr REARDON: That issue was at the start of this calendar year not the end of last year.

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: Mr Reardon, a few minutes ago you mentioned the intelligent application that is available for phones. I certainly have it on my phone; it is a great thing. I guess the next step on from that is to adopt something that this Committee looked at quite a few years ago and recommended to Government—that is, the introduction of intelligent, satellite controlled cruise control systems. Members of this Committee actually travelled to Leeds a few years ago and drove cars equipped with this system. It seems like a very logical step now, with the improvements in technology and so on, that we should look at something like that as a design requirement for new cars.

Mr REARDON: What I can say is that we have a research and development group in the Centre for Road Safety. They look at a whole range of technology areas and safer vehicles. I will hand this question over to get a bit of expertise in responding to your actual question.

Ms PRENDERGAST: Obviously five years ago we trialled Intelligent Speed Adaptation (ISA) in the Illawarra and it was hugely successful. What we found was that, while the device was in the car, people did modify their behaviour. Once the device was taken out, the effect was not as great. There are three types of ISA. What we have is advisory, which is what we are doing with the speed adviser application. It beeps at you and warns you; it is an advisory application. There are two other levels: there is supportive, and at supportive what it will do is to actually start playing with your fuel and slowing the vehicle down; and then there is the limiting, which actually will cut the fuel off and slow your vehicle down. When we did the original trial we looked for suppliers of both the supporting and the limiting and found there were no suppliers available.

What we found with the Toyota fly by wire issue that has occurred internationally and the connection to brakes and other electronic controls is that it has not been adopted widely throughout the world. It still has work to do in terms of integration to the vehicle and the safety with other components. Of course, we are watching that space. Where we see the most potential for intelligent speed adaptation is in the repeat offender space. We have been looking for what we can do with repeat offenders for alcohol. We now obviously will have alcohol ignition interlocks for high-range and repeat offenders. There are people who continue to repeat speed. Victoria has recently trialled Intelligent Speed Adaptation and it has shown there are some impacts. It is something we are definitely looking at.

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: One of the issues that I find very annoying as a driver on freeways and motorways, and I am sure a lot of other drivers do also, is vehicles sitting in the right-hand lane sometimes at substantially less than the speed limit, but I have never seen police book a person at 95 kilometres an hour. Have you got any comments?

Mr REARDON: We certainly do. In the last couple of years when we introduced mobile phone changes, it led to a whole range of commentary around the top 10 misunderstood road rules and we have put a fair bit of effort into the top 10 misunderstood road rules, that being one of them. I will hand over to Marg to talk about that.

Ms PRENDERGAST: We call them the road hogs. They sit in the right-hand lane, go under the limit and they frustrate other drivers. The real risk is the risks that other drivers take to get around them as a result of the frustration. The road rule is quite simple. If the speed limit is 80 kilometres and above, so 90 kilometres, you must keep left unless overtaking. We have tried to communicate that rule. Stu will pick up that there is enforcement, but we are currently scoping Share the Road and we have isolated (a) the behaviours that are most annoying and (b) risky behaviour that causes the most crash risk. We will target this behaviour on the M1s and F6s because we know that that needs to be done. It really is an education piece because it creates dangerous behaviour. People will undercut on the left. The risks that that causes worries us, particularly to vulnerable users, a motorcyclist, or cyclist. It is an area that we will focus on.

Mr SMITH: I think the member wrote to us and asked for that. I have not got the exact figure before the Committee, but I can supply the figure. I know it is in the thousands. Operation Freeflow—when we think it is safe to do so, obviously we will carry out enforcement in the right-hand lane. There are some road systems where you get multiple splits. The Hume Highway splits into the M5 and we get motorists saying to us, "Which left do you want me to sit in?" There is some confusion around that, but it is in the thousands that we infringe, but so far as the safety of our own officers and safety of other motorists, we will not touch it in peak hour. We will enforce it outside that hour. It is one of the most fought infringements, from memory. I will seek to supply the Committee with the exact figure, but it is in the tens of thousands.

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: In your submission you outline the criteria used to determine whether or not a crash is considered to have involved speeding as a contributing factor, and you also say that differentiating between speeding is a contributing as opposed to causal factor. What is the difference between a contributing and a causal factor?

Mr SMITH: I will kick Marg into the chair to answer the question so far as the science and beyond and I will talk about it from the crash point of view.

Ms PRENDERGAST: We have included the definitions that we use. We have been using those definitions since 1986. We also included what definitions are used around the country. There are many other States that are in line with our definitions. Victoria does not code speed and yet they have the highest level of speed enforcement in the country. It is a consistent base. A lot of people ask questions, and it is maybe where you are coming from, about the distinction between excessive and inappropriate speed. Both are at play in the definition. I will give you one example. The road is 100 kilometres. There is a strong curve that has a 65 kilometre advisory. You will be coded "inappropriate speed" if you are in a crash because you have taken that corner at 85, 90. You are still below the posted speed, but you are well above the advisory speed and it is inappropriate for conditions. Excessive speed is still the most prevalent of all. We know that speed has been growing while other factors such as alcohol have been decreasing. We know that speed is the number one issue. We can all dance around the facts such as I am a really good driver and I can speed because I have never had a crash, but at the end of the day we will never beat the road toll unless we deal with speed.

Mr SMITH: From a crash investigation point of view, we may get a combination of things. We may find a mobile phone in a wheel well that has a message to a loved one, "I will be home soon." The driver might have been fatigued, but it is not until we plug into the airbag that we get the exact information of what was the speed at the time of the impact and what was the deceleration. We used to have to do it by chalking out the road and using mathematics. They were extensive calculations. These days, the Government has spent a considerable amount of money updating the technology in crashes so that we can plug into airbags and ECMs [Electronic Control Module] so that we can get that information. By force I think, Marg is doing an overview of the way that our crash data is recorded in our COP system to bring it up so it gives a better guide to the Centre for Road Safety as to what the factors are. Did the phone come first or did speed come first, or is speed the only reason why the collision occurred? It is the difference between we absolutely know 100 per cent speed was the issue or it might be a number of factors.

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: But the phone contributed?

Mr SMITH: Yes.

Ms PRENDERGAST: We separate by a system. We adopt contributing factors. Many crashes will have a potential for speed, fatigue and indeed impairment and distraction. We use the police data to code accordingly. We do not tag a lead cause. There will be multiple contributing factors. That indeed is the Safe

System approach. It is hard to pinpoint the precise cause. You can look at what contributed and you must look at that so that we can work out countermeasures to stop it happening next time.

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: I have one more question in relation to driver training. There are different road and driving conditions that young drivers might experience between urban areas and rural and regional areas. As you would appreciate in regional areas there are a lot of dirt roads, loose gravel and when they are wet they can be quite slippery and so on. Should young drivers be trained in skills to handle vehicles in emergency situations when they encounter those situations? In most cases people who have years of driving experience can cope more capably than someone on P-plates, particularly if they are coming out of the city to drive in regional areas.

Ms PRENDERGAST: I think what you are alluding to is advanced driver training and the whole skidpan thing. What we find and what the research shows is that it creates overconfidence in young drivers. If they can do it on the skidpan under supervision, they think they can do it on the road. We have focused on the most important thing for young drivers, which is on-road training, getting the log hours up in their local environment where they drive. We want the country kids to be trained on the highways and dirt rural roads, and we want the metro kids to be negotiating through cyclists, pedestrians and all of the issues that they face every day. That is how we do the Safer Drivers Course. We pared it back and looked at what crash risks were occurring in young driver crashes.

We developed a three-hour facilitated course, which focuses on low-risk driving strategies, how to read hazards and what risks are at play such as were you using a mobile phone, were you speeding and what impairment really does. The beauty of that is it is complemented by two hours on-the-road training. It is tailored to the local area in which it is being conducted. We have 250 providers now for Safer Drivers. The rural kids are getting driven around on those highways during that coaching and they are getting tips for what they need to practise for the rest of their log hours. In the city, the instructors are taking them out in school zones in the afternoons when there are kids about and old people are about doing their shopping. They are driving around in real conditions, which is helping them to work out how they need to manage the risks.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: I have one further question in relation to that. Learner drivers are limited to a speed limit of 80 and a red provisional driver to 90. If they are from the Central Coast and trying to adapt to the M1 conditions, a vehicle that is prohibited to an 80 kilometre speed is quite dangerous on a 110 kilometre road. Do you have a view on that?

Ms PRENDERGAST: We have changed it.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: What is it now?

Ms PRENDERGAST: After the Auditor-General looked at the young driver space, it is now 90 for a learner and a P1, and it goes up to 100 for P2. P1 is the constraint; you have all seen our graph. Learners are quite safe, but there is a huge spike for a P1 in the first six months, tailoring back over P2. We need to protect the young kids in their first year of driving.

Mr REARDON: In terms of developing that position, doing the Safer Drivers Course, the task force looked at this issue as well about the prevailing speed limits for L, P1, P2. It was not an internal discussion. There were a lot of stakeholders involved in reaching the position. The Auditor-General gave us a position, but we verified that through a whole range of stakeholders to reach that position. That is where we landed because, as Marg said, from L to Provisional 1, there still remains a spike in terms of casualties.

Mr SMITH: A lot of public debate occurred after the Lennon's collision because it was a young girl, learner driver, out doing her best with dad and it was the M1 argument. They were travelling at a very low speed, the truck came over a visionary rise so that the driver could not particularly see her and it came across, so all the debate happened over the speed at which she was learning to drive. There was a lot of debate amongst us about it. The issue is graduated speed. They cannot be learning the fast bit of life on their own. They need to learn going a bit faster with supervision. That is the whole reason beyond the Auditor-General's report.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: In your evidence you mentioned that the Centre for Road Safety was looking at variable zones during the lunchtime hours. Can you enlighten me on that?

Ms PRENDERGAST: It was something that we raised many years ago and we have been following the evaluation of Victoria's trial before we make any further decision. Victoria has been trialling it. We have been trying to work out how we can better protect vulnerable road users. Our premium treatment is that we have more than 150 40 kilometre zones in high pedestrian areas all day long such as Balmain, Surry Hills, soon to be the CBD, Parramatta, North Sydney, where we know there is a lot of activity, particularly when officers break for lunch.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Where does it operate in Victoria?

Ms PRENDERGAST: In particular, cafe and shopping strips.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Where would you see an application of that? We already have the CBD going down to 40.

Ms PRENDERGAST: That is why we thought if there were any other locations that did not warrant the full application of 40 you could consider that, but at the moment we have been rolling out 40 kilometres to protect those zones all day long. We also know that society is changing. It is not so much peaks and troughs. It is activity all day long. As we grow more, that will occur more. If there is an area that we know there is a particular spike in pedestrians, we could look at applying that.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Would you have it 40 kilometres from 11.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m.?

Ms PRENDERGAST: Potentially, if it has not been treated with a 40 kilometre limit. That is an option. The other option that people have put to us is particularly big pubs, "Do you do something outside pubs at closedown times?" It is tailoring it to where the need is. If you do not have to put the imposition of the lower speed limit because the activity is not there all day long, it is something we have in our toolkit.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Have the police provided any advice or do they have an interest in this area?

Mr SMITH: We have found, certainly during particular Wanderers games, that the pedestrian traffic wants to wander around on the roadway. We have a motorcycle response team that now works at Parramatta and we have found it to be an effective tool to get pedestrians off the road and get the road system back to order when those particular games are on. I think the jury is out but we certainly take advice from the Centre for Road Safety on that.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Do you have a situation where you can have variable mobile speed limits? For example, if there is a major sporting event, you can use mobile boards and say, "It is 30 in this area."

Ms PRENDERGAST: I have an event background, having done the Olympics. We do a permanent closedown for a major event. For example, in the CBD we will do a permanent closure of the road or tailor it for major events—clearways, limit traffic. That is how it works at Olympic Park. That is what this is about, that if there was a particular thing on, you could consider that.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Could you have speed limits for the lunch period in country centres such as Inverell, Armidale or something like that?

Ms PRENDERGAST: I believe that every urban centre on a main road must have the lower speed limit. You cannot control people to only come out between 11 and 1 in a country town. With an ageing population, they will be out and about all the time—early in the morning, late in the evening into the night. It is quite variable, so it really is only around where there is a known high activity at a particular time. The way that we have led it is actually the permanent application for those high pedestrian areas. It is something in the future that could be considered, but we are looking for Victoria's evaluation just to give us more guidance on whether this has been effective. And you would not want to proliferate that because the community needs certainty too. You would really only use it in a limited sense.

CHAIR: Effectively, applying the school zone philosophy to that thinking.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Have you done any research on or evaluation of the double demerit system since 1 April 2011?

Ms PRENDERGAST: Not specifically. We actually monitor every period. We could provide that on notice.

Mr SMITH: I think in the submission the last 86 periods have been looked at. I cannot tell you at what page.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: I would like Ms Prendergast to take that on notice.

Ms PRENDERGAST: We will take that on notice, but we monitor them every single time.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Could you provide on notice whether you have conducted any official reviews of the demerit system since 1 April 2011?

Ms PRENDERGAST: We log and officially review it after every single holiday weekend. We have a running log from the day it was introduced. We can basically slice and dice that data. We always monitor holiday periods.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: Page 49 of the submission contains some of that information.

Mr WALKER: The submission has exactly what Mr Smith said. It was 86 holiday periods, which is up to 2013 Easter.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: I was asking about recommendations to change the operation of the double demerit system, not the effectiveness.

Mr REARDON: We have been monitoring effectiveness, not recommendations.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: I meant recommendations on changing or altering the double demerit system. That was my question.

Ms PRENDERGAST: No, we have not considered that. We monitor and evaluate and look at every holiday period and they have been resoundingly successful in managing that huge risk when all the traffic descends.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Acting Assistant Commissioner, police officers and previous roads and police Ministers of both political persuasions have told me about a tolerance that is that if you are a highway patrol officer and you see someone speeding you allow 10 per cent plus one kilometre. If you are in a 50 zone you book people who are going 56 kilometres an hour. How do you balance that?

Mr SMITH: Designing the systems for 1,243 officers revolves around five speed zone periods here. In 2003 there was an extensive inquiry by New South Wales police into electronic enforcement equipment, being Lidar, radar and then check speed. We applied a self-enforced tolerance of three kilometres in relation to those devices even though the manufacturer says what it reads is what it says. But the car itself is calibrated to two kilometres at 120 kilometres an hour and three kilometres at 180. What the officers are instructed to do is subtract three kilometres from whatever the detected speed is.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: It has changed from the 10 per cent, it is now subtract three?

Mr SMITH: Yes. This is the unpublished—you know, there must be a tolerance out there according to auto magazines. It is not really. An inquiry happened into electronic enforcement devices and the service made a decision that it did not matter what the device was, we were just applying that rule across the board.

Ms PRENDERGAST: What Mr Smith is talking about is the tolerance around the particular device being used, not the general tolerance that exists on our road network.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: There is a 3 per cent—

Ms PRENDERGAST: Plus the existing tolerance, which has not changed in well over a decade.

Mr SMITH: Obviously, that is always in favour of the driver but the speed zones are set. Those are there and, obviously, the officer just subtracts that as part of that.

Ms PRENDERGAST: Just to be clear, there is a tolerance across the board. We never speak about it. We never discuss it. It has not changed in well over a decade. What Mr Smith is alluding to is particular devices that may have an extra tolerance just around the reliability of the device just to be sure from an evidentiary perspective.

Mr RYAN PARK: At the time the new Government came in there were reports that the now Deputy Premier made an approach to the Government about changing that tolerance. Did that happen, and what was the result of that approach?

Ms PRENDERGAST: I can answer that.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: No, the question was directed to—

CHAIR: The question can be answered by any witness.

Ms PRENDERGAST: Absolutely. What I can say is there was a belief that there had been a tolerance change by the previous Government. We made it very clear there had been no tolerance change in well over a decade if not longer, because that was alluding to the general tolerance.

Mr RYAN PARK: Just so I am clear, there was an approach made by the Deputy Premier in relation to this issue?

Ms PRENDERGAST: There was a public statement. We looked at it and we went back and confirmed that there had been no tolerance change.

Mr RYAN PARK: As a result of that approach there was no change made?

Ms PRENDERGAST: No change made whatsoever. In fact, there has been no change made for well over a decade in the general tolerance.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Would the Acting Assistant Commissioner like to add anything to that?

Mr SMITH: Only insofar as the breakdown last year, we did 119,641 by Lidar, 69,670 by radar and we did 27,174 estimated speeds. The total speeds were 215,000. The manufacturers of Lidar say what the device reads is what it reads. We applied that in 2003 as a result of a significant inquiry internally and that has stood the test of time. It remains there and the officers are trained and understand clearly what the rules of engagement are.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Mr Reardon, how are the new mobile camera operators who are booking people and issuing fines and incurring demerits paid?

Mr REARDON: The contract is delivered by Roads and Maritime Services [RMS]. They are paid for their hours.

Mr HEAD: That is correct. My understanding is they are paid on a set hourly rate.

Mr WALKER: I can confirm that. They are paid on a set hourly rate that has been established and set up in the contract prior to anything being signed. For example, a contractor has bid that—and this is an example—our services cost \$200 an hour. We have requested 7,000 enforcement hours a month so the multiplication is based on that.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: How do you explain the activity that has been publicised in the Wagga *Daily Advertiser* and on Channel 7 of the operator in Wagga? What is his motivation in hiding in the tall grass with a camera?

Mr REARDON: In terms of the speed camera strategy, I mentioned at the start for the four camera types the criteria are quite clear in what we said we would put out there. We doubled the size of the signs on red

light and speed cameras and we said we would put several signs in for mobile speed cameras. That is what every mobile speed camera should have: it should have advance warning twice and once after the camera. That is what our position is.

CHAIR: Can I make an observation that the operator could not be in the tall grass because the camera in the vehicle could not operate in that situation. That is a furphy and I do not think we need to pursue it.

Ms PRENDERGAST: We have very firm policy around the signage.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Why did the Government take action against the operator?

Ms PRENDERGAST: Basically, we have a policy where we do advance signing at 250 metres, again at 50 metres and one straight after. We have high reflective visibility. This Government is introducing increases to the visibility of speed cameras. We are currently rolling out. At the moment we are increasing from a base of 930 to 7,000 hours. As part of that we are training all of the operators. RMS in awarding that contract required extensive training, they have extensive procedures. The case in Wagga has been dealt with. There was corrective action taken by RMS, who spoke to the operator and disciplined them in respect to it being so imperative for the integrity of our scheme.

Mobile speed cameras do make a difference. They are actually creating almost a deterrence across the network and they are placed at crash risk locations based on our criteria. It is really important for us and the integrity of the program to make sure that the operators are doing the right thing and complying with those guidelines. RMS will take corrective action if anything happens and if anything is reported, and they do.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Since the Wagga incident have other mobile operators been disciplined or spoken to by RMS?

Ms PRENDERGAST: Not that I am aware of.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Can you please check and come back to us with an answer if you find that they have? In mid-May the Government announced there would be 20 new red light speed cameras. They will be at Auburn, Bexley, Blacktown, Burwood, Castle Hill, Darlinghurst, Eastwood, Epping, Ermington, Lane Cove North, Maroubra Junction, Merrylands West, North Sydney, Oakhurst, Parklea, Richmond, Sydney, Waitara, Woolloomooloo and Yagoona. Where are the next ones being rolled out?

Ms PRENDERGAST: We always publish and announce exactly where the cameras are going to be rolled out.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: When will the next ones be rolled out?

Ms PRENDERGAST: We are currently planning for the next batch of red light cameras. There are 126 red light speed cameras out there now. There is another 20 being constructed. We are currently doing the site selection for the further ones. What I need to add and what is a critical point is that it is actually rolling out a little slower than we anticipated. That is because we come up with the locations with the highest crash risk. We work together with RMS and we are identifying what are the intersections that have the highest crash risk, where there are the most fatalities and injuries. Then RMS go away and scope up whether the camera is the right option or are there other alternative works that could be done at those locations short of putting a camera in such as light phasing, et cetera.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: You are not answering my question. I am mindful of time. You said "further ones". How many more and when will they be announced?

Ms PRENDERGAST: We are currently doing site selection for the next batch.

Mr REARDON: The Government is committed to the rollout in the speed camera strategy. We batch them and we have recently announced the latest batch. We are working on it and we are working on the rest.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: There were 20 in mid-May. When will the next batch—

CHAIR: That is not strictly speaking the subject of the inquiry.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: It is. It is demerits and it is the very last point. I checked before the proceedings. It relates to demerits.

Ms PRENDERGAST: We are currently doing site selection.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: You cannot tell me you do not know. He said there is a program. How many more are coming up?

Ms PRENDERGAST: Basically, we come up with a list of the next 40 or 50 risk sites. What is happening is RMS is actually looking at each of those sites. A lot of them are actually getting discounted and it is found we do not need a camera; we can do light phasing, we can look at the right-hand turn or other measures to address the crash risk. Then the ones for which there are no other alternative works become the next batch. We will announce them as soon as they are ready. We have committed to actually roll out 200, as was committed to in 2010, by the end of 2015. I may add that with the current red light speed cameras what we are seeing is a phenomenal level of red light running. At present 60 per cent of infringements through red light speed cameras is red light running, which is the most dangerous behaviour and has the potential to wipe out a pedestrian, a cyclist or T-bone a car.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: That is at the existing locations?

Ms PRENDERGAST: Yes. That is what we are finding as we roll out new ones. The predominant behaviour is red light running as opposed to speeding.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: You said 200 by the end of 2015. Is that 200 more or 180 more?

Ms PRENDERGAST: No. We are up to 126 now and we are rolling out another 20. If we do the maths that is 146 so there would be 54 more to roll out. Those 54 will roll out if crash risks at intersections deem that number to be the correct number.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Does the Minister have any input into the location or approval of those 54 cameras?

Ms PRENDERGAST: No, they are selected based on the criteria in the speed camera strategy, which actually includes community input.

CHAIR: That was covered in the submission.

Ms PRENDERGAST: There was one example of community input, for example, where North Ryde Public School after a tragic crash on Lane Cove Road really highlighted the risk. Then what we do is validate that there is an issue. The issue at that location was a phenomenal amount of red light running. It was way above the normal average and it warranted, based on the crashes that had occurred and the prevalence of red light running, that we needed to do something.

Mr REARDON: To be clear, it is based on the criteria that are in the Speed Camera Strategy and we would be happy to furnish copies to the Committee.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: There will be 54 more cameras?

Ms PRENDERGAST: Potentially, yes.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: The numbers are 126 red light speed cameras, 108 fixed cameras, 24 point-to-point cameras and 7,000 hours of mobile speed cameras. Is there any advice on 13 demerit points being increased, decreased or changed because of all the technology that is now in place?

Ms PRENDERGAST: No, what we know is the premium level of enforcement for speed comes from New South Wales Police. Cameras play a supporting role. The Speed Camera Strategy clearly articulates the role of different cameras to address different risks.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: I take it from that statement that high-profile policing is better than electronic surveillance.

Ms PRENDERGAST: No, it is complementary.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: But you said that earlier.

Ms PRENDERGAST: No, I said the speed cameras are to support high-visibility policing. What I can tell you is it is going to be very difficult for high visibility policing from an occupational health and safety perspective to have policemen at an intersection that we know is bad. Camera technology is far better. The level of cameras that we have out is far less than the other States.

CHAIR: Mr Secord, you would be aware that your Government introduced those for those same reasons. If you had read the submission you would find—

The Hon. WALT SECORD: You have now been in government for coming up to four years. It is time to stop looking in the rear-view mirror and start looking forward.

CHAIR: They were introduced for the very reasons you are now questioning.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: I can ask any question.

CHAIR: But you are being selective with the dates. Please proceed with your questions before I have to hand over to Mr Ryan Park.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Chair, you are entering your fourth year and you are seeking another four years.

Ms PRENDERGAST: What I can add is that at those 126 locations that have red light speed cameras there were 3,998 crashes, 2,540 injuries and 13 fatalities. We are placing them, based on criteria and strategy, and we have one sole agenda, that is, to reduce injuries and deaths at those locations.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: And they are effective?

Ms PRENDERGAST: They are.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: I cannot find on a Google search or any technological searches on speed cameras known as TraffiStar S392M. But the Governor gave approval to a request from the roads Minister for those cameras and it appeared on 20 March in the *Government Gazette* but they have not been covered in the media and information has not been given about them. Would you please explain these cameras and tell us how they differ from previous cameras?

Mr WALKER: Without being exactly familiar with the particular TraffiStar model—

The Hon. WALT SECORD: If you like I will give you a copy—

Ms PRENDERGAST: There is no need. We are actually aware of what you are talking about and there is an evolution of technology.

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: Point of order: The Hon. Walt Secord is continually interrupting the witnesses when they are trying to answer questions. Would you please call him to order?

CHAIR: Yes.

Mr WALKER: I can say that camera technology evolves so we have red light speed cameras that are currently out in housings around the State, or fixed speed cameras or whatever they might be, and each of those needs to be approved under various Acts, for instance, the Road Transport Act. If we want to look at a new piece of camera, or a new advance in a camera, or something like that, or just when a contractor comes in and says, "I have made a slight change to my particular camera device", it will need to go through that approval

process. So it is not saying there is a new type of camera out on the road, it might just be a new model of red light speed camera but we are doing due diligences through the legislation to have it approved.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: This is the approval of a new camera. You said you knew about this camera. How does it differ from previous cameras?

Ms PRENDERGAST: It is just a new model of a digital camera. We have moved from wet film to digital and, as Evan said, different providers will have slightly different models out as technology advances. They may just have a little bit more accuracy, a bit more reliability, who knows? They may just have better vision. As technology evolves we gazette it and make it public.

CHAIR: Indeed, and it would relate to the questions you were asked earlier about point-to-point, they are being evaluated so that you were advocating those and they supply the information.

Mr RYAN PARK: I think all of us would see that aerial speed enforcement is a failed program. It is now giving only two infringements, if that, a week. I cannot find in my research that the program is effective. I am assuming that men and women of the Police Force would prefer to have those resources on the road, given that we have talked about today detection being about high visibility and there is nothing highly visible about aerial police enforcement. When will this program be scrapped?

Mr SMITH: Aerial enforcement was in place prior to the restructure of Traffic and Highway Patrol Command. There was a visible deterrence so far as individuals driving on a road system—

Mr RYAN PARK: Markings—

Mr SMITH: Markings, nice signs, and the numbers were never ever huge so far as the type of speeding that this kind of enforcement is suited for, which is over 45 kilometres. We were seeing a lot of that activity prior to the restructure. When we restructured, arising out of Goal Seven and our State Plan, we then focused on putting a high visibility presence in the same area that aerial enforcement took place. We basically took out those over 45 kilometre speeds which took the old aerial enforcement quite a bit of time in the air tracking the vehicles, a stop that happens up the road when it is safe to do so. We are now more effective because 36 cars sit on a motorway and another 120 cars sit on those highway systems where there was aerial enforcement.

We have recently reviewed it and provided advice to our executive that we think it is now a secondary enforcement strategy to high visibility policing by marked police cars in the same area. We think it is more effective and the advice we have certainly from point-to-point and those systems is that there is a downturn in excessive speed. We now have an asset there that is pretty much replacing it.

Mr RYAN PARK: It is basically going?

Mr SMITH: Yes. Is it taking a backward step, yes, it is. It is on its way but we class it still as a secondary enforcement. We still, here in double demerit points this weekend included, advertise about it and the plane will be up.

CHAIR: Just as an observation, Assistant Commissioner, it was introduced in 1986 because I remember it on the Great Western Highway being well advertised at that time.

Mr SMITH: A very long time ago.

Ms PRENDERGAST: And then it got reintroduced in 2010.

Mr RYAN PARK: Yes, we introduced it for some stupid reason.

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: That is why you are in Opposition.

Mr RYAN PARK: It could be the case.

Mr SMITH: It is a secondary to high visibility policing and we now have 416 ANPR [Automatic Numberplate Recognition] cars which are highly visible and highly effective as a network rather than relying on a plane and five stopping cars.

Mr RYAN PARK: We have approximately eight speed zones: 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, 100 and 110. I know that at one stage the Government was keen to eliminate the 70 and 90 kilometres an hour speed zones which I thought had some merit and was something that should be pursued, given that in our own electorates and certainly mine where we have large commuter populations, and I imagine it is the same for my friends on the Central Coast, that changes in speed zones are often what confuses people. That idea did not seem to go anywhere. Why is that the case?

Ms PRENDERGAST: At the end of 2011 when we reviewed the speed zone guidelines we said exactly that. We have a desire. The community needs more consistency. We do want to rationalise. We recommended looking at 70s and 90s. Since that time a couple have been removed, however, we have been spending the past year on the very map that enables Speed Adviser to work, which is enabled by a system called Speed Link. Speed Link records all of the speed zones through New South Wales. We happen to be the only State in the country that has an up-to-date map. We have invested heavily in that map. We now have it if someone puts a speed zone sign in after review or a change, that work order will feed back into the system to ensure it is always up to date and that is what is enabling Speed Adviser.

In the past year we have used that to actually identify areas on the network that have the strongest variability and that have the 70s and 90s and different speed zone changes. The next chunk of work to do is we are looking at how we can rationalise that on a route perspective based on that variability. We look to where the most variability is, where the 70s and 90s are and there will be a more active program of reviewing those locations just to get some better consistency.

Mr RYAN PARK: Do you think the 70 and 90 speed zones can be eliminated and replaced with either a 60, 80 or 100 speed zone? I believe they are not in any other country or perhaps not in any other State, but I stand to be corrected, but in your expert opinion do we need 70 and 90 speed zones?

Mr WALKER: I will start with that. In speed zone reviews we have to consider the individual circumstances of the road. Someone took a decision at a time that 70 and 90 speed zones were appropriate for a location so I do not think we can ever make a carte blanche statement that we could just remove 70s and 90s without looking at the individual speed limit to see whether it was appropriate for that length of road. We would want to consider the crash history of that location, all the various issues that Ms Prendergast talked about in terms of vertical and horizontal alignment, access and types of road users. I do not think you can make a carte blanche statement like that though I think 70s and 90s are definitely a place to look at if you want to consider variability.

Ms PRENDERGAST: It may be that they go up or down: it would have to be based on that crash risk.

Mr RYAN PARK: It is not automatic for them to be increased. This is not about changing speed it is about eliminating two zones that I am not 100 per cent sure from my research in a previous role actually work very well.

Ms PRENDERGAST: We think there will be some locations that do warrant it but we think that they are the targets for us to further rationalise and that is exactly where we are at now. Now that we can gauge the variability that we are seeing on the network, we can actually target the areas with the highest variability and progressively implement those speed reviews in collaboration with Roads and Maritime Services.

Mr RYAN PARK: Mr Head, you talked about the 600 reviews that have been conducted and I stand to be corrected but I think the worst 100 were published. Have the subsequent reviews been published?

Mr REARDON: The first one we did with the Safer Roads website was very high profile to get the process started. There are the subsequent ones from Roads and Maritime Services so I just want to clarify that.

Ms PRENDERGAST: There is also email notification. The Safer Roads website still exists, you can still log your concerns and we will review those concerns but, more importantly, there is a database where people can actually register to get email notification of speed changes. We will advertise. We will send out emails ahead of the speed zone changes and there is local advertising.

Mr HEAD: I was just going to add to those points and say, yes, we publicise each one of those individually as part of a comprehensive community update that rolls out in conjunction.

Mr RYAN PARK: The 600?

Mr HEAD: Of the 600, yes, so they have all been reported on individually so there is a communications package that will go with each one. From a collective perspective I do not have available right now the information which says exactly what the outcomes of those were suffice to say that the vast majority have either involved a reduction or remain as is at this point of time.

Mr RYAN PARK: When was the last time reviews were done in a particular area?

Mr HEAD: In terms of reporting? We are conducting them all the time.

Mr RYAN PARK: Are they ongoing?

Mr HEAD: They are ongoing.

Mr RYAN PARK: They do not stop?

Mr HEAD: There are usually several hundred every year that are being processed.

Mr RYAN PARK: How long will it be until everywhere has been reviewed?

Mr HEAD: It is a continual rolling package and where we are getting changes in circumstances within the road environment or within building developments. One of the things that we are seeing, for instance, is where we are getting significantly new residential development occurring on the fringes of the city and certainly on the Central Coast and moving south from the city that is leading us to do a number of speed zone reviews in those areas to take account of changing circumstances. There could be new entries onto roads, lots more pedestrian and cycle activities. That is a cause for a number of them to be reviewed.

It is not so much a case of whether we will review every single road; if there has not been a significant change in circumstance often it may be a lesser review than if we have a far more substantial change occurring within that area. Some of the work that we have been doing with the Centre for Road Safety is about understanding that variability, where customers have some views around that variability, where we think there may be changed circumstances in terms of safety and trying to look at what would be the most beneficial way to undertake reviews from here on in.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Earlier in the year the Minister made reference to the Centre for Road Safety looking at "a metre matters" by the Amy Gillett Foundation. What recommendations are you making in that area from the examination of the Queensland law and other representations? What demerits would apply to that?

Ms PRENDERGAST: Two Mondays ago we released the Cycling Safety Action Plan. We actually got ahead of the game. As soon as we saw an increase in the deaths of cyclists last year we joined up with the Amy Gillett Foundation and developed with it and sponsored the development of the Two Way Street Campaign. That has seen a massive billboard campaign, radio messaging and, of course, it evolved into the release of the Drive and Ride Rules in February. That is really important. The Two Way Street message is very important. We are selling that a metre does a matter, you know, that you need to give cyclists the space they need for their own safety. We are also doing the road rules themselves and about cyclists needing to comply with road rules.

In terms of introducing the "metre matters" legislation, there are two concerns from our perspective. First, the enforceability—how does a driver actually judge a metre? There is talk that there are other measurements but those measurements are not usually lateral or of a small distance, it is three seconds ahead or, indeed, it is 50 metres et cetera behind a longer vehicle or whatever. Second, we are also really worried about the unintended consequences of the legislation insofar as it actually invites people to cross double lines. Double centre lines are only put in place where there is a really strong risk. The way we are treating it is leading with

education, really supporting the metre matters message, balancing it with we need cyclists to be a little bit more compliant—the small minority who are not compliant.

More importantly, we are monitoring the Queensland trial, as are all the other States, to look at whether it is safe, whether it is changing the culture and if it is we will definitely consider it. But we need to look at how the Queensland trial—we actually went to the Australian Road Rules Maintenance Group in December last year, and all the other States were with us, with the exception of Queensland and one other State, which were advocating the legislated rule. The other States were very worried about the enforceability, the unintended consequences of the double centre line, and want to watch Queensland. Early indications are quite positive from Queensland. So over the next year we will be watching this space, trying to embed the two-way street message and change the culture because cycling is growing and we need to protect them. We need drivers to look out for them and we need riders to ride more predictably and do the right thing. Again, we are at the start of the journey and we are focusing a lot of effort in that space.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Do you have a timetable in mind to recommend to the Minister?

Ms PRENDERGAST: Effectively you would look—Queensland commenced on 7 April. You would need at least a year or two years to evaluate the evidence. The last thing we want to do is introduce something like this and then start seeing head-ons that may not necessarily have happened on country roads.

Mr REARDON: I understand the trial is two years. We will have interim reports back through the national processes. The key for us is about—their evaluation on compliance is definitely the two-way street, so we are doing education—

The Hon. WALT SECORD: So you are going education rather than Queensland?

Mr REARDON: We are at the moment. So where they are going on enforcement and their trial, we will also be looking at the two-way program. It is not just about car drivers or about cyclists. It is about their behaviour between each other.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: I can read from what you are saying, Ms Prendergast, that it looks like you are leaning against it?

Ms PRENDERGAST: No, not leaning either way. I want to see the outcomes. We are leading with education. We acknowledge there is an issue out there and a culture to be changed. We need to protect cyclists better. A metre does matter, and we are sending that message strongly. We will watch the trial. If there are no unintended consequences and enforceability does not prove to be an issue, we will definitely consider it.

Mr RYAN PARK: In terms of the number of speed infringements issued, I understand that for the first time recently the number issued by cameras has overtaken the number issued by police. Is that a concern? What do you think that is a result of?

Mr SMITH: I think partly we have to apply the tools where they are meant to. Certainly, through the strategic road safety group, of which Ms Prendergast is a member, as is Paul Endycott from RMS, we talk about this stuff all the time, about broadly putting strategies in place so that the roadside cameras need to plug holes where highway cars cannot police due to safety. Highway patrol units will take out the higher end speeding, the at-risk individuals. They are geared for that. Those people need to have a roadside sit because they are risky and they are dangerous. With cameras, as we were talking about before, the red light camera system, which also measures speed, we might have to put two cars there to do that job: the stopping car, a secondary car and an observer.

It is just more effective broadly road safety business where we are getting better at it and those cameras, to me it is not a concern that one is in front of the other. What I need to make sure is that, as with the hoon laws which were introduced, those risky drivers are taken out effectively, quickly and given a time on the sideline because they potentially will kill someone. Unauthorised drivers, the research says it. So we are in the right place we need to be, and I guess the camera system is where it should be in so far as policing zones that we cannot traditionally suit a highway officer. These days we have all sorts of occupational health and safety rules about guide rails and where they can go. We try to make sure broadly every road system has strategies on it for speed.

CHAIR: I turn briefly to strategies to improve speed limit compliance. The submission outlines that in July 2012 the Government introduced the “Fair Go for Safer Drivers” initiative that recognised and responded to community concerns and calls for New South Wales motorists to be rewarded for safe driving. As we know, the initiative provides a 50 per cent discount on licence renewal fees for drivers who hold New South Wales unrestricted licences and who maintain a driving record with no relevant offences for a five-year period before the renewal date. How has that been advertised? How has it been accepted by the public? Is there an opportunity to consider professional drivers receiving an additional demerit point instead of a reduction in cost?

Mr REARDON: In terms of the safer driving discount, I mentioned previously that our broader policy in road safety is about both carrot and stick. It is not all about enforcement; it is about education and providing a reward for good drivers. When that came into place we expected reasonably strong take-up, and I think as of April 2014, since introduction, there would be over 500,000 drivers in New South Wales who have had that discount applied to them since that time. So it is quite significant in terms of take-up. People approach Roads and Maritime Services and now Service NSW as well, and that is where the discount is effected. That process works reasonably efficiently.

In terms of things that we have to consider now it is the Government's recent announcement around a 10-year licence as part of the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal recommendations, so we are considering how those two things work together. We will work that through, but it has been a very effective program in terms of its implementation and rollout to date. In terms of how we take that forward, we will continue to monitor numbers. The last comment about demerits, we are not considering anything further in that space but happy to consider any comments the Committee wishes to make.

CHAIR: There is one aspect that would apply to professional drivers, and obviously there has been consideration for that extra point allowance for them. I am wondering whether that again would be part of a strategy long term that could be considered as part of this current approach.

Mr REARDON: In terms of the three points to one point in terms of demerit points and what is the area for 13 points right at this point in time, I was asked the question previously about personal views on it. We just need to keep maintaining the balance on those matters, so Committee recommendations in that regard I will leave to the Committee basically.

Ms PRENDERGAST: I would like to add quickly that a carrot is good to balance the stick. You do not need to advertise the licencing discount. It is automatic when you apply for your licence renewal. It will automatically be channelled to you.

CHAIR: Evidence provided to the Committee suggests scope to adjust the driver licence renewal process to make it more similar to the graduated driver licensing scheme. Has a more stringent process for licence renewals been considered by Transport for New South Wales? Do you think it would improve driver compliance with speed limits? It came from a different submission.

Mr REARDON: Can I just clarify the more stringent for full licences?

CHAIR: They are aligning it to the graduated driver licensing system. In other words, it would be a time reduction effectively for your licence renewal in the same way as the graduated licence system operates. Clearly, it is designed to achieve in some ways the same as the demerit point system but the suggestion was there so I wanted to get a response from you.

Mr REARDON: Is this around a renewal or where I no longer have my licence as a full licence and we are re-applying for the licence?

CHAIR: Correct.

Ms PRENDERGAST: That is the repeat offenders space that we talked about before. So effectively that will only affect a repeat offender. We are looking at a whole range of measures, the loss of demerit points, the need to do a traffic offender program. I alluded before we are looking at repeat speed offences and what we can do further. It is really the repeat area that we need to target to get some road safety gains.

CHAIR: It would be very similar to that.

Mr REARDON: To answer your question, there is a lot of work happening around repeat offenders and habitual traffic offenders et cetera. So then again it is about targeting those specific behaviours as opposed to across the board. In those repeat offender areas there is a lot of work going into that.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: Do you have any experience of self-explaining roads? Do you have any opinions on those and their effectiveness?

Ms PRENDERGAST: A self-explaining road has a lot of infrastructure in place to explain it. It has only been applied in Europe so far. We need to acknowledge there are cultural differences between Australia and Europe in terms of acceptance and what that is. We believe in the 40K for high pedestrian areas. We know they are very effective in school zones. Not only has the Auditor-General shown they have been a resounding success; so, too, has Staysafe itself when you examined this issue a couple of years ago. Testament to that is the fact that within school zones, a 40K area, over the last decade there have been three deaths. That is amazing, given the level of activity and intensity in those zones.

We know that at school zone times there have been another 10 deaths over the last decade. But I think one of the major testaments—albeit we did have a bad week two weeks ago, not all of that was in school zone, I may add—is that last year there were 111 injuries of under 16s in school zone times, not necessarily in school zones. That is testament to the controls in place and the level of intensity of not only the speed zone itself, the flashing lights at over a third of schools, soon to be all schools by the end of next year, all of the different measures we do from school crossing supervisors, fluorescent signage, all those layers are helping us improve that safety. We are comfortable with the 40K based on the data.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: In regard to the comments earlier on the red lights, I note that in the report and just for the record, on page 64 in 2012 when the size of the program was 106, a 30 per cent reduction in casualties at those locations with red lights. Has that been consistent since then?

Mr WALKER: Yes.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: That reduction in casualties at those red lights. So the effectiveness is quite substantial.

Mr WALKER: That is right. We review those; every year there is an annual speed camera review. So there was a 2013 review, there has been the 2012 review and they have shown a consistent reduction in casualties.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: But further information would be beneficial because it is all out of date from 2012.

Mr WALKER: There will be another annual review being conducted—

Ms PRENDERGAST: Well, 2013 reviewed 2012, so later in August when we publish we will look at that one.

Mr RYAN PARK: It is a year behind.

Mr WALKER: That is not too far away.

Ms PRENDERGAST: But we are monitoring that closely.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: I just wanted it on the record that the reduction is identified with the red light cameras.

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: I go back to the issue of the variable speed on the M1 and the F6. We see those signs on some of the other motorways as well, the M5 and the M7 also have them, the lit signs. Is there any justification for having a wider range of variable speed zones on a whole range of different roads where it can better reflect the conditions at the time?

Ms PRENDERGAST: At the moment and where it has been applied to date is where the risk has been shown, particularly with wet weather or fog down south. That is how it has been applied to date.

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: So on the M1, for example—the F3 as we formerly knew it—you made mention of the fact that it can be a very dangerous road when there is heavy rain occurring but for the majority of that road the speed limit remains at 110.

Ms PRENDERGAST: The variable section is where we know the crashes occur in the wet.

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: Even in wet weather.

Ms PRENDERGAST: Yes. We track all of that in temporal terms and align it with the weather to examine that. But that is the constant job for us, to keep evaluating, to keep looking and to keep addressing those risks, together with RMS.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: In Europe there is a requirement that if there is a breakdown you have to pull out these little fluorescent triangles and put them in front and behind your vehicle. You have to do it safely if you are on a major intersection. Has the Centre for Road Safety given the Minister any advice or opinion on that?

Ms PRENDERGAST: Absolutely. After the tragic crash at Mittagong we released the breakdown safety strategy in September 2012. It contained a series of actions. We are quite proud of that. There was a gap in that space that we are seriously addressing. One of those actions was to explore retaining the European fit because it is mandatory there for the triangles and the warning systems, and even to advocate vests. What we have done to date is approach the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries and we will not stop. We want those to not be despecified from European vehicles landing in this country, and we are actively working in that space, petitioning the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries to ensure that does not occur.

At the same time we are recommending to people that they carry triangles and a vest in their car. We have introduced the breakdown safety guide for their glove box and, more importantly, we have distributed four million of those breakdown guides with registration renewals. We had a major thing at the Easter Show where we gave out vests last year. This year we showed our "Slow down, give us space" video. We are very active in this space and we will not stop until there is an acceptance of those triangles and that they are not despecified from European vehicles.

Mr RYAN PARK: A matter that my constituents raise with me is that you sometimes see on major freeways such as the F6 police cars hidden behind things in terms of detection but they question, if it is about high visibility—see it and slow down—why are the police cars hidden? What is the approach or reason why police take that approach?

Mr SMITH: I drove through Wollongong and found a particular car parked in a particular place and I took action straight away. We have that discussion all the time.

Mr RYAN PARK: It is a question that arises in a large commuter belt: they are meant to be highly visible but they are tucked away.

Mr SMITH: I think the zebra stripes on them just about make it impossible to camouflage.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: Unless they are facing you, the new models do not have any markings on the bonnet.

Mr SMITH: There is a business end and there is a road safety end of the vehicle. Obviously every motorist driving past a high visibility car will see whatever the road safety education program is. We do audits, particularly in the holiday periods, and we send the inspectors out on the road. The Centre for Road Safety audit our tasking and if we are found to be lacking in that regard there is a penalty that comes our way. I found a particular car where you exactly remarked and that was resolved that day and it gets resolved every time I drive past that bloke.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: You also talked about the safety of the officers and there have been incidents where police officers have put themselves at risk. They must remain safe as well. We lost an officer on the Central Coast.

Mr SMITH: We have been the subject of extensive prosecution as a result of operating on a dual carriageway where it is split and we have strategies where they use a Lidar out the window and we have to make it safe for them but we want the public to see them. The strategy was clear. I take your point.

Mr RYAN PARK: The intent is that you should see them, they should not be hiding but you cannot control every person.

Mr SMITH: The main thing is that we have an open line to the community now with the Facebook site and Inspector Brooks behind me sits there diligently at night responding to them. When it is parked incorrectly these days I am informed very quickly.

CHAIR: I thank the members from Transport for NSW and NSW Police for their attendance, thank you for appearing before the Committee.

(The witnesses withdrew)

(Short adjournment)

RAPHAEL GRZEBIETA, Professor of Road Safety, Transport and Road Safety Research, University of NSW, and

LORI MOOREN, Senior Research Fellow, Transport and Road Safety Research, University of NSW, affirmed and examined:

CHAIR: Thank you for appearing before the Committee today. Welcome back Professor. Welcome Ms Mooren. I draw your attention to the fact that your evidence is given under parliamentary privilege and you are protected from legal or administrative action that might otherwise result in relation to the information that you provide. I should also point out that any deliberate misleading of the Committee may constitute contempt of the Parliament and an offence under the Parliamentary Evidence Act 1901. Time is always limited at these hearings and the Committee may wish to send you some additional questions in writing, the replies to which will form part of your evidence and be made public. Would you be happy to provide a written reply to any further questions?

Professor GRZEBIETA: Certainly.

CHAIR: Before we proceed with any of those questions would you like to make a brief opening statement?

Professor GRZEBIETA: I think we have pretty much covered what we wanted to say in terms of the submission. The highlight of the submission are our recommendations at the end that the New South Wales zoning guidelines are revised to be consistent with the Safe System approach. In other words, all references that imply that other objectives can be more important than safety; safety should be the primary concern in those guidelines. It should include a fuller explanation of serious and fatal injury risk associated with impact speeds and implications for speed limits for differing road functions; remove images or model photos that are inconsistent with a Safe System practice; include a section on road hierarchies and functional delineation; and include a section on self-explaining roads using successful international evidence based models of practice. I will leave it at that unless you have something else to add, Ms Mooren.

Ms MOOREN: We were concentrating on the speed zoning side of things. We did not get the connection about the demerit points. We are happy to talk about both of those subjects.

CHAIR: I am sure that is something the Committee will probe. The submission indicates that there is a general lack of understanding of the safety implications of low level speeding. What do you consider needs to be done to address this lack of understanding?

Professor GRZEBIETA: We have been attempting over a number of years, in various places around Australia, to try and get that understanding through to the wider community. I think that people are not aware of how dangerous it is when you stand next to a vehicle that is travelling at 60 kilometres per hour: it is instant death. It is like standing on the precipice of a cliff and I do not think the general community understand that. We regularly see pedestrians taking risks around Sydney and in the suburbs. Those risks are pretty high. They are

not aware that if the person or driver in the vehicle suddenly had a heart attack or had to swerve for some reason they are effectively dead if the speed is anywhere above 50 kilometres per hour.

The problem is trying to reduce the speed limits from 50 as the default speed limit. I do not think we are mature enough as a country, politically speaking. European best practice countries are doing that now. I have just returned from Sweden where it is 30 kilometres per hour everywhere. I saw on the Polish SBS news last Saturday that they are heavily implementing 30 kilometres per hour zones. People are grumbling and are angry about it, but they are determined to start to save more lives. Poland had one of the worst figures in the OECD [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development] nations in terms of their track record. Australia is middle, probably more towards the better practising countries. For us to go further and start to have the returns we see in Sweden, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, eventually we are going to have to go to 30 in built-up pedestrian areas.

CHAIR: Exploring that a little further: You stated that lowering speed limits may be viewed unfavourably for mobility but the trade-off is an excessive increase in safety. How can mobility be increased while enhancing safety? Can it be done?

Ms MOOREN: I have some thoughts about that. One of the things we have in New South Wales is very misleading clues in the road environment as to how they should be used. We said in the submission that we should look at the New Zealand example of self-explaining roads projects. There are various ways that we can increase mobility. Obviously the best way is to develop the public transport infrastructure. We are seeing an increase in cycling, which is also good for health and environment. What they found in New Zealand is that when they redesigned the road environment they did see less traffic: so less motorised traffic, less congestion. There are ways to get people to shift modes.

Professor GRZEBIETA: It is noted in some literature that travelling at a speed of 90 kilometres per hour on a freeway for heavier vehicles appears to be the most efficient speed at which you can travel where you have appropriate mobility, you are saving on fuel costs, which is good environmentally, it lowers the stress levels, and you have a better perception-reaction time. I think we have a long way to go in terms of the mix of heavy vehicles with lighter vehicles with regard to speed limits but we do see it. We also see better traffic flow when the speeds are lower in urbanised areas and you have people all moving at the same time rather than bunching up as a result of pulling up at lights or trying to go faster. There have been studies overseas that have shown you do get better flow when you set the lower speed limits. That has been shown in the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK.

CHAIR: Looking at speed limits at either end of the current range, how would you most effectively set those speed limits? Your experience overseas would inform us. I would like a comment on the *Wheels* magazine advocacy of 130 kilometres per hour. As you would be well aware, last year a journalist travelled from Melbourne to Sydney very carefully slowing down for the speed cameras but not in the 110 kilometres per hour sections. What is your opinion of that approach? What is your opinion of the range at the upper level as opposed to the lower level that you have been talking about? Likewise, is there a more effective means of policing that through point-to-point or speed averaging cameras?

Professor GRZEBIETA: With regards to that particular gentleman travelling at 130 kilometres per hour: If you have the appropriate infrastructure, if you have got the roadside barriers, the runoff areas, and effectively what we call in the international road assessment program a five star road then you can raise your speed limits. If you have not got the appropriate safeguards if that person had a heart attack and veered off the road at 130 kilometres per hour and travelled across the wide median on the Hume Highway—where I presume he drove—there is no barrier and he will take out whoever he cuts across into in the opposing traffic. We have seen that happen. You need extremely wide clear zones on either side of the road to safeguard and reduce the speed of your vehicle to a level where it is survivable. Cars at the moment are designed for survivability at roughly a speed of 65 to 75 kilometres per hour for frontal impacts. If you are travelling at 130 instead of 110 you are requiring a lot more energy to reduce your speed to that level of survivability, which is about 75 kilometres per hour.

CHAIR: The other part of the question concerned speed averaging cameras.

Professor GRZEBIETA: The International Transport Forum at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development has published a number of guides. Those guides show that for every 5 per cent reduction in average speeds you will get roughly a 20 per cent reduction in fatalities. Now that has been proven.

That is actually in the national road safety strategy documentation. Figures for three separate example roads have been presented in that documentation where the speed limit was reduced from 110 kilometres an hour to 100 kilometres an hour, and there was that level of reduction in the number of deaths. That is because roads have not been appropriately designed for the higher speed. What you need to do is to have a median barrier anywhere on a road where you have single carriageway. In Sweden at the moment if a road does not have a median barrier then they are putting cameras in. They make people travel at the appropriate speed limit, and they have reduced it to 80 kilometres per hour. That is what they are targeting. Their attitude is "We will help you to travel at the correct speed limit". They are not overly enforcing; what they are saying is, "We will help you, as a community, to try to travel at the speed limit."

CHAIR: Are these speed advisory or penalty cameras?

Professor GRZEBIETA: These are penalty cameras. They are usually fixed cameras or point-to-point cameras. They will assist the community in trying to maintain the correct speed. Their attitude is not to get a stick out and belt their citizens over the head with it. What they are trying to do is to get their citizens to understand that higher speeds have certain crash consequences. So they are providing appropriate applications on iPhones to guide citizens and they are using speed adaptation systems to assist their citizens. They are providing cues on the road—for example, I have heard about how they are now painting tunnels with certain colours so that if you exceed the speed limit, the colour around you in the tunnel changes from yellow to red. We have to think of these innovative ways to get people to travel at safer speeds. There is well-established scientific evidence that if you raise the average speed limit of the fleet—from 80 kilometres an hour to 90 kilometres an hour or from 100 kilometres an hour to 110 kilometres an hour—on badly-designed roads then you will raise the number of fatalities by around 20 per cent.

Ms MOOREN: I would like to make a comment on the enforcement side of things. I think we have a huge challenge ahead of us to change the culture of speeding in this State, because people do have the expectation that going 10 kilometres over the speed is cool and they are not going to get booked for that. My feeling is that if you are setting laws and regulations then they are not worth the paper they are written on unless they are enforced. Victoria has gone the route of lowering enforcement tolerances. We know from the research that enforcement is the most effective tool we have in road safety. Why should people get away with exceeding the speed limit? It is not that hard to comply with the speed limit, and most people do comply with it. So I think we should use cameras or whatever other enforcement technologies we have available.

Mr RYAN PARK: In relation to the enforcement of speed limits in particular, we talked earlier today with another group about the various levels of enforcement at the moment and the penalty regime attached to it. Given that speeding remains the cause of about 40 per cent or so of all fatalities, what else do you think could be done to make the current enforcement and penalty regime, or the demerit system, more effective at reducing fatalities? I am just looking at those two elements. I accept that there are other elements to reducing fatalities. But if we are just looking at enforcement—and, in particular, the demerit system—then in your professional advice what would be a better model than the one we currently have? What changes could be made to the one we currently have?

Professor GRZEBIETA: For a start, I think we need a lot more advertising about the enforcement. I think the amount of advertising we have is significantly less than what we see in Victoria, for example. The tolerance on the limit should also be lowered. I think Victoria is leading the way in terms of enforcement. I think point-to-point definitely should be introduced on long-run roads.

Mr RYAN PARK: Do you mean for light vehicles?

Professor GRZEBIETA: I think it should be introduced for all vehicles. Who should be exempt from this? Even motorcyclists should not be exempt from this. I think all road users should comply with the speed limits. Point-to-point is much more efficient in terms of getting everyone to comply with an average speed that is within the speed limit. I mentioned earlier Sweden and their use of covert cameras. They have a different attitude. They do not feel that people should be belted over the head and criminalised. The issue of criminalisation is at play here. The whole idea here is to try to bring the community along with us. What we are hearing is that there is a minority group that are vocal and loud. The majority of New South Wales drivers and road users do not have demerit points and do not speed. We have seen concerns raised by communities in urban areas. They are concerned about speeding in their neighbourhood. I think we need to tap into that sort of community attitude that enough is enough. We do not want any more deaths or serious injuries. I think we need

to change the culture, and that is difficult. We have to overcome some of the messages we have seen from the shock jocks and in some of the press over many years.

Both Lori Mooren and I were involved in the *Media Watch* program which looked at a story by *A Current Affair* on Channel 9. They were totally irresponsible. They did this ad hoc experiment, which Jonathan Holmes said would make a year 12 student blush with embarrassment. It was just rubbish. There is this whole argument about revenue raising. Yes, cameras do provide a certain amount of funds to the Government in return for infringements. But we know that those infringements drop in certain areas. They drop quite rapidly. The Attorney General has carried out an inquiry into speed cameras and the whole issue of revenue raising. We are stuck in a rut with this whole issue. We have to try to somehow change the community culture. When you go above the speed limit—which has been set for engineering reasons, for Safe System approach reasons and for survivability reasons—then you start to reduce your perception and reaction times. The consequences are quite severe if you have a crash, particularly for yourself and for others around you, because obviously the police will charge you with culpable driving if there is a death. I think people are just not aware of some of these things that are going on and I think we need to educate them more about that.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: I take your point and your concern about the argument around revenue raising. But this Government has predicated a budget bottom line on that. So do you have any alternative ideas? I see Government members of the Committee laughing. But it is the case that the Government is putting new cameras in. They raised about \$79 million last year. So do you have any alternative ideas, and leaving the demerit points system in place, getting around the issue of revenue raising? Can you suggest any recommendations, ideas or alternative approaches?

CHAIR: I would also be interested in that because, as the member well knows, it is hypothecated to road safety. You indicated a need to increase education. So are the two related and how are they progressing?

Professor GRZEBIETA: I am going to raise a controversial issue. That statement is kind of interesting. We have had our core funding pulled out from underneath us. We are a road safety group and we have now lost that core funding. We survive now on other contracts—external contracts. If we are so serious about road safety in this State then why has that happened? No-one won the bid that came out for road safety research at the beginning of this year.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Can you expand on that? Are you talking about Federal funding?

Professor GRZEBIETA: No, I am talking about State funding.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: And you are the first person we invite to give evidence here. Can you explain this?

Professor GRZEBIETA: I will explain it to you. There was a tender process that a number of people—

Ms MOOREN: Maybe we should go back a step. I was with the Roads and Traffic Authority when we set up what was then called the Injury Risk Management Research Centre at the University of New South Wales. We got together with the Motor Accidents Authority of New South Wales and with the Ministry of Health because we wanted to get the data together and to have better quality research and analysis. So the three agencies cofunded the centre. We still got research grants and all that kind of thing. Then the Ministry for Health pulled out for a number of reasons. The Motor Accidents Authority then basically said to the RTA, "You are the ones who drive road safety so you decide what to do." We have got to the stage now where the RTA was our core funder. We changed our name to Transport and Road Safety Research for that reason. We are completely focused on road safety research. Recently the Government decided that they would go out to tender. You have to do that to test the waters and to see who are the best.

Professor GRZEBIETA: You have to do that, and we did not have a problem with that. We understand the importance of probity and all the rest of it. But no-one was awarded the tender.

CHAIR: We need to get back to the terms of reference for this inquiry so could you wrap up this response briefly, thank you.

Professor GRZEBIETA: Yes, sure. No-one was awarded the tender. So that means that the road safety researchers there are going to go into other fields—in other words, it will affect all of the information that you are trying to generate in terms of what are the best things to do in terms of road safety.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Are we talking about small contracts or large contracts? Are these multimillion-dollar contracts or \$20,000 contracts?

Professor GRZEBIETA: We are talking somewhere in the order of about three quarters of a million dollars.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: How many people do you have in your research institute or unit?

Professor GRZEBIETA: There are about 10 of us. There is another group at The George Institute for Global Health under Professor Rebecca Ivers as well. We are not talking about very serious money here in terms of providing the appropriate background group who will provide the information. For example, like we are doing right now with our submissions. That will disappear because of the lack of funding and the lack of contracts available. We were told that there were going to be contracts available, which all the various companies could compete for—for example, like engineering companies et cetera.

CHAIR: Nevertheless, we do have to get back on track.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Is anyone carrying out the research at the moment or is there just no research being done at all?

CHAIR: It was very obvious from your submission, Professor—which was very thorough, and we thank you for that—that you also used a lot of material from the New South Wales Centre for Road Safety. So obviously the answer is that there is research being undertaken.

Professor GRZEBIETA: Yes, but that independent research is starting to die down now.

CHAIR: We do need to get back on track. We will have to leave that discussion for another day, I am afraid to say. Are there any questions that relate to the terms of reference for this inquiry?

The Hon. WALT SECORD: I have a question on point-to-point cameras. There is strong opposition in the community to point-to-point cameras applying to light vehicles. How do you change the community's opinion and view on point-to-point cameras?

Professor GRZEBIETA: Does that mean the community wants to break the law?

The Hon. WALT SECORD: I am asking you.

Professor GRZEBIETA: Well, that is the response I think I would give back to the community. Does that mean that you want the opportunity to break the law? We have to have tolerance. Obviously there has to be a tolerance level of, say, five kilometres an hour. People make mistakes; we all make mistakes. But essentially there has to be some sort of response in terms of educating the community that if you do not break the law and if you travel at the appropriate speed then there is no problem with point-to-point cameras. We have 70 per cent of the community who do not have any demerit points.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: Would your response be the same on the installation of red light cameras?

Professor GRZEBIETA: Red light cameras are effective in preventing motorists running red lights. But they have a bit of a side effect in that they increase the number of rear-end crashes. So we end up with a lot more claims for whiplash. So there is a compromise that you have to reach in terms of how to do that effectively.

Ms MOOREN: I have a comment to make about the community acceptance of enforcement. Our experience over many years has been that whenever you introduce something new there is a reaction. But people get used to it. For example, people rebelled against the mandatory use of seatbelts and random breath testing. My view is that we just keep doing it until people get used to it. At the same time, we should make every effort to try to educate the community about the risks of speeding. Getting back to the issue of demerit points, I was

involved when the Roads and Traffic Authority first introduced the Double Demerit Points Scheme. We were actually surprised at how much community support there was almost immediately for the scheme.

What we were trying to do, and there is a funny story about how it was introduced but we do not have time for that today, was to send a strong message about the actual risks of speeding. So for all other offences we added one demerit point but for any speeding offence we doubled the demerits. We thought that that was a way to send a message that we were serious about it from a road safety perspective. We did not want to hurt people in their hip pocket but it was a very effective scheme. I think in the first holiday period we saw a 23 per cent reduction in fatalities. There was a lot of support for it. If that is the case then why apply it only to holiday periods? Why not send a message that speeding is a dangerous offence?

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Increasing demerit points for speeding is one of your recommendations.

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: Professor, could I go back to your comments about Sweden. You said that where there are no barriers between the opposing lanes of traffic the speed limit is 80 kilometres an hour. Is that correct?

Professor GRZEBIETA: Yes.

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: Would you say it is appropriate to have a similar rule that applies for Australian conditions, particularly on main intercity highways, given that Sweden is a country that is only 600 or 700 kilometres in length in total, which is approximately the distance between here and Dubbo?

Professor GRZEBIETA: Yes, I think it is appropriate. We have had the recommendation come to us from other noble road safety champions. Professor Jack McLean from South Australia did a thorough analysis of the rural areas around South Australia and concluded that if we reduce it to 80 kilometres an hour we would have a significant reduction in the fatalities and injuries. I have forgotten the numbers—it is in our documentation—but the risk of fatality or injury in rural crashes is much higher than in the urban environment. Similarly, Dr Soames Job, who was the previous head of the Centre for Road Safety, has the same recommendation. Professor Ian Johnston, the head of the Monash University Accident Research Centre has the same recommendation. We are not saying this because we are trying to mimic some other country's road safety. We see it as a serious problem. Road fatalities are the highest killer of young children—unintentional injury of 14 years or younger. It is one of the highest unintentional injury causal factors in the Australian population. It is something that we need to address. I am sure each and every one of us would have had a relative or a friend or someone we knew who was either killed or seriously injured. It is a disease. That is what we need to treat. That is one way of treating it in the rural area. If you want to drive at the higher speeds, you need to have the roads appropriately designed. Wide road barriers have worked very well in some of these environments.

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: Surely it comes back to what is enforceable and practical. If you consider somebody getting in a car in Sydney this morning and heading out for what arguably could be a day and a half or so drive to Broken Hill, for example, to sit on 80 kilometres an hour between Cobar and Wilcannia, or Wilcannia and Broken Hill would be like watching the grass grow. That is the reality of it. It becomes such a slow event that people simply will not abide by it.

Professor GRZEBIETA: Okay, and that is why we are suggesting that the roads need to be changed. We need to have rumble strips to wake people up because when they are driving along in the sunshine—

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: A lot of those roads have rumble strips on them, which is a very good thing.

Professor GRZEBIETA: Appropriately sealed shoulders. There is the Australian Road Assessment Program. I would suggest that we need to look at this very carefully. Probably you need to travel at 80 kilometres per hour on any roads that are below a certain star level until such time as they raise the engineering safety features on those roads.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: I would like to get your thoughts on the concept and practice of self-explaining roads. In your submission you talked about the approaches in the Netherlands, United Kingdom and New Zealand. Can you expand on the aspect of self-explaining roads? Could you also explain how you would see that approach implemented in New South Wales?

Professor GRZEBIETA: I might respond with a question to you. Would you sit at 60 or 50 kilometres an hour around the streets in the central business district?

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: I do not think I could get up to that speed at the moment.

Professor GRZEBIETA: That is right. Also, there are people around and there is narrowing of roads. I do not know if you have seen in certain shopping centres—

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: Shared areas?

Professor GRZEBIETA: Shared zones, yes. You have to be careful with that terminology. There is local area traffic calming systems where, as you noticed in one of the photographs, the trees are encroaching into the road space narrowing the road, so you feel as if you have to slow down when you are travelling on that road. You see pedestrians walking in areas that are close by, so you know if you go at a higher speed you pose a risk to them. There are different engineering features that we can introduce. Urban design plays a key role in all of this. If you want to travel at faster speeds, you have to separate those vehicles from the vulnerable road users such as cyclists and pedestrians.

Ms MOOREN: Looking at Sydney, we have very wide roads which are urban arterial, I suppose, but in the CBD—and I caused a stir recently in the *Herald*—there are more pedestrians; 90 per cent of the road users are pedestrians. We have not really changed our road environment to accommodate that new mix. We need to narrow the streets, change the light phasing, but make it look and feel like this is a built-up area, an area of a lot of pedestrian activity. I am not an engineer, so I cannot design it, but I have seen designs that suggest—I think we included some in the submission—

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: I saw some photos. You talked about the examples in New Zealand and you also talked about the international standards.

Professor GRZEBIETA: International Road Forum, which is the OECD special task group that look at novel ways of reducing speed in various urban areas. The other thing that we have to realise is that a car travelling with low beam in a city environment, unless the area is really well lit, will likely strike a pedestrian if they are travelling at the default speed limit of 50 kilometres an hour. You will not see the pedestrian. I have presented that in other evidence to other inquiries of the Staysafe Committee. That is an issue, particularly in suburban areas around shopping centres where you do not have adequate lighting. To put adequate lighting in is, of course, costly. That is another reason we need to drop the speed limit from 50 kilometres an hour to 30 kilometres an hour, so you have time to perceive, react and brake. At 50 kilometres per hour you will not have a chance of breaking in time.

Ms MOOREN: Also in the rural road environment there are some low-cost perceptual countermeasures so that when you are driving and there is a nice wide lane you feel very comfortable going fast because you have the room to move. Simple things such as narrowing the lane visually—

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: Putting a line down the side. That has been enacted in my area, which visibly slows the traffic down. You talked about Sydney and the built-up area. If you go back to scratch where you have the time and space to limit, that would be fine, but in the current climate what examples do you have from overseas about the self-explanatory roads that already exist?

Professor GRZEBIETA: We can provide the information and papers that discuss that. There are also guidelines for developing shopping centres and precincts where there are lots of pedestrians and cycling activity. The governing background tool of this is the Safe System approach and the survivability risk curves. That is what engineers should use to design the systems. In other words, try to stop vehicles getting up to various unsurvivable higher speeds. Roundabouts are a classic example of how you prevent an intersection crash at higher speeds, and when the two vehicles crash, they crash at a particular offset angle rather than a T-bone, reducing crash severity, so you provide a survivable environment. They are the sorts of things that we need to think about.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: You feel strongly about the 30 kilometre speed zones and I am assuming you are talking about a CBD area as opposed to a blanket suburban coverage?

Professor GRZEBIETA: Yes, where there is high pedestrian activity.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: We all know politically that is not something that is popular and you mentioned in your opening statements the maturity of the politics of this compared to some other countries. Are there peak periods for which you could have a variable speed limit introduced rather than a blanket 30 kilometre speed zone? What are your feelings on that and what would be the times that you would introduce it?

Professor GRZEBIETA: The unfortunate thing is that we see a lot of pedestrians being killed at night when there is not much traffic around and speeds tend to be higher, and particularly when you have pedestrians who are inebriated. So there is an issue there. Certainly it is worth looking at and exploring.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: The point is that a lot of the emphasis is always put on the driver, whereas pedestrians certainly have a certain responsibility in this area as well. Would you agree with that?

Professor GRZEBIETA: Absolutely. Pedestrians have been given quite a light approach to road safety. It is mutual responsibility. Personally, I would like to see a lot more enforcement and education targeted towards pedestrians in terms of their responsibility in saving themselves from being injured or killed.

Ms MOOREN: I saw a pedestrian being booked on the weekend on King and George.

Professor GRZEBIETA: For jaywalking?

Ms MOOREN: Yes.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: It is a touchy subject. I lost a cousin who was at a pub drinking. He decided not to drink-drive, but was hit by a car when walking home, and died. This Committee has received a number of submissions advocating speed limits based on the 85th percentile. Again, you have articulated your views on this. Can you elaborate for the Committee why you consider setting the speed limits based on the 85th percentile to be irresponsible and dangerous?

Ms MOOREN: For starters, people are poor judges of risk in the road environment. People feel comfortable driving at a certain speed and everyone else feels they should keep up with traffic or to prove they are a better driver, they should go faster than that. There is an underlying creeping up of speed. If you say, "Okay, what are people travelling at and let us just make that the speed limit", does not mean it is going to be a safe speed.

Professor GRZEBIETA: To add to that, if it is the 85th percentile then what about the 15 per cent that are travelling at the much higher speeds? When we are talking about fatalities and risks and crashes it is the extreme events that we tend to see. It is Reasons risk cheese model where all the risk holes line up in the Swiss cheese and then you wind up having an incident occurring and someone either gets killed or seriously injured. It is that sort of 15 per cent that are travelling at the higher speed. They have got less time to perceive, to react and to do something about avoiding the crash. That is why it is dangerous to set it at the 85th percentile because you are still allowing that the high risk 15 per cent of drivers to travel faster

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: Are we ever able to prevent that happening? It is like any normal distribution curve: there will always be a few at the other end of the spectrum who are going to speed no matter what.

Professor GRZEBIETA: Absolutely.

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: They are the people we should mostly be targeting, are they not?

Professor GRZEBIETA: We have written an article for the engineers that is going to appear shortly where we have looked at the risk. If you set the speed limit at 30 kilometres per hour then you assume there is going to be 15 per cent that are going to go up to about 36 or 37. If you look at the risk curve for pedestrian impact survivability you will get about a 40 per cent chance of the person struck being killed. Whereas if you set the speed limit at 50 and you assume there is 15 per cent that are going to be speeding, pedestrians are at a much higher fatality risk level where there is about a 90 to 95 per cent chance of them dying if struck. That is the issue here. You have got to provide a certain amount of safety redundancy here, a capacity or safety margin. That is why we should be setting limits at lower speeds.

CHAIR: Your submission makes the point that the demerit point system and threat of licence loss disproportionately affects people who need to drive for work. Do you think special consideration should be given to this category of driver? We know the Government has instituted a carrot approach—a reward to drivers with an unblemished record over five years at the licence renewal stage. Is there room for enticement for professional drivers to add another point as an allowance in the demerit system? They already have one more, as you know. I am looking for ways in which you would approach the demerit point system and your point about professional drivers.

Professor GRZEBIETA: I think people make mistakes. We accept that. That is the premise of the Safe System approach. I think we have to be compassionate here. When people do the wrong thing we should try to educate them. It is the Swedish philosophy: we are going to try to help you comply with the speed limit, comply with the driving rules. I think we should consider a situation where if you have been caught drink driving then we will put an interlock in your vehicle, as an example, or we will install an intelligent speed adaptation system; you cannot drive unless you have these systems there and it will be at your cost to put them in. Make it difficult. We should keep increasing that difficulty. As a society we have always got to give people second chances. We do that in the criminal system; we should be doing that likewise on the road system. It is worth considering.

CHAIR: Thank you for appearing before the Committee today. We appreciate your time and your submission.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

ALLAN GRAHAM PRYOR, National Liaison Officer, National Motorists Association of Australia, sworn and examined:

CHAIR: I draw your attention to the fact that your evidence is given under parliamentary privilege and you are protected from legal or administrative action that might otherwise result in relation to the information you provide. I also point out that any deliberate misleading of the Committee may constitute contempt of the Parliament and an offence under the Parliamentary Evidence Act 1901. Time is always limited at these hearings and the Committee may wish to send you some additional questions in writing, the replies to which will form part of your evidence and be made public. Would you be happy to provide a written reply to any further questions?

Mr PRYOR: Certainly.

CHAIR: Before we proceed with questions would you like to make a brief opening statement?

Mr PRYOR: The position of the National Motorists Association is that we are very concerned that there is an overemphasis on speed. The mere fact that this Committee is talking about that one singular issue concerns us greatly. One of the reasons we would suggest why the focus is on that is because it is something that is easy to measure with technology. The major cause of fatalities and serious injuries is actually inattention, but how do you measure inattention? There is no meter for it. Another one is fatigue. Again, how do you measure that? It is very hard to look at a person and say they are at about 80 per cent so they had better go and have a rest. You just cannot measure it.

CHAIR: The submission made some strong points in that regard. It says because crash data is not analysed effectively there are misleading claims that 42 per cent of fatal crashes are caused by speeding. You refer to the United Kingdom system where a distinction is made between speed as a causal factor versus speed as a contributing factor to crashes. Can you expand on your criticism of those claims about speed causation and crash data and how it could be improved in New South Wales?

Mr PRYOR: In New South Wales the definition of speeding is not "exceeding the speed limit". That was, in our view, created for the purpose of deception. To give you an example, previously if there was gravel on the road and a motorbike had an accident the police officer may make the decision that it was road conditions so they will put it down to that, whereas under the regime that they are working to now all that group of things are put down as speeding, which they are clearly not because the person was not exceeding the speed limit.

CHAIR: The submission also advocates the use of the 85th percentile method for setting speed. You heard reference to that in the previous questioning. Why do you believe this to be the most effective method for

determining speed limits? We have received evidence that the method is irresponsible, particularly as there is a phenomenon called "evolution of speed" where 85th percentile travel speeds tend to drift up over time. Will you comment on the determination and the proposition?

Mr PRYOR: I am sure those people are sincere but I believe that they are driven by their ideology. The 85th percentile is the internationally accepted method for setting speed limits and I would suggest that bureaucrats and other well-minded people in New South Wales are not clever enough to know better. Going back into the history of road research in the 1960s—1964 in particular—an Australian called Solomon did research in this area and it has been accepted internationally. The same research was done in the North American continent and that would suggest why they adopt that as the basis for setting speed limits. But, again, we have had people come into this country and this State and say, "We know better. Set the speed limits lower and keep setting them lower and it will reduce the injuries."

CHAIR: I might leave it to others on the Committee to explore the lower level speeds and the recent announcement of the intention to introduce 40 kilometre an hour zones in the central business district. I will ask you a question I have asked of other witnesses. It relates to the *Wheels* magazine sponsorship of a journalist who drove at an excessive speed according to the speed limits. He drove from Melbourne to Sydney at 130 kilometres an hour and "didn't die and didn't get booked". He slowed down for the dozen or so speed cameras and stuck to the speed limits except when in the 110 zones. What is your view of that and what is your view of point-to-point cameras in restricting drivers who might exceed speed limits over an extended period?

Mr DARREN WEBBER: We should point out that he did not make it back. Our friendly police informed us that an attempt was made to make the return journey and the police were able to stop that from happening.

Mr PRYOR: If I had been the editor of the magazine I would not have been encouraging people to do that. If a law is wrong then what you should do is try to work to change it, not deliberately break it just to prove that it is a farce. Point-to-point speed cameras have a purpose, but again we are coming back to focusing solely on speed as the single thing that kills people. I would like to explain further that there was research by the Monash University Accident Research Centre to try to prove that the Intelligent Speed Adaptation system would reduce road fatalities.

The research is quoted in this submission. It points out that if every vehicle in Australia was fitted with a device and the satellites in the sky could control the speed of every vehicle so they could not exceed the speed limit the maximum reduction in road fatalities would be 8 per cent. Think about it. Here is government-funded research and it is saying a maximum of 8 per cent but we have still got these people that were running the Roads and Traffic Authority previously, which is now Roads and Maritime Services, saying that more than 40 per cent of fatalities are caused by speeding—by our definition of speeding, not necessarily exceeding the speed limit.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: In your submission you describe the double demerit system as an abysmal failure. I do not hold that view but you are entitled to it. Can you elaborate on your criticism of the double demerit system?

Mr PRYOR: In the submission we have quoted Professor Alan Buckingham for his analysis.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Why do you believe the double demerit system is a failure?

Mr PRYOR: Because of the evidence that is there from his analysis. We have also quoted the statistics and what happened when it was introduced. For the two years before it was introduced the death rate per day, which is a terrible term to have to use—the number of people killed per day was 1.6. For the three years after the double demerits were introduced solely on speeding it went up to 1.82. That is an increase of over 13 per cent in fatalities at face value caused simply by focusing on speeding and double demerits. It did not work.

What then happened was the Government had enough sense to introduce double demerits on seatbelts and helmets if you are riding a bike. Fortunately, the figure came back down but it is still higher than the original figure before double demerits. That is a very simple numerical analysis that the National Motorists Association did but Professor Alan Buckingham was brought to Australia and his conclusion as I have quoted from his article was that it was of nil effect. The double demerits thing was of nil effect.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: You are maintaining that is a reclassification of categories putting in seatbelts and helmets.

Mr PRYOR: It does, because that was the only thing that changed.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: Would the view of your membership be that drivers are subject to more legislation and enforcement than a pedestrian and a cyclist sharing the same roadway?

Mr PRYOR: We would not have a view on that at all. All people should do their best to comply with the law.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: You were here when the previous witnesses suggested that they would like to see an expansion of education programs for pedestrians that are involved in motor accidents who do not respect the laws of the road and venture off onto the road. Is that something you would agree with?

Mr PRYOR: Yes. The best advertisements the government came out with for pedestrians were called "Watch Out Cars About". It basically is a matter of warning pedestrians of how physically strong a car is and how frail their body is. A particular vocal minority group did not like it and caused the government at the time to pull the plug on the advertisements. We would certainly encourage you to bring those advertisements out again and try to get the message across to pedestrians. It is said by others that 73 per cent of pedestrian fatalities are either partly or wholly due to the fault of the pedestrian. We need to get some educational process going to get that across. We were delighted about the publicity in January about the fact that pedestrians have right of way at intersections, which has been the case for a long time but people were not aware of it. Even now we are still taking a big risk if you cross the road at an intersection without looking to see if the cars are slowing down for you.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: One submission states that one of the most common excuses given in an accident is "I didn't look properly".

Mr PRYOR: It is not our statement but, yes, there are a lot of those types of things.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: In your submission you stated that you believed across the country the analysis of causation factors of crashes is not properly assessed. You then alluded to the fact that there is a better police system in the United Kingdom. Why do you believe the crash data is not analysed properly? What is the evidence base for that statement? What do you believe can be done to correctly collect crash data? Will you explain the United Kingdom system to which you referred and what can New South Wales learn from that system?

Mr PRYOR: I was here 10 years ago reporting to the Staysafe Committee and I was saying exactly the same thing then.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: I was not here then.

Mr PRYOR: I accept that. It is not a matter of having a go at you people and the Roads and Traffic Authority, now Roads and Maritime Services, at all but it is a matter of putting up that there is a much better way to analyse accidents rather than the very basic system that we have now. There is an attachment which shows the Committee the type of analysis that is possible. The data is structured that way and actually gets to a better understanding of the causes of crashes.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: Why is the United Kingdom police system a better analysis of the causes of crashes than the New South Wales system?

Mr PRYOR: It would take several days to go through and explain that. I am certainly not an expert on it. Michael Lane is and unfortunately he flew out of the country two days ago and that is why I am here by myself.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: Can you submit further information about the United Kingdom system?

Mr PRYOR: If the Roads and Maritime Services genuinely want to pursue it, Michael Lane and I would be very willing to spend time with their delegates, if that is what they would like to do. There is no single-sentence answer.

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: In your submission you state that penalties for traffic infringements are purely punitive and have no provision for rehabilitation for early release or for good behaviour, et cetera. How can the system be changed to overcome your comments?

Mr PRYOR: We have a licence renewal system which is much better with a reward for a five-year licence renewal at half price for five years of no demerits. I renewed mine in May and was grateful to pay only \$83 instead of \$166 and that is ideal. Again there is no clever system that I am going to be able to tell you off the cuff where you can do it better. I do not agree with what an earlier witness said that we give them three demerit points instead of fining them. What would be much better than fining people, particularly for low-range offences, is to require them to do an awareness course or a driver training course. What you really need to do is change the attitude of people. A training regime is a very good place to do that. Just sending somebody a fine through the mail, say, 10 days after a speed camera has clicked them does not relate to people. It really does not change their behaviour. They get annoyed, they pay the fine, they cop the demerits and someone may lose their licence but it really does not work like being pulled over by a police officer who says, "What do you think you are doing?"

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: Do you say there should be more of a carrot rather than a stick approach or do you need both?

Mr PRYOR: It would be better to have some reward. As we know a positive reward for behaviour is far more effective than a negative reward. Off the cuff I do not have any pet system that I would recommend for better drivers.

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: One of the recommendations in your submission is that the automatic demerit system be abolished in regard to the new offence of driving or riding without due consideration for other road users. Will you expand on that concept?

Mr PRYOR: The reason for that is to try to get people into some kind of training course to change their attitude. You can use the sledgehammer approach or you can put them off to the side with the message, "You need to think about what you are doing and attend this course. It will take some of your time, some of your money and by doing that we will permit you to continue driving on the roads." It is not telling them to keep on driving until you run out of money or run out of points.

Mr RYAN PARK: First, I thank you for the correspondence that you regularly send me, the Minister and now the new shadow Minister for Roads, the Hon. Walt Secord. It is always very informative and it is good to see someone engaging in an issue that is important in my own electorate. In the past you have raised with me concerns about the reliability of speed cameras. In particular, you have referred to overseas, for example, in California, where they have had to do massive reviews and changes as a result. Are you confident that the cameras in New South Wales are accurate? Is a regular review of them conducted?

Mr PRYOR: The message that technology speed camera companies put across is that they are scientifically infallible. I would prefer to talk about the Australian examples of false bookings. As quoted in the text of our submission, there were over 80,000 fines in Victoria that were refunded from 19 speed cameras that were faulty, incorrectly giving fines. The same thing has happened in other States. We have quoted South Australia where an internal audit found exactly the same thing. We would suggest they are not the perfect piece of equipment that manufacturers claim. You may not be aware that under the manuals of the manufacturers the cameras are only required to be calibrated once a year. The then RTA [Roads and Traffic Authority] and now RMS actually calibrate them once every six months, so they do it twice as often as the manuals say. The monthly check that they tell the public about is actually a lane alignment check so it simply ensures that the camera is lined up on that lane.

Mr RYAN PARK: I understand from my previous roles they calibrate the cameras twice a year. Are you aware, given bad experiences both overseas and in Australia, of any problems in relation to the cameras being used in New South Wales currently? Are the audits picking up significant things? If not, do you think that what is being audited or checked twice a year is what they should be checking? Do you think the audit is the best way to do these things?

Mr PRYOR: I would like to see it done much more frequently because when they find the camera is out of calibration the camera company does not write to the Government and say, "You had better refund the fines for the past three months because we have realised our camera was wrong." It is just hushed up.

Mr RYAN PARK: Are you kidding?

Mr PRYOR: Well, think about it; that has never ever happened. Quite often at the end of the six-month period when they do the six-monthly check they find it is out of calibration. I have actually read reports from the manufacturers' maintenance check-listing what was wrong with it.

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: For how long do those reports go back?

Mr PRYOR: It would be the property of the Government and the manufacturer, I do not know.

The Hon. RICK COLLESS: Some years?

Mr PRYOR: Certainly several years.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Do you have any examples that have been provided by your members where they have questioned what they believe to be the accuracy of a particular camera?

Mr PRYOR: The most obvious one in my area is the Balgownie Road, Balgownie camera. A group of local people were incensed that they had been booked when they had not been speeding. To give the Committee an example there was the local milk truck that was ticketed. That driver took his truck to a dynamometer testing station that proved it could not have possibly committed that offence. That person received the only letter of apology I have ever seen from the RTA.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: When was that?

Mr RYAN PARK: It was years ago.

Mr PRYOR: I cannot tell you the exact year but it was more than five years ago. It might have been 10 years ago.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: Technology has changed?

Mr PRYOR: No, it has not. They still use the same basic system inroad for detecting it. I realised afterwards what was the cause of the camera going off. What activates those piezometer loops on the road is a pulse, a wheel going over the road. In this particular case there was a large construction site nearby on which pole-driving was being used. Every time the pile driver went down the camera went off. Another example was that the RTA lollypop lady whose vehicle was parked at the side of the road, while she was doing her job on the pedestrian crossing, was ticketed to say she was speeding.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: Perhaps there needs to be some independent regulator—

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Are you calling for a speed camera ombudsman?

Mr DARREN WEBBER: Is that something that perhaps the Government should be looking into?

Mr PRYOR: I would certainly like to see an independent check on the cameras. I would like to see it when people like me or my wife write to the appropriate Minister pointing out that the camera is flashing when it obviously should not—and there is one at the intersection of O'Brien's Road and the Princes Highway—both with separate vehicles on separate days when there has been no other traffic I have seen a car coming through at less than 50 kilometres per hour that did not go through a red light because I was facing the red light stop. The camera has gone off and I have not been able to get them to come out to check the camera. They just write a letter back saying that it could have been this or could it have been that or it could have been something else. Why not send out the technicians to check that the camera is working properly?

Mr RYAN PARK: Mr Chair, for what it is worth, I think this is an area that we should look at. The point is that these cameras have been in place for a while. I am not convinced that after the checks are carried out they go back to the customer and say, "We had a problem." I am not making a political point; it happened in our days as well. This morning we heard that reliance is placed on them that these cameras are 100 per cent accurate all the time. Mr Pryor has sent me countless times examples of both in Australia and overseas where that is not so. I find it hard to believe that there are no problems in New South Wales. If it is a manufacturing problem—whether it is Reflex or whoever—I think we must have this problem. Chair, I think this is an area that is worth exploring.

CHAIR: It is related to the operation which can result in demerit points. Will you put that in writing so that the Committee can put that question to Transport for NSW?

Mr RYAN PARK: Yes. I am happy to liaise with Mr Pryor as well.

Mr PRYOR: One of the many communications I have sent to these two gentlemen is about the Reflex company that operates most of the cameras in New South Wales. Its company policy has been exposed in the United States where they have been charged with federal criminal charges for its policy of bribing officials both in the Government and in the police force.

CHAIR: As we well know, and the point has been made, this does occur in electronic areas. Unfortunately we frequently hear of situations where banks have had to revise their situations and refund customers so it would be no different to that, I imagine. It does need to be explored that there is a regime in place to check their operational efficiency.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: What is your opinion of the Minister's announcement of a 40 kilometre zone in Sydney's central business district? What is the view of your membership?

Mr PRYOR: The particular thing I do not think anybody has explained to the Committee is that it is quite common that if the speed limit is reduced artificially low that fatalities increase in the following two years.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: How is that?

Mr PRYOR: In the text of our submission we have pointed out the example in the Northern Territory where the people that have claimed they know better insisted that there be a speed limit on what were previously unlimited roads in the Northern Territory. I will give you some figures here if you like. In 2006 there were 42 fatalities in the Northern Territory. It introduced a 130 kilometre an hour speed limit and there were 57 fatalities the following year, which is a 35 per cent increase. In 2008 there were 75 fatalities which is a 73 per cent increase in fatalities. The people thought they were doing the right thing by following the advice. In this case and in many cases where the speed limit is set artificially low you will find what happens is their best intentions have not worked out the way they intended. You mentioned the 40 kilometre per hour zone. Interestingly, the number of fatalities in Melbourne, Brisbane and Adelaide went up when they introduced the 50 kilometre per hour zones in those cities. Nobody can explain why that did not happen in Sydney. We can only guess whether the public are more cynical; whatever the reason, it did not happen here.

CHAIR: To follow that, in your submission you state:

Similarly a limit set for conditions at one time of day is not relevant to safety at other times e.g. a High Pedestrian Activity zone may be relevant at 3.00pm but ... inappropriate at 3.00am as the risk factor is relatively minor.

We have heard suggestions that overseas—and it will be explored here—there may be contemplation of the introduction of variable speed zones. An example obviously exists already as the school zones. What would be your reaction to that, because it follows from that 40 kilometre an hour, because we are talking about the lower levels here?

Mr PRYOR: One of the things we have said in our submission about the school zones is that conceptually it has been badly introduced in New South Wales. You might not know they have a different system in the other States. A previous witness was talking earlier about the number of fatalities in the school zones in New South Wales and claimed it was successful because there had only been three in 10 years. The last time I looked it up there had been zero fatalities in South Australia, with their system which used to have a very low speed limit and flashing lights. But a motorist only has to slow down when children are present. That is just one example of a vastly different system that has been very effective. Again, you have been given advice from

people who I am sure are very sincere and think they are doing the right thing but there are better ways of doing it.

In particular, a speed limit sign is a soft barrier. In engineering we would call that a soft barrier because a driver may or may not obey the instruction, whereas a hard barrier is like a physical fence, separating the traffic from the pedestrians, in this case schoolchildren. So it would be better to have hard barriers. For example, if the school is on the main road with a 100K limit normally and you just put a 40K limit in during certain times of the day, that may or may not be effective. But if you fence off that entrance and make the children and parents use the side streets, where there is less flow of traffic and the traffic is flowing at lower speeds—

CHAIR: I am less interested in the school zones because the Committee conducted an inquiry on that specific topic earlier. But this variable, I used that as an example of a variable time of speed reduction so that is what I am interested in here.

Mr PRYOR: Again, the focus is on speed as though it will magically fix things. In Europe where there is a 130K limit, say, in France and it rains, then yes it goes down to 110 kilometres an hour and that is very sensible.

CHAIR: But that is primarily on tollways, remember.

Mr PRYOR: What you and I would call expressways—

CHAIR: Motorways but they are usually tollways as well, otherwise it is 100.

Mr PRYOR: There are plenty of examples of variable speed limits already. Mount Boyce, which is a truck weighing station in the Blue Mountains, is an example. It is simply another means of putting up the speed limit sign.

CHAIR: But at the lower level—I am following up on Mr Secord's inquiry—would you be in favour of that? Would you see a possibility of variable zones being applicable? You raised the issue of the responsibility falling back upon the driver to notice when people are around. That would be an interesting case in court to argue. How would you see it being introduced?

Mr PRYOR: I look at it from the other end. I look at it from the point of view of the fact that people's lives were not lost and people were not maimed. One of the things wrong with the 40K limit outside a school is what we are saying is that it is okay to permanently maim children or seriously injure them, rather than just kill them outright. I suggest that is not the way to look at it. What you should do is make the situation safe for children.

CHAIR: We are talking about CBD areas primarily. We have had other submissions advocating for a 30 kilometre an hour zone in those types of heavily congested areas. What is your view on that?

Mr PRYOR: I do not think it will make any difference. If it is a congested area the traffic cannot move quickly anyway, and I have already quoted examples of other cities in Australia where putting a low limit, an artificially low limit, in those first few years caused more people to die. I would not want to have that on my conscience. I think whatever reason the change in Sydney to 40K did not make any difference. I suggest that probably the same thing would happen with a 30K limit if it were introduced.

CHAIR: Thank you for your attendance today. We appreciate your submission.

(The witness withdrew)

(Luncheon adjournment)

REBECCA IVERS, Director, Injury Division, The George Institute for Global Health, and

PATRICIA CULLEN, PhD Student, Injury Division, The George Institute for Global Health, affirmed and examined:

CHAIR: Thank you for appearing before the Committee today. I draw your attention to the fact that your evidence is given under parliamentary privilege and you are protected from legal or administrative action that might otherwise result in relation to the information that you provide. I should also point out that any deliberate misleading of the Committee may constitute contempt of the Parliament and an offence under the Parliamentary Evidence Act 1901. Time is always limited at these hearings and the Committee may wish to send you some additional questions in writing, the replies to which will form part of your evidence and be made public. Would you be happy to provide a written reply to any further questions?

Ms IVERS: Yes.

Ms CULLEN: Yes.

CHAIR: Would you like to make a brief opening statement?

Ms IVERS: I will briefly go through the slides we have given you to give you background information. We are a road safety research group within The George Institute, which is a medical research institute, and we conduct a large amount of population-based road safety research. You will see on that list the number of things that we are doing including big trials of a motorcycle coaching program in Victoria. That is with 2,500 people. Another study is in New South Wales with 20,000 young drivers. There is a fair proportion of Aboriginal road safety research, heavy vehicle work, older drivers and we analyse crash and hospital data per various studies or contracts. We have a fair degree of expertise in road safety research.

When it comes to the terms of the inquiry I would like to go over a couple of things. First is the discussion about setting appropriate speed limits and the conditions under which speed limits are set. It does require consideration of a wide variety of factors including the safety rating of the road, lanes, volume of traffic and the traffic mix, safety of roadside sight lines and crash data for the road. Traditionally we have balanced out the speed limits on the road against mobility for those travelling in motorised vehicles. We are coming to a consensus. New South Wales has adopted the Safe System approach to road safety which prioritises safety over mobility and we are now starting to recognise that prioritising safety over mobility in the setting of speed limits is appropriate. That is particularly evident in Sydney at the moment with the rise in cycling fatalities and the increased conflicts we have between vulnerable road users and motorised vehicles in more densely populated urban settings.

We need to have a careful look at the way in which we set speeds and build roads in urban areas. That is a critical factor. We know speed is a really critical factor in most road crashes, whether or not it is designated as the main contributing factor. Clearly speed has a huge impact on the severity of the crash and the injuries and likelihood of death, irrespective of whether speed was the reason why the crash occurred. It is absolutely closely related to severity of injury and the likelihood of death: the laws of physics are fairly clear. There are clear guidelines for speed limits based around a Safe System approach and survivability of the crash. The data states 30 kilometres per hour for areas with likely pedestrian-car conflicts, but we generally have a 50 kilometre default speed limit in most urban areas in New South Wales, aside from very highly urbanised areas with high pedestrian traffic. You will see we are well out of the ballpark for that.

The data suggests 50 kilometres per hour for car to car side impacts, which are generally the kinds of crashes that occur at intersections. These speeds are about survivability of a crash. If you want people to actually survive crashes these are the speed limits you need to have for these kinds of conflicts. Data suggests 70 kilometres per hour for front-on collisions and that applies to unseparated roads in rural areas where we currently see the speed limit set at about 100 kilometres per hour. If you have a head-on collision and you are travelling at greater than 70 kilometres per hour the crash is more or less not survivable. One hundred kilometres per hour plus speed limits should only be put in place where there is no possibility of a front or a side-on crash such as highways and roads that have good clear separation from traffic in opposite directions.

For both rural and urban settings the speeds in Australia are higher than other OECD countries. We do have a high proportion of fatal crashes and serious injury in rural areas, mainly speed related. Seventy per cent of fatalities and 85 per cent of serious casualties are outside major cities and nearly 50 per cent of those rural road fatalities involve speed. As is evident from that previous slide, speeds on rural roads are set higher than the quality of road dictates from a safety perspective. If we want to impact on safety of roads in rural settings that is an area where we have not been able to shift fatalities and serious injuries at all over the last decade. We need to have a good look at speed. Given that we cannot afford to build high quality dual lane highways in all country areas speed is something we have to manage better.

Likewise, in urban settings a speed limit of 50 kilometres per hour is too high for most urban roads where we have possible pedestrian conflict. Looking at bringing the speeds down in urban settings towards 30 kilometres per hour is strongly recommended. We also need to look at the infrastructure to support vulnerable road users, including pedestrians and cyclists, and to force slower speeds not rely on signage and people adopting lower speeds voluntarily. We do need to put in chicanes and speed humps to force people into lower speeds in those densely populated urban settings. Speed in our country certainly is something that is accepted. We have a trade-off between safety and mobility. At a community level people seem to think that we have a right to speed and actually modifying people's behaviour in relation to speed is a difficult thing because most people do speed.

A driver's willingness to comply with legal speed limits is impacted by a complex range of issues. They need to understand the association between road trauma and speeding behaviour, but really at the end of the day we know the combination of having legislation and visible police enforcement, backed up by social marketing and mass education campaigns, is an effective way of modifying people's behaviours. We know that demerit systems are fundamentally an important part of that because the main trigger, main point of the enforcement is that people highly value their licence and the demerit point system allows the Government to reduce road trauma by threatening to take people's licences away from them if they engage in certain behaviours. Ms Cullen will talk briefly about the impact of demerit points in reducing speeding behaviour and road trauma.

Ms CULLEN: In terms of the countries that have a demerit point scheme road trauma has seen a 50 per cent reduction in relation to hospital admissions and surgeries. There has been an additional 15 to 20 per cent reduction in accidents, fatalities and injuries and a 30 per cent reduction in traffic violations and risky driving behaviours subsequent to the implementation of the demerit point scheme. In terms of the acceptability to the community of the demerit point scheme, which I know would be of great value to you as Ministers and shadow Ministers, the public generally accepts the demerit scheme quite readily.

Research that has looked at this has found that 75 per cent of people consider the demerit points an adequate deterrent to speeding. They also consider that speeding sanctions and the demerit point scheme are generally well regarded with most penalties either appropriate or too lenient. Further, the double demerit point scheme that is introduced over holiday periods is viewed quite favourably. In terms of the effectiveness of the demerit point scheme there were 26 studies that have been reported and of these seven studies showed effects that lasted beyond 12 months. They were largely from Spain and Italy where the demerit point scheme introduction was accompanied by mass media coverage. What this indicates is the effects of the demerit point scheme may diminish over time if the scheme is not accompanied by ongoing mass media education campaigns.

Finally, what we would like to point out is in order to increase the effectiveness of the demerit point scheme we have in New South Wales it is important that drivers recognise that there is a severe, swift and highly perceived risk of getting caught. In terms of doing that the demerit point scheme needs to be promoted to the public as an effective way of reducing speeding behaviour. In this way it needs to be supported by ongoing mass media coverage. Additionally, we feel that campaigns that dispel the myth of safe speeding and increase the visibility of enforcement may be more beneficial to modifying speeding behaviour than the demerit point scheme and sanctions alone.

Ms IVERS: There are a couple of other things to point out. There are a couple of things about the demerit point system that are critical to it being effective. One is that the punishment needs to be timely and of sufficient strength and certainty. There is one example in New South Wales where we have one demerit point incurred for less than 10 kilometres per hour speeding offence, which is not in keeping with an effective system. It gives the message that because the penalty is so low, low-level speeding is okay. Drivers need to be caught 13 times before they are at risk of losing their licence. They are not essentially being punished each time they are caught until they have done it 13 times. That is likely to increase the likelihood of speeding.

We recommend at least three demerit points for this level of speeding with increasing penalties for subsequent offences. When it comes to speeding at a community level very small differences in the average speed across the community are effective at reducing the crash rate overall. You might regard low-level speeding as almost irrelevant but it does have an impact on the average speed at a community level and it is important. Finally, the way in which we hand out demerit points is important, particularly for speed. One of the things I would like to mention is the way in which speed is enforced. There is a high degree of community acceptance and people like to see police on the roads and police with radars collecting people. We have a problem with the cries of "revenue raising".

What is a cost-effective and critical way of managing speed is visible police enforcement. Mass media supporting visible police enforcement is critical because the community needs to have the perception that if they speed they will be caught. Having that visible police presence is important, particularly with mass media campaigns, there is no denying that. However, it is expensive. It needs to be supplemented with speed cameras. Having unmarked speed cameras at random locations is an effective way of monitoring speed. If people can anticipate speed cameras they will modify their speed at that point in time. It has no impact on their speeding behaviour the rest of the time. There is a halo effect around the speed camera; they will slow down where they see the signs, but they will speed up later on.

What is most effective is unmarked speed cameras and point-to-point cameras rolled out across the State. Point-to-point speed cameras are effective and it means that everyone is more likely to drive at the speed limit all of the time because they know that if they speed they will be picked up. It comes into the point about certainty of enforcement; if they speed they will be picked up. We know that is a very effective way of changing people's behaviour. There needs to be strong political leadership to mandate that kind of approach. If we want to address speed particularly in country areas where speeding and high rates of fatalities are a huge issue, and there are no other cost-effective ways to address it, we need to get serious about looking at point-to-point cameras on those long stretches of road.

CHAIR: You are covering some of the areas that would have been questions arising from the Committee. I might just start by mentioning that in your submission and again today you indicated that speed limits in Australia are higher than in OECD countries, particularly in urban areas. The Committee has received other submissions stating that speed limits in Australia compared to other countries are too low. I am presuming they are usually at the top end, mind you. Can you comment on that proposition? With other witnesses I have remarked upon the case last year where *Wheels* magazine sponsored a journalist to drive at speeds of up to 130 kilometres an hour from Melbourne to Sydney, avoiding speed cameras where they were known. Can you build a response to that into your answer as well, because that refers to the issue of point-to-point speed cameras?

Ms IVERS: Absolutely, and it really does depend on which country you are looking at for speed limits. I think you could pick out any country and say we are higher or lower than them in our speed limits. When you look at speed limits for urban settings you see that many European countries are now coming back to 30 or 40 kilometre an hour speed zones in densely populated areas. Clearly our cities are not always laid out like that—they are much larger and sprawling. Certainly there is an opportunity to actually reduce our speed limits in those village locations that we have scattered throughout our capital cities in a way that is actually consistent with that. I must refer you back to those principles of the Safe System and speed limits that are appropriate if you want people to actually survive crashes. That is certainly going to be more of an issue in our urban areas.

In country areas I think we need to look at the context of the Australian landscape—knowing that people travel long distances and often in poor-quality cars. We have fatigue and a whole range of other issues that come into play. Speed is critical in all of those things, and keeping speeds lower rather than higher is going to be important in reducing fatalities on country roads. As I said, I think having point-to-point cameras to enforce lower speeds is a very effective way of actually changing behaviour. There is really no other alternative which is effective in enforcing speed limits on rural roads. I think it is something that we really need to be brave about.

CHAIR: What else needs to be changed to enhance road safety?

Ms IVERS: If we want to actually improve our road safety then clearly we need good quality roads. There is only so much money that you can spend on roads. The trade-off is always that you cannot spend money on other things, and building roads is very expensive. You can modify roads in a cheaper way. Having blackspot programs, having good signage on curves in country areas, and having adequate lighting and good sight lines is critical. Separating traffic with wire rope barriers and other barriers on the road is appropriate. Clearly having a safer fleet is important and that is going to make a difference in years to come. Reducing driver distraction and having adequate enforcement are important. Then there are all those other things that we know make a difference—like wearing seatbelts, targeting drink-driving and so on. From a road safety perspective, actually managing alcohol supply and alcohol advertising is important. That is a whole other issue which we probably do not need to go into here today, but it is absolutely something that should be on our agenda if we want to influence road safety outcomes. Speed is actually one of the critical factors that we need to address.

Mr RYAN PARK: Thank you for coming all the way from the beautiful electorate of Keira. We are hearing from so many smart people today from my electorate. I want to talk about enforcement, and this has been a common issue mentioned across the board this morning. Are you aware of other strategies around the globe or within our own country to better enforce speed limits? At the moment the Government is going down a path that is centred around using technology such as cameras et cetera. In your view is there a better approach? You touched on point-to-point cameras. Is there a better approach to enforcement than what we are currently doing to reduce speeding? Or is what we are doing working by combining police enforcement with a greater focus on speed cameras?

Ms IVERS: I do not think there is a better way of doing it. It is always challenging to get the combination of police and speed cameras right. In a tough fiscal environment obviously moving towards speed cameras is good. To keep speeding levels down it is important to have a visible police presence and mass media campaigns supporting the speed cameras and all the other systems. You cannot get away from that, because the way it works is that people need to perceive that they will be caught if they speed. So if they never see the police or they never receive a speeding fine then they do not perceive that they will be caught and so they continue to speed. Point-to-point cameras are fantastic because people do get caught if they are speeding. So you do get that certainty.

I suppose you could speculate that if you had point-to-point cameras everywhere then the need for supporting mass media campaigns and a visible police presence might be reduced. But having a police presence is important for other things like seatbelt wearing and drink-driving so I do not suppose will ever move away from that. Point-to-point cameras and other technological approaches are important. I suppose we can further reduce speeding by having a fleet of advanced cars, by having speed limiters set in cars and by talking to Roads and Maritime Services about speed limits. But we are a long way off that at the moment.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: You made some comments earlier about low-level speeding and you said that you would like to see the demerit system move to three points.

Ms IVERS: Yes, that is right.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Do you think there would possibly be a reluctance by police officers around that and that people would challenge police officers much more? Do you think a police officer would be more willing to fine someone for low-level speeding if they are giving them one demerit point? But if in fact someone is facing a harsher penalty for low-level speeding, such as three demerit points, then they would argue with the police officer and the police officer may actually let them off? I would argue the point if I was going to lose three or four demerit points.

Ms IVERS: I think that is probably the case. But you probably would not speed again so it would change your behaviour as well. I think it is about community tolerance. With those things, you bring them in and then once people have been caught and they have paid the fine their behaviour changes and their attitude will follow. Actually getting the behaviour change is the most important thing. If we put in place three demerit points then your behaviour will change. You would be much less likely to speed at a low level if you knew that you were going to get three demerit points and you had been picked up for it a couple of times. If you get picked up twice then you have earned six demerit points and you are starting to be at risk of losing your licence. Your behaviour will change. As I said, these things do require leadership. It does require a strong Government to say, "We think tackling this kind of speeding is important. We want to change people's behaviour and we are prepared to actually cop a bit of flak for it."

The Hon. WALT SECORD: We took evidence earlier from Transport and Road Safety Research from the University of New South Wales. They made remarks that there were no research grants this year. Has that impacted upon you? He said there was a tender from Transport for New South Wales to do the kind of research work that you are actually doing. Have you had a similar experience?

Ms IVERS: We work closely with the Centre for Road Safety. We are funded from the Centre for Road Safety for a number of different projects. I think we are working with them on research that is of mutual interest. So, no, that has not been the case with us.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: I want to go back to a comment you made at the very start where you talked about modification of the culture of speeding. You talked about enforcement, police presence, demerit points, speed cameras and the perception that you are going to get caught. Beyond that, what are your thoughts and

your ideas in regard to culture and changing the culture around speeding? You spoke before about the halo effect—that is, if a driver is coming up to a speed camera then they slow down; but straight after that they speed up again. How do we change that culture? Do you have any thoughts on that? Do you have any analysis or information from overseas about how we go about changing the culture of speeding?

Ms IVERS: That is the million-dollar question, really.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: That is why I asked it. We were hoping that you would have the answer.

Ms IVERS: No, I do not have the answer; but I can comment. It really comes back to what I said before—when you change behaviour then attitude follows. We need to go back and look at drink-driving and seatbelt laws and the history around that. We had a problem with that in the community. We had high rates of death and injury. So we said, "Because of this problem we are going to put something in place." When those laws came in around random breath testing and seatbelt wearing there was a huge outcry from the community and from other agencies. They said, "Our way of life is changing and everything is going to fall apart." We went ahead and put the laws in place. We enforced them strongly and people got picked up. Over time that behaviour came to be seen as criminal behaviour. It became less common, and then people started to look on that behaviour as being bad behaviour. So the behaviour changed and attitudes then followed. We have changed the culture now. I think the culture around drink-driving is actually different now.

We need to look at speeding in the same way. We actually need to make a statement to say, "This is not behaviour we are willing to accept." We need to link it with death and serious injury. We need to move towards understanding. We need more research into really understanding the burden of serious road-related injury in the community, because we do not have great data on that. We need to tie that all in and send a strong message out to the community that we are not prepared to tolerate this anymore—that we are going to put in place heavier penalties and we are going to enforce this better. The behaviour and then the culture will actually change.

I do not actually think it is that difficult. But it does mean that we have to take the enforcement of it a bit more seriously than we currently do. I think at the moment we do still have a very high tolerance for road deaths in the community and people do regard speeding as something they have a right to do. Coming back to drink-driving, I do not think it is that dissimilar to the way in which we thought about drink-driving before we brought in random breath testing. I think we probably need to learn some lessons from that and go back and say that we probably know the answer to it—it is just that we have to be prepared to actually do something about it.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: I am old enough to remember when it became compulsory to wear seatbelts. That program was aimed at young kids. It reminded very young children to put their seatbelts on. The kids would be the ones in the car who would remind you to put your seatbelt on. So the campaign around that was aimed at the younger generation. The drink-driving campaigns seemed to be targeted at teenagers. We have heard here today about targeting campaigns at those who are middle-aged, those aged 40 to 60—and it is good to hear that 60 can still be regarded as middle age. Has there been any research done on where to target messages in regard to changing the culture? Has there been any research into targeting campaigns at kids, perhaps even before they are in cars, about some of these things? We heard today that the middle-age bracket, from 40 years of age to 60 years of age, seem to have a greater chance of reoffending. We talked about various aspects of the demerit points system. I am just wondering whether you are aware of any research that has been done on where to target messages in terms of changing that culture?

Ms IVERS: I am not aware of any research that talks about whether it is better to target one age group rather than others. But I would suggest that, for something like that, you actually have to work across all levels of the population. Particularly when they are enforcement-based measures, you actually need to target all levels. If you want to have a whole-of-community culture shift then you need a whole-of-community campaign. Of course working with children and young people is important. Again, I do not know that there is any strong evidence that working with them early on is then going to change their behaviour later on. The issue about speeding behaviour is about what you are actually doing. There is very good evidence that people know they should not do something but they still go and do it. That is why these levers of enforcement, the demerit points system and the threat of losing your licence are so effective. It is not about changing people's attitudes; it is about changing what they actually do. That is where we need to focus our efforts.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: In a lot of your evidence you have articulated very strong support for penal enforcement. Do you have any views on the carrot approach—so the reward for good behaviour such as half-price licensing, for example? Is that as effective as the stick approach?

Ms IVERS: I am not aware of a whole lot of research evidence around that. I think it is something that certainly needs to be considered. I know that some of the motor vehicle insurers think about those kinds of things in terms of giving people benefits in their insurance if they are safe drivers. That is certainly worth looking at. But, at the end of the day, I do not think it is something that would replace an enforcement campaign. It is certainly something that is worth researching more to look at how beneficial it is.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: Do not take this as me disagreeing with you, because I most certainly do not, but when we talk about enforcement penalties we get a kickback of angst about a nanny state, particularly when we are talking about putting in place further restrictions on driving. In your studies have you come across an attitude that, apparently, speed limits are set with the expectation that people will travel 10, 15 or 20 kilometres an hour over that speed limit? Is that something that has come up in the studies as an expectation?

Ms IVERS: As an expectation, I do not know, I could not comment on that.

Ms CULLEN: As a misconception?

Mr DARREN WEBBER: Yes.

Ms CULLEN: Yes, I read a paper about that. There is a public misconception that while the speed limit may be set at 60, 10 per cent above or below is acceptable travelling speed.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: Putting enforcement and cameras aside and whether or not we are catching them appropriately, do you consider that the current speed limits in New South Wales are appropriate as a statewide speed limit structure?

Ms IVERS: They could come down by 25 per cent, in my view.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: Across the board?

Ms IVERS: Not across the board. We would need to look at them, but certainly in urban areas we need to seriously look at reducing speed limits in strip shopping centres and the villages around and suburban streets. The street in which I live, which is a very quiet suburban street, children play on the road and the speed limit is 50 kilometres an hour. It should be 30 in situations like that because there is a high risk of conflict. It is a low chance, but it is high risk if something actually happens. I seriously think we should be looking at our speed limits in rural settings. Speed zones of 100 kilometres per hour on poor quality country roads that have very high crash fatality and serious injury rates are too high. That is where the culture comes into it. We have an expectation that it is our right to drive fast on those roads. We accept a high crash and fatality rate. It is time to say, "Do we really?" We need to have a culture shift around those settings.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: Are you familiar with the way the speed zones are reviewed and set?

Ms IVERS: I am not. I am aware of the way in which they are set.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: The lead-on question was do you have any suggestions or opinions on that process?

Ms IVERS: Again, we need to make sure that safety is at the top of the list rather than mobility. For many years we have traded off safety against speed and economic productivity and moving things around. We need to look at different ways of moving things around. A culture shift around transport is needed, how we move things around and how we move people from place to place. We need to get away from a reliance on private transport for people and saying the way of the future is not going to be private transport, particularly in our urban settings. We need to have more people catching public transport, walking and cycling, and that needs to be reflected in the way we set speed limits. We need to have a good look at that. We need to be forward thinking here. Our lifestyles are changing.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: I expressed concern with the culture issue. Despite being too young I was subjected to the "Click Clack Front 'n' Back" campaign, which, for the better part, brainwashed me into a very good thing. There was a clear outcome, in my opinion, with the alcohol and seatbelt revolutions, if you can call them that, compared to the public perception of the issue that we are talking about here. We have heard it

several times and you have said today that the culture and perception is that low-level speeding is not an issue, particularly if I am driving a modern car on a modern road and I am an experienced driver. That is the perception. Do you have a suggestion how can we combat that? There seems to be a strong perception that as cars and roads get better and licensing regimes get stricter, speed limits should be going up rather than down.

Ms IVERS: As I said, the laws of physics do not change. Speed will always be an issue for us. It is true that we have better roads and better cars. I would argue about licensing and changing people's skill level. It comes back to the fact that you would shift culture. We know we can shift culture and people's attitudes using enforcement-based approaches. We need to consider that with speed. We have shown it goes up and down, and it goes up and down with political cycles. If we put something in place and increase demerit points, you will see it reduced in five years time and people's expectations will change. It takes a while. We cannot keep changing things up and down all the time. Community expectations do not shift—you have to give it five or 10 years to change the culture, or even longer.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: I am mindful that in the face of an enthusiast market where cars are built with the capacity to double the potential speed limit it is a massive cultural undertaking as opposed to the former seatbelt and alcohol—

Ms IVERS: You could argue that with drink-driving and alcohol. Particularly with the alcohol industry at the time that was very challenging. I think that that culture is something that is not necessarily going to be sustained over time. It is reasonably prominent now, but we need to be mindful that there is a younger generation coming through that are not as car-focused. You see reduced licensing and increased numbers of young people who do not bother getting their drivers licence and who are not the slightest bit interested in cars. It is a small shift, but it will increase. It is what I mean about looking towards the future and looking towards the way in which our cities are going to work. It will not just be Sydney. It will be Newcastle and Wollongong and other major urban settings. We need to be mindful of that and think ahead 20 years into the future.

CHAIR: Earlier in your submission you made a statement, "As our urban areas become more densely populated there will be more discussion required about the trade-off between mobility and safety." Given that there is a move to introduce a 40 kilometre zone in parts of the CBD in Sydney and there is certainly pressure, as you have indicated, to introduce lower speed zones in urban areas and residential areas, give me some comments on the trade-off and how you think both areas can be satisfactorily met.

Ms IVERS: There is not anything sensible I can say about that. It is such a challenging area to ensure that we do have movement of people and trade through our major urban centres. I do not think that there is anything sensible I could add to that now. I am not a transport planner. I would be hesitant to express an opinion.

CHAIR: You attempted to cover it to a degree by saying, "Significant work needs to be done with members of the community."

Mr RYAN PARK: And fair enough.

CHAIR: We are looking for some guidance that we could record here from your expertise. Moving to the demerit point system, you advocate a harsher approach and you say that the application of one demerit point allows 13 offences. Yet, of course, that is within a 36- to 40-month period. Do you have any comment on that? Clearly that is not, in your words, habitual as perhaps it is unfortunate over 40 months.

Ms IVERS: I maintain that a one demerit point for low-level speeding gives someone no real message at all in terms of deterrence. They have been caught. They can be repeatedly caught in a short period of time and still not lose their licence. We know that the threat of a loss of licence is a thing that drives people's behaviour. It is really just sending a message that you can do this and get away with it. The number of times that people might engage in that kind of speeding before they are caught is also significant, so someone can be caught repeatedly and that means basically they are probably speeding pretty much all of the time. There is no real motivator to changing their behaviour because they need to be caught a significant number of times in a reasonably short period for them to lose their licence. It does not work as an effective lever to change that person's behaviour.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: You do not think the financial disadvantage is effective?

Ms IVERS: It depends on the person and their level of income, of course.

CHAIR: You referred to other forms of inducement as opposed to penalty. The Government clearly is looking at rewarding safe drivers who have an unblemished record for five years with a reduction to the cost of their licence. I am thinking particularly of professional drivers who are on the road more frequently and could incur minor demerit points. Is there some way in which some assistance could be allocated in their area? We know that they have 14 demerit points as opposed to 13 for a normal driver. Do you see any way in which a reward might be allocated, or is that again to the detriment of road safety?

Ms IVERS: I am very hard line on that. Basically, I would not see that there would be any need to do that. If they are professional drivers on the road all the time they should be adhering to the speed limits. The fact that people are incurring low-level speeding fines or mid-range ones regularly means they are not taking enough care on the road. It comes back to complacency. We need to be mindful of that. Putting aside the young driver issue, when you have been driving for a long time you become very complacent. All of us make mistakes all of the time when we drive. Most of the time we do not have an issue. Professional drivers are at high risk because they drive more. They are also more likely to have a crash. Although they might have a high degree of skill and experience, because they are driving more they are at higher risk of crash. I do not think that starting to induce exemptions in that circumstance is necessarily good. You would need to look at the crash data and the risk of those drivers. Making exemptions and things like that is very difficult. As soon as you start making exemptions you start to weaken the system. Looking at rewards in terms of licensing and applying them across the board and looking at the effectiveness of those is a perfectly reasonable thing to do. I do not think that making exemptions—they are still speeding, are they not, and that is still a high-risk behaviour.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: You are pretty hard line. We have a very clear picture of your view. You are not mincing words. You mentioned cycling earlier. Queensland is trialling the one metre rule around cyclists. We have had a number of injuries involving cyclists and the person who was involved in the Southern Cross Drive incident was charged this morning. Do you have any views on the one metre rule around cyclists and ways to improve safety for cyclists?

Ms IVERS: Again, it is an excellent way of trying to change—it is difficult. Obviously laws such as that need to be enforceable and practical and you need education campaigns around them. That can be problematic. I have seen various social media websites around cycling that there have been issues where cars have given cyclists a metre and have forgotten to look up and see the oncoming traffic because they have been so conscious of giving the cyclist a one metre space, so education is needed. Anything like that is worth considering. When it comes to cycle safety and other vulnerable road users such as motorcyclists and pedestrians, it is about a culture shift. We have a significant problem around cycling at the moment. That will become more of an issue as more people cycle. Again, it is about recognising that they have got an equal right to use the road and they are more vulnerable.

I think there are other things that could be put in place which look at the responsibility of the driver, so having legislation in place that puts responsibility on the bigger vehicle, so the car is responsible for the safety of the cyclist, the cyclist for the pedestrian and so on. That sort of circumstance is another way of looking at it. It would be worth also considering approaches like that. It is also a relatively new area for us as well. We often are compared to European countries where there are smaller, more densely populated cities where speed limits are already very low. It is difficult to make comparisons. We are coming from a situation where we are used to driving large cars at high speeds. We know that when you have cars and bicycles on roads with higher speeds that you will get the highest degree of conflict. Again, separation of traffic is equally important until we get the shift in culture. The one metre rule is worth considering, but you need to consider enforcement and other considerations.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: In a previous answer you hinted, and I forgot to give you a chance to elaborate, that you may have had an issue with the licensing system.

Ms IVERS: In what way?

Mr DARREN WEBBER: You suggested there was a cultural problem that with better technology in cars and better road conditions and a stronger licensing system the expectation was that the speed limits would go up rather than down. You said something along the lines that you would not necessarily agree—

Ms IVERS: About skill. That is true, particularly with the graduated driver licensing system and making it tougher for people to get their licence. Graduated driver licensing systems are effective in reducing

the risk of crash when people get on the road. I would not go in the opposite direction and say that these drivers are more skilful. That is a different question and you need to be mindful about that. It is about gradually introducing young drivers to higher risk situations in a way that mitigates the risk, but it does not necessarily mean they are more skilful.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: That is what I wanted, thank you.

(The witnesses withdrew)

LEONARD PAUL THOMAS WOODMAN, Road Safety Officer, City of Sydney, sworn and examined:

BONNIE PARFITT, Acting Executive Manager, City Access and Transport, City of Sydney, affirmed and examined:

CHAIR: Thank you for attending this afternoon. Would you please tell us in what capacity you are appearing before the Committee?

Mr WOODMAN: I have just changed jobs within the City of Sydney. I am now the Driver Educator at the City of Sydney, a position which I have held for nearly three weeks. Prior to that, I was for almost 19 years a Road Safety Officer. I am attending here as the Road Safety Officer and person who, together with Ms Parfitt, contributed to the submission.

Ms PARFITT: My current position is Acting Executive Manager of City Access and Transport and my substantive position is Transport Planning Manager.

CHAIR: I draw your attention to the fact that your evidence is given under parliamentary privilege and you are protected from legal or administrative action that might otherwise result in relation to the information you provide. I also point out that any deliberate misleading of the Committee may constitute contempt of the Parliament and an offence under the Parliamentary Evidence Act 1901. Time is always limited at these hearings and the Committee may wish to send you some additional questions in writing, the replies to which will form part of your evidence and be made public. Would you be happy to provide a written reply to any further questions?

Ms PARFITT: Yes, we would

CHAIR: Thank you. Before we proceed to questions would you like to make a brief opening statement?

Ms PARFITT: Yes. Firstly, I would like to thank the Committee for the opportunity to speak to our submission. The City has made a submission and I would just like to give a little bit of context to that if that is okay. "Sustainable Sydney 2030" sets out the vision for the City. This document was created after much research, expert advice and, most importantly, input from our community. A key part of the 2030 vision is to create a city for walking and cycling. In order to achieve this we need to ensure that the City that we create puts the safety of our most vulnerable road users at the top of our list of priorities.

The city centre in particular has a very high concentration of people walking and cycling comparative to other parts of New South Wales. For example, 92 per cent of trips made in the city centre are on foot. This creates a greater risk of collision as there are just more people around. We know that if a person walking or cycling is hit at 50 kilometres an hour he or she is twice as likely to be killed compared to being hit by a vehicle travelling at 40 kilometres. Lower speeds in areas with high pedestrian activity are even more critical in reducing fatalities and injuries.

On Monday 26 May the New South Wales Government announced the introduction of the 40 kilometre speed limit in the core of the Sydney city centre. The City of Sydney welcomes this announcement as we have been campaigning on this issue since 2004 and as such our previous submissions to the Committee have been very much focused on that. While this is a significant step forward for the City, the City is interested in ongoing discussions about the extent of the zone and how it can be effectively implemented. The City has previously campaigned for a much wider area of the city centre to be a 40 kilometre zone, which is a reflection of both close analysis of walking-related crash data in the city centre and also logical gateways for communicating

lower speed zones to drivers. So while this is a step in the right direction we would like to see further analysis into the boundary of the zone and the effectiveness and practicality of implementation.

Also, the City is growing. Our population is currently at 192,000 people and is expected to reach 280,000 people by 2036. We want to ensure that our current and future residents can move around our city safely and comfortably. In order to do this and ease already congested roads we need to switch more people to different modes of transport that take up less space. It is very difficult to convince people to walk and cycle in our city when our streets are not considered to be safe for these users.

As a result of growth, lower speed limits are also becoming more important in our village centres, residential neighbourhoods, school zones and key connectors in and through the City. On looking at a map of speed limits in our city recently I was surprised and concerned at how few of these areas actually have the 40 kilometre or less speed limit. We would like to fix this. The City of Sydney and other local government authorities are required to seek approval for any speed limit change within our areas. The City bases its requests on community engagement and in response to risks and crash data. This process is quite lengthy and there is no guarantee that Roads and Maritime Services will approve the change. This is despite the advantages that local governments have in understanding local environments' context, history and community needs.

The City of Sydney also strives to be a global city and as such we have monitored the approaches of other international cities and countries. We have observed that many cities are embracing much lower speed limits than we are, with the aim of providing safe and pleasant places to walk and cycle. We note that Paris is investigating the introduction of a 30 kilometre speed limit to increase the safety of people walking, cycling and driving and to reduce vehicle emissions and air pollution. The City believes that further implementation of lower speed limits and enforcement of speed limits helps to improve the amenity and safety of people in our city. This is important to us.

CHAIR: You spent some time talking about the 40 kilometre speed limit that is being introduced into certain parts of the city. Can you inform the Committee how that was negotiated because it will be looked at by many other jurisdictions? Also, where would you see that being extended to? You mentioned that you felt it should be applied to a wider area.

Ms PARFITT: Previously the City has undertaken quite a lot of research into what might be key gateway locations. I will let Mr Woodman speak to that in more detail as he did the bulk of the work on that. We have worked very closely with Transport for NSW and RMS on looking at crash data and pedestrian injuries and fatalities to work out what that boundary might be. That is in part reflected in that. However, when we look at the data that we have collected we can see that there are lots of crashes and, more significantly, injuries that are occurring outside the proposed zone.

Mr WOODMAN: With the boundaries with central Sydney, that was looked at as a package within itself. Going back to the previous Government, there was a memorandum of understanding which covered the light rail through George Street and pedestrianisation of George Street and 40 kilometre an hour speed limits. When the current Government came in research and liaison with Transport for NSW and Roads and Maritime Services was continued and a lot of areas were discussed. Boundaries were first drawn up that were somewhat greater than the current offer. Apart from that particular package we also want to look at our residential areas, some of which have 40 kilometre speed limits for various reasons and others do not.

As Ms Parfitt mentioned, when you look at a map of the City of Sydney local government area, which obviously does not just cover the central city, it is a like a patchwork quilt. We have 40 kilometres in one place, we have a couple of 30 kilometres in some places and we have a few shared zones of 10 kilometres but it is scattered all over the place. We need to join that all up so that people understand they are in a low-speed environment. That is why we also need what are referred to as natural gateways. When someone is driving along Parramatta Road and comes into Broadway as they approach Broadway they tend to feel they are getting into the City.

CHAIR: You are asking for a default zone across a wider area, effectively?

Mr WOODMAN: Yes. There are other areas. There are other RMS-controlled roads that currently have a 60 kilometre speed limit and others have 50 kilometres. We have a mixture. In my current position only a couple of days ago I had to drive from Epsom Road to Sydney Park. There were five different speed zones in that. There were 60, 50 and 40 kilometre an hour zones. In my role as driver educator I am going to have to be

out there making sure my drivers—the city's drivers, I am taking ownership of them—are aware of the speed limit changes and when and where to look. If we have a blanket zone of one speed limit the education side is going to be more achievable saying that you do not exceed the 40 kilometre speed limit wherever you go and you do not have to worry about different speeds.

CHAIR: It was raised earlier in our hearings that examining an overseas concept of variable speed zones could be a possibility for our State. What are your comments on that? From what you have just said I imagine you would say it would add to the confusion.

Mr WOODMAN: Yes, I think it would in city areas. Again, I will put it in the context of people I have now started to work with. Do garbage truck drivers driving out at different times of the night and day have to remember the speed limits? Is the signage going to be effective enough and repeated enough to tell them where they are? Generally these guys are going to be driving at low speed but once they finish their run they are going to be returning to the depot on their way home and there will be a temptation to make up that time. My role in educating them will be a lot easier if I have one speed limit within areas that have very similar characteristics. I am not talking about if they go on to the Eastern Distributor; I am talking about as soon as they are in the environment that we have consistently through our local government area, which is made up of high-density residential areas, shopping strips and activity. And there are a number of organisations working on shift work through the night. We do not really have any major quiet times.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: There are two different zones in Martin Place at Elizabeth Street and Pitt Street, which is within walking distance of here. Who drew up these maps? They are quite nonsensical. Did the City of Sydney draw up the final ones that we have now?

Mr WOODMAN: The approval for the speed limits is given by Roads and Maritime Services and prior to that the Roads and Traffic Authority.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: So Duncan Gay and Roads?

Mr WOODMAN: Roads, yes. Since 2004 for high pedestrian high activity areas, which include the commercial areas out towards Erskineville, Zetland and those areas where there is a lot of activity, we have been consistent on wanting 40 kilometres an hour or 10 kilometre shared zones.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: You have been consistent. You have been advocating this for years. I remember when we were in government you were putting that position forward. Do you think there will have to be revision of these boundaries?

Mr WOODMAN: Yes. I think that we are seeing signs that others are coming round to our ways.

CHAIR: That is obviously the purpose of this inquiry.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: You said at the start you were the newly appointed Driver Education Officer, is that right?

Mr WOODMAN: Educator, yes.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: Does that cover what we were here for last time, mobility scooters?

Mr WOODMAN: No.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: Is there an equivalent officer for pedestrians hired by the city?

Mr WOODMAN: It would be the previous Road Safety Officer and that is me.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: We have had a couple of pedestrian fatalities in relation to bus incidents recently in the City. A lot of the focus today has been on the responsibility of the driver in the environment of the road. Do you think equal emphasis is put on the responsibility of a pedestrian interacting with a road that a vehicle is driving on?

Mr WOODMAN: Yes. The responsibility of a pedestrian when crossing the road should be—and we emphasise the very basics of looking, thinking, being sure that it is safe to cross and concentrating. Probably if you have seen in our media releases or comments that I have made, I have been trying to make the comment, "switch off your mobile phone and switch on your concentration". When someone is walking, and we are born to walk and that is given to us. If we are walking along, we are different to drivers in that if we are walking along any particular stretch of road we only have to worry about the other pedestrians around us who might be carrying coffee and cigarettes and things like that. However, we do not need to concentrate a great deal and we should not have to. We should just snap to it when we come up to a set of traffic lights.

But where we have fast moving traffic we have an expectation that the pedestrian has the ability instantly to be able to judge the speed and approach of those motor vehicles. Where we have a system of traffic moving quite quickly from a red traffic light, picking up and peaking at speeds amid blocks, and people may cross the road legally—there are no jay walking laws in Australia—if it is 20 metres away from a controlled crossing they may cross if it is safe to do so. But if they are expected to judge the speed of traffic that is going quite high, then it is difficult for them to do so. We need also to come back to yes, there is responsibility for the pedestrians but start thinking in the same way as Paris, New York and London, where the people come first. We should have a hierarchy of road users and at the top of it should be people walking and coming down through the process. I will not talk about motorway speeds or country speeds. We do not have that in our area, but a different thought should be put to that.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: You said it was Epsom to Sydney Park. Can you give me those five zones?

Mr WOODMAN: Yes. When you leave Epsom Road, you go down Epsom Road it is 50 kilometres an hour. You turn left into Botany Road, it goes to 60 kilometres an hour. You turn right into the next street and it goes down to 50 kilometres an hour. You cross another road that is 60, then it goes back to 50 and 60 again before you get onto Sydney Park Road, which is another 60 speed limit, turn into Princes Highway, again it is 60. We turn off Princes Highway and it goes to 60, 50 and there is a short stretch of 40.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: So there is a 40 in there too.

Mr WOODMAN: Yes. The thing is that in those industrial areas—I might be jumping the gun here—lower speed limits and lower speeds also protect vehicle occupants. We talk about pedestrian areas but if we actually look at our crash data, numerically the highest number of people who are injured are vehicle occupants. If we bring that speed down just by a small amount, all the collisions causing injuries such as whiplash and all that become so-called near misses and all the near misses become total non-events. We move everything down so the biggest benefactors from lower speed limits, even in urban areas, are likely to be motor vehicle occupants.

CHAIR: What we will do at this point is take up your submission. I quote:

It is difficult to determine accurately what the contribution of speed has on crashes within the City of Sydney. Many crashes occur below the current speed limit and are not reported as speed related.

Do you have any comments on that in the circumstances of what you have been talking about?

Mr WOODMAN: Yes. The previous witness mentioned about the laws of physics. Basically, the very basic in driver education is that if you are going at a speed that you cannot stop in time, you are probably going too fast for the conditions. There is a tendency in city areas for people to think that you cannot get to those speeds.

CHAIR: Indeed, I think members of the Committee have expressed their view already today.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: I have been on television saying that.

Mr WOODMAN: It might be easier to get a taxi and drive around and see how many times it peaks over the speed. Your average would probably be quite low but in that situation we have collisions occurring below those speed limits. If the vehicles are travelling somewhat slower there is more time for the driver to react, there is more time for the vehicle to be brought to a stop.

CHAIR: In that sense you would be considering the contribution of other factors such as traffic congestion, driver distraction and pedestrian activity and therefore you would have to take means to manage those as well. Speed would just be one factor.

Mr WOODMAN: But it has been revealed to be the key factor. If we bring the speed down then we are giving people time to react more. We are allowing pedestrians to have a bigger margin of error when they are assessing the speed of vehicles before they are crossing the road or as they are crossing the road.

CHAIR: But you did say that it is difficult to determine accurately the contribution of speed.

Mr WOODMAN: Only from the statistics. The statistics which basically police go on: the speed they have either measured the vehicle at or the witness statements or by measurement through the assessment of the crash afterwards by the crash investigators.

CHAIR: That arose from the question asked by Mr Webber. Have you completed that?

Mr DARREN WEBBER: If we are talking about blanket zones, is there space for main arterial roads to be at a slightly higher limit than the zone surrounding them or is that still going to lead to confusion?

Mr WOODMAN: I think that needs to be looked at but I think there will still be a need for perhaps higher speed limits on the main key roads that come into the city that deliver the vehicles to our gates. Most of that will be more or less outside our jurisdiction anyway but there are some other roads that are State controlled that do move traffic around very quickly and have high speed limits, 60 kilometres an hour. Pyrmont Bridge Road going from Pyrmont Bridge down to Parramatta Road, I believe that will be changed to a slower speed limit of 50 kilometres where we have housing close to the roads, many intersections and several schools.

In the case where we have schools there is the 40 K speed limit during school time. The difference is easier for drivers to deal with than if it is 60 down to 40 and back up again. Some of those roads need to be looked at. We would prefer to see a speed limit drop from 60 to 50 but within high activity, residential, shopping link, sports areas, we need to demonstrate that it is a high-risk situation, high-risk area and that an appropriate speed limit, 40, 30 as they are doing in Europe, should be applied.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: I have one final question. The 40 or 30 kilometre speed zones for the central CBD, some are suggesting that that does not go far enough, that a CBD should be vehicle free entirely. Does the city have a preferred limit, be it 40, 30, no vehicles at all? Have you come to a conclusion as to what you think the perfect scenario would be in your 2030 plan?

Ms PARFITT: I do not think that our approach is to say no vehicles in the city centre at all. What we are trying to do is create a bit more choice and a bit more balance. One of the things that is really lacking in the city centre at the moment is that the balance of priorities is not quite right and we certainly know that most people moving in our city are moving by foot, they are pedestrians, people walking and we would like to see more cyclists so we need to create an environment that reflects that approach, which does mean in some ways giving more priority to them and shifting that balance a little bit away from private vehicles.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: The Chair touched upon it briefly, and I did notice it in your submission. We have had a lot of submissions today that were criticising the accuracy and reliability of data on speed as a determining factor in crashes. So it was good to see that yours is different for the obvious reason, they cannot even get up to that speed.

Mr WOODMAN: Well, they can.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: They can but in short spurts. The fact is that in your submission speed is a very little factor in the majority of your crashes. I was wondering, because you talked earlier about extensive data and I know you used the crash link data, has there ever been an endeavour by the City of Sydney to try to find out what are those other factors? It was touched on about congestion, pedestrian activity, driver distraction, electronic device distraction or just pure driver impatience. Has there been any endeavour by the City of Sydney to work with the police and those types of factors to try to get that type of data?

Mr WOODMAN: Not as in a major data collection process. We work with the police. You probably talked earlier about the Motorcycle Response Team that is used around the City in various operations. The

feedback we get from the police is sometimes that people are distracted with mobile phones and so on. There has been a general decline in the number of crashes involving pedestrians, involving all road users, and I think that is across the State, not just the City of Sydney. So we are not saying there is not an issue there; we are saying that the data does not identify an issue. The fact is that people are distracted as drivers, as other road users. I could not scientifically give you any numbers on that.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: I was just wondering whether there had been any endeavour because I would have thought that information, because then you target that to reduce the number if you know what you are aiming at to try to fix.

Mr WOODMAN: And targeting that would be possibly a more difficult endeavour than to reduce the traffic speed. This has been seen around Europe and everywhere else that possibly the easiest way of bringing about a significant or a continuous reduction in crashes would be to reduce speed limits. Years ago we talked about the golden bullets of RBT, seatbelts and that. Perhaps we have run out of those bullets but perhaps in our armoury we could add—the laws of physics, as the previous witness said, do come into play. If we can continually demonstrate to people entering a city or an urban area where there is high activity of other road users, more vulnerable road users, then lower speeds has got to be the key answer.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: It has been raised here about the Queensland concept of the one metre rule with regard to bikes. From the City of Sydney's perspective, would you support that rule, and as a local government area how would you see enforcing it?

Mr WOODMAN: That is very interesting because two weeks ago I was asked by a colleague, who is a very keen cyclist, when I was going over to work at the depot as a Driver Educator, "Are you going to make all our drivers keep one metre from bicycles?" My answer was "Yes", so I think that gives you the answer of whether we support it, bearing in mind the United Kingdom uses a six foot, 1.8 metre area around a cyclist. The key area of concern, which was again brought up by the previous witness, is that a driver seeing a cyclist doing the right thing moves across the centre line and faces oncoming vehicles.

This needs to be looked at, and I will be looking at that from my point of view and my drivers over the next few months to see how we can bring in that rule, how we can monitor it and see how effective it is. We can do that on our local scale because we have that control. I would be quite interested in passing that information to the Centre for Road Safety so that we can see whether it is a problem that drivers will move on to the wrong side of the road.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: That comes to the last question. I have been in Sydney for three years and my experience in traffic with cyclists is it has not been a case of me keeping away from them, they are up the inside of my car and at times they are travelling a lot faster than I am in the car. I have had three close calls as a pedestrian of nearly being cleaned up by bikes not obeying the rules. If speed is an issue we are dealing with, I go back to the speed of some of the cyclists: Has there been any assessment with regard to how they move throughout the City and the difficulties they cause for pedestrians by not obeying the basic road rules such as stop lights and to a lesser extent speed?

Mr WOODMAN: I will pass on to the Committee the links to our website because we have quite an intensive program, not just the website but on the ground, called "Share the Path" where we have teams of City of Sydney officers out four to six times a week on the streets talking to cyclists about their responsibilities. We use a carrot approach. We have free cycle checks on the way to work. Once a cyclist has their bicycle up on the frame that someone is checking it gives us the opportunity to talk with them about the use of bells, riding on shared paths, not riding on footpaths, their responsibilities towards pedestrians and to what the pedestrians are doing, and how they should behave around pedestrians.

As Road Safety Officer I was the key person dealing with complaints and issues from cyclists and pedestrians. In the last six months the numbers have declined dramatically. We believe that the number of cyclists we have passed information on to has had a positive effect in reducing the potential for collisions, near misses or purely people being scared because a cyclist is about. Cyclists do stand out from other road users quite often because of the colour of their clothing. I assume that most of us drive here and we have incidents with other drivers. I had a discussion with the manager of our cycling project team who was concerned about car doors opening in front of them and cyclists being doored. I do recall an event when I was driving a motor vehicle along Kent Street that people will open doors in front of a motor vehicle.

It is not picking on the cyclists. We have road users of all different types and modes that will at some time do the wrong thing because they have made a mistake: it may be intentional but hopefully there are few of those. It is an old term but sharing the road is the key element. We at the City of Sydney are strongly putting that forward in pedestrian and cycling promotions.

Ms PARFITT: I will add to that. I think that is one of the reasons why the City is strongly keen on creating separated cycleways. Not only does it reduce the conflict between cyclists and motor vehicles but it also reduces the conflict between cyclists and pedestrians, which is what we are seeing a lot of. That is why it is important to us.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Can I clarify that you are instructing Sydney city council drivers to follow the one metre rule?

Mr WOODMAN: I have not started, I have only been there two weeks. It will be on my agenda to introduce programs, methods and systems that will accommodate other road users as well as our own road users with the ultimate objective to ensure that we reduce any incidents and reduce any costs involved such as insurance costs, as we are a self-insurer. The other thing is we are not really going to discuss much on points, but monitoring offences that drivers might incur or do while they are driving council vehicles. We will look at that as a whole package of things. Hopefully we will set an example and a benchmark.

CHAIR: I read from your submission, and if I am drawing the incorrect inference please dissuade me. You state: "Many international capitals and major cities are embracing the concept that towns are for people and that motor vehicles should only be driven if necessary and with the responsibility for low risk movement". You followed that up by saying, "The City of Sydney does acknowledge that there is and will continue to be a need for motor vehicles of one type or another." That sounds like a grudging admission that they will be around. That is the way it has been written.

Under your recommendations you state, "Suitable educational programs to be introduced for all road users on appropriate driver interaction with pedestrians and cyclists." I was heartened to hear your last comments because from my observations the education programs would need to be for pedestrians and cyclists and their interaction with drivers. There would not be a day where any of us come walking up to Parliament and do not encounter cyclists on the footpath and where they use both the footpath and road, depending on which is the quicker route. How do you approach that educational program and whose responsibility would it be if the 40 kilometre zone is extended much further afield?

Mr WOODMAN: The local government road safety program covers the education side of all road users. Through the road safety officers program, grants and so on we would be able to continue and perhaps even enhance the programs that we have been using. There are pedestrian programs, the cycling programs and there will be a number of programs planned in the near future for the interaction between motorists and cyclists. We have had discussions with some key groups on that that have been effective. There have been discussions between cyclists and State transit bus drivers that have worked out very well so they have found out what each other's needs and requirements are in order to work together. Incidents involving buses and cyclists—I cannot remember when we have had one. That is the sort of area we would look at. With regard to driver education we do have the "Watch Out People About" program and you have probably seen the banners. There is a lot of advertising, promotional material and work with the police and motorcycle response team, which has been in operation for 18 months. They are the education enforcement area.

CHAIR: You mentioned a preference for the development of more cycleways to separate those two forms of traffic, and understandably so, to avoid the possibility of collision or car doors opening. Can I get your comments on the London experience where a block of cyclists, some 40, 50, 60, would form at the head of the traffic and take off thereby slowing down the traffic, accepting a green light when it changes: is that effective and would you consider having the same system here?

Ms PARFITT: I am not a cycling design expert but I have seen that used very effectively in other European countries and New Zealand uses it commonly, although they have little cycling infrastructure. Mr Woodman may have seen it in other places.

Mr WOODMAN: The forward holding by cyclists is linked in with either a separated cycleway where you have an intersection where the separated cycleway cannot be carried across the intersection or you have a dedicated cycle lane on the inside that allows cyclists to come up on the inside and go into the holding area

where they wait for the traffic lights to change. The expectation is that they tend to move off quicker and get back into the cycle lane on the other side of the road. Judging by the number that are used throughout the United Kingdom, my last visit there was in 2011, and the support that is given through the highways agency over there for local government to implement them, I would say it is pretty effective. It needs to be done not just one here and one there or drivers and cyclists will not know what it is about, it has to be done either fully or hardly at all.

CHAIR: Demerit points apply to drivers; do you ever see a day where they might apply to cyclists and would it be appropriate?

Mr DARREN WEBBER: Or just some form of licensing?

Mr WOODMAN: Currently there is one penalty for all cycling offences, which is \$68 for all the offences that they carry out. I do not think I can comment on that but there would be a strong lobby against it.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: Did you say lobby group against it?

Mr WOODMAN: The cyclists would not be too keen on that and they are quite a strong lobby group. On licences and even registration, if we look at the majority of adult cyclists the majority of them do own motor vehicles. It would be no different to the national average of 95 or 96 per cent of people who own vehicles and have driving licences, so they really should know what the road rules are anyway. If there is concern about them not paying their way they cause little wear and tear. I pay for the rego and everything else for two motor vehicles so when I ride a bike I am not getting value for my money.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: So the demerit you incur when riding the bike could come off your car licence?

CHAIR: Depends on the speed you were travelling.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: I reject the Chair's proposal.

CHAIR: It was not a proposal. I asked whether Mr Woodman saw a day when it would occur.

Mr WOODMAN: If you look at the outcome of a collision, even a collision with a pedestrian, rarely is it anything like a motor vehicle hitting a pedestrian or a cyclist. If we look at it realistically and we put the offences with respect to the degree of trauma that they cause then that would be a different argument.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: Also the age of the pedestrian.

Mr WOODMAN: This is true, but even a 58-year-old guy like me hit by a cyclist is likely to suffer fewer serious injuries than if I got hit by a motor vehicle at the same speed.

CHAIR: Thank you for appearing before the committee this afternoon.

(The witnesses withdrew)

(Short adjournment)

ALEXANDER CORNELL [LEX] STEWART, Private capacity, sworn and examined:

CHAIR: Good afternoon, Mr Stewart, and thank you for appearing before the Committee this afternoon and for travelling to be with us today. I draw your attention to the fact that your evidence is given under parliamentary privilege and you are protected from legal or administrative action that might otherwise result in relation to the information that you provide. I should also point out that any deliberate misleading of the Committee may constitute contempt of the Parliament and an offence under the Parliamentary Evidence Act 1901. Time is always limited at these hearings and the Committee may wish to send you some additional questions in writing, the replies to which will form part of your evidence and be made public. Would you be happy to provide a written reply to any further questions?

Mr STEWART: Yes, indeed.

CHAIR: Before we proceed with any questions this afternoon, would you like to make a brief opening statement?

Mr STEWART: Yes, I would like to speak and I do thank you for granting permission to me to speak for 10 minutes rather than the customary five minutes. You will have in front of you 11 pages of PowerPoint slides, and I will get through that in 10 minutes. My perspective arises from having been a road safety and traffic management manager in the Roads and Traffic Authority from 1990 to 1997, and of course you politicians keep changing the names of these departments. I left the RTA in 2001 but I retain a passionate interest in reducing the road toll. I have been for many years a member of the Australian Institute of Traffic Planning and Management [AITPM]. As the AITPM committee prepared for their 2012 conference I was silly enough to say, "Look, we really must have a major overview of road safety." They said, "Good, fine, we will get somebody." Of course there was a lack of volunteers and it ended up being me. Back in January I provided in my submission a conference paper of 16 pages. My presentation today covers a subset of that paper relating to the terms of reference of this Committee.

You will see references in my presentation. The second page covers the Committee's term of reference (a) about the contribution of speeding to crash rates. You will see throughout the document references to table 1, section 4.2.1 et cetera. They refer to the 16-page document that I provided in January. In my view the contribution of speeding to crash rates is exaggerated. Table 1 of that document shows the current 39 per cent to 40 per cent level of speeding that is often talked about. That seems to be a worse problem in terms of the percentage of fatalities than the 20 per cent rate for drink-driving. But I point out that data on speeding are unreliable.

In section 4.2.1 on page 6 of that 16-page document you have a description of the kind of things that happen when a police officer attends a crash scene. He used to fill in the P4 form, and nowadays it is computerised. At the end of the day after he has cleared up the bodies and the broken glass he fills in the accident details such as the date; time; whether the road runs north, south, east or west; and whether it was raining. He ticks yes or no in a box. Then he gets to the box on the form labelled speeding. He looks at the glass, he looks at the vehicles smashed, he thinks of the trauma and he ticks the box to say that, yes, there was speeding. So there is no proper mathematical consideration given. Police are not trained in this. I actually did the very first crash course, if you will pardon the pun, of four-and-a-half days training police to try to get more accurate assessment by the police. Of course the vehicle could be travelling under the speed limit, and yet if there is a huge rubber skid mark and lots of broken glass then the police officer will tick the box to say that, yes, there was speeding involved.

Monash University, reference 9a, says that the RTA's procedures have an insufficient scientific basis and deems them as unsuitable. An Adelaide University study, which is reference 8 in my paper, studied 695 crashes. One of the glaring findings was that speeding—namely, travelling in excess of the speed limit—is absolutely overwhelming in their considerations. There is a reference there to a report from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development working group on ambitious targets in 2009. I could not squeeze that onto the page. So we have had a huge focus on speeding and speed cameras based on what I would argue is an unsuitable, unscientific and misleading foundation. Speeding is a problem, of course, but I think it has been exaggerated.

Turning to the second page of my presentation, this looks at the rationale for speed zones and their current operation. You sometimes get knee-jerk reactions from local traffic committees. Talking to some of my colleagues in Roads and Maritime Services I have discovered that traffic committees are far less important than they used to be. Basically RMS has centralised control. For example, I am the bloke who in 1992 put the speed limit up on the Newell Highway, from 100 kilometres an hour to 110 kilometres an hour. It was a road safety measure to reduce fatigue, along with other mechanisms. Fortunately, there were no adverse consequences. About three years ago they suddenly put it down again due to a horror crash, which in my view was caused by road deficiency. It is all too easy to blame the speed limit and to whack the speed limit down. They still have not fixed up that section of road, which I believe is deficient.

So blanket limits are imposed by the centralised RMS. It does not take adequate account of local conditions. So there are small rural villages where there are 50 kilometre per hour speed limits and yet you probably only see one pedestrian every few months. I would argue that that is not suitable. I will not take up the time of this Committee by giving further examples of what I would say are inappropriate zonings, and in my presentation I have used the word "silly zonings" so that it would all fit on one line. I had to squash it all in on

the page. Basically I think it is more cost-effective to work with psychology and I have made some comments in that regard at the end of section 3 of my paper and at reference 3.

There is a limit to the amount of stick, the punitive approach, we can use effectively. We need to use more of a carrot approach. I used a lot of benefit-cost ratios to try to get approaches that were cost-effective. In the western region I used the carrot approach and it worked. We achieved big reductions. Table 1 and other statistics show the substantial achievements of RTA western region. Moving on to the Committee's terms of reference (c) and (d), how do we set appropriate speed limits? It used to be the 85 percentile method. Nowadays it is sort of done by RMS fiat. That then puts a clumsy onus on the public to protest and say, "Hey, that is not appropriate." I refer to section 7.9 of my paper there. It is my opinion that we have had a sort of illogical obsession against speeding. I would say: Why not set all speed limits at 10 kilometres per hour? Then you would have road safety; you would have no crashes. Of course we would say that that is silly. Why is it silly? Because of course we want traffic efficiency. I was road safety and traffic management manager and the two were sometimes conflicting requirements. The answer is that nobody knows. Nobody has really studied this.

There is plenty of data on how much road crashes cost. I refer to a study from 2005 by the Bureau of Transport and Regional Economics which found that capital city congestion costs \$9.4 billion. That does not address rural travel times and the loss of productivity caused. So we have these counteracting things at play—the traffic efficiency people want us to go faster and the road safety people want us to go slower. Nobody knows the trade-offs. I happen to have been chairman of the intergovernmental committee back in the 1980s. It was me who chose 91 octane unleaded petrol based on the conflicting requirements of the motor car industry and the oil industry. The oil industry fudged it to 91. I could not really argue as the difference between 91 and 92 was tiny. But it was an objective analysis. There was a methodology to trade off the conflicting requirements. It was done objectively not by some sort of knee-jerk ideology.

What about speed limits in other jurisdictions? I make a comment in my presentation about enforcement tolerances in Victoria. I worked for three months in Sweden for the Swedish National Road and Transport Research Institute. Sweden has a well-organised system—speed limits are either 50, 70, 90 or 110 kilometres per hour, and you know that the road environment suits. France has 130 kilometres per hour on their freeways and 110 kilometres per hour if raining. That sort of speed adjustment sign is quite rare in New South Wales. You may notice such a sign going north on the Hawkesbury River Bridge as you go up the hill. That sign says the speed limit is 100 kilometres an hour or 90 kilometres an hour when it is raining. I think that could be done a lot more often. We need to treat motorists with intelligence. Most of the time the speed limit could be 100 kilometres an hour but then when it is raining it should drop back to 90 kilometres an hour. You can see a photograph in section 4.3 of my paper.

Germany has no speed limit on its autobahns and a fatality rate of 0.7. France, New South Wales and Germany all have roughly the same fatality rates. *Wheels* magazine want to see speeds of 130 kilometres per hour on the Hume Highway. I agree with them. Why should we spend money on infrastructure if it is then underutilised? As an engineer, you design a road with speed zones of 60, 80 or 110 kilometres an hour. There are various parameters. It does not make sense to spend all the money on a road and then not to use it.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Which stretch of the Hume Highway are we talking about?

Mr STEWART: We are talking about the double-lane sections. These are the sections where you have a big breakdown lane and a median strip.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: So it is divided?

Mr STEWART: Yes, there is a median strip, turn lanes and gentle curves. It is the Rolls-Royce section. In France it is done that way. I went over there two years ago when my son got his Ph.D. and drove 1,000 kilometres. It was marvellous. There are often problems with speed limits. We get a fuss. People lose demerit points because of the frequent changes in speed limits. For example, Wagga Wagga has 13 different speed zones. I was on the front page of the local newspaper talking about this. I am talking about driving on the arterial roads not the Sturt Highway. The speed limit goes from 80 to 50 to 70 kilometres an hour. The poor motorist does not know how fast he should be going. Some zealous police officer is there and goes zap and catches him speeding, or a speed camera will be there. The motorist may have thought the speed limit was 80 kilometres an hour when in actual fact it was 50 kilometres an hour. A confused, distracted motorist is a less safe motorist. Of course that is the rationale for not allowing the use of mobile phones while driving. So the issue of different speed zones is an issue of concern in Wagga.

Turning to the appropriateness of the Demerit Points Scheme, section 5.1 of my paper talks about the current design and objectives of the Demerit Points Scheme. I could not find any written objectives for the current Demerit Points Scheme. We need to not only punish people but also promote intelligent human behaviours. Part of the problem with the current scheme, as I say in my fifth dot point on that page, is that it has large dollop "staccato" jumps. So you can be travelling 12 kilometres over the speed limit on a holiday weekend and, wham, you are on double demerit points. It is relatively easy to lose your licence for a minor offence. In my view the current scheme is illogical and negative.

At point (f) of my slides, on the problems with the current Demerit Points Scheme, you can see that the curve of the graph of demerit points and speed goes the wrong way. The punishment does not fit the crime. Kinetic energy, which is marked on the graph as a green curve, goes up as the square of the speed. But the curve representing demerit points flattens off. There are big punishments for minor offences and relatively smaller punishments for the major offences. So inherently the curve on the graph goes the wrong way. On the next page of my slides I suggest a new merit points scheme to work with the psychology. In that regard I would seek the permission of the Chairman to table a Federal Office of Road Safety seminar paper, which I produced and wrote. When I got to western region as an engineer I commissioned a master's degree psychologist. Table 1 of my paper shows a very bad problem with drink-driving, a lack of seatbelt wearing and so on. I commissioned a psychologist to go out and interview people to find out why they were not wearing seatbelts and why they were drink-driving. It was a major psychological study. That is why I request permission to table that paper.

I suggest we try and work in a system where we work with the psychology. I have made some suggestions there. I have summarised what I put in my paper at section 5.3. In item (g) of my slides I look at the impact and effectiveness of the Demerit Points Scheme in reducing speeding behaviour. I make the point that in the whole road safety program there is too little attention paid to non-speeding. Speeding data are listed on the website of the Office of State Revenue but data for many other offences are not listed. I put in a freedom of information request, or a GIPA [Government Information (Public Access)] request as they now call it, for a list of all of the infringements not listed. I would suggest to you that they are very few but all of those are causative factors in crashes. The Demerit Points Scheme should be aimed at all behaviour not merely speeding.

I think we have driver resentment at speed limits, and I think we need to work with people and to take a carrot approach as well as a stick approach. Recently I have asked some questions of the police and RMS about overtaking because we now have a dangerous situation caused by the over-rigid enforcement of speed limits. If you are travelling on a country road behind a slow vehicle at 80 kilometres an hour and there is a great queue of traffic, when you come to an overtaking lane the slow vehicle will speed up to 95 kilometres an hour. One vehicle will pull out and creep past travelling at 100 kilometres an hour. So you get to the end of the overtaking lane and only one vehicle has managed to creep past the slow vehicle. There is still a great queue of vehicles filled with people shaking their fists in anger. That problem has been raised by retired police with whom I worked. It is a big hazard. That is why I have asked the question, which the police and RMS are ducking and taking a long time to answer: Am I allowed to exceed the speed limit briefly while overtaking a vehicle? In my view you should put your foot down and quickly and crisply move around the slow vehicle and get back into the left-hand lane and then quickly get back down to the speed limit. But what if you get booked? What if a camera gets you?

The final graph in my presentation, and the punchline of my conference paper, is that we have to do things that work. We have to be objective and use benefit-cost analysis. We cannot just keep cranking out things that are not working. We only have a limited road safety budget. So it is a question of whether we spend the money on television advertising, on a wearing bicycle helmets campaign in schools or on building roundabouts. How do we allocate the money to reduce the road toll? That is my point.

CHAIR: Thanks, Mr Stewart. You said in your submission that if you have the opportunity, you would provide a submission addressing the individual terms of reference. Obviously you have spoken to that as part of your opening address. I will start with the question regarding current operation of speed zones. Your original submission stated that speed cameras are punitive and not educational. Other evidence that has been provided to the Committee suggests that speed cameras have a role to play in raising awareness of heightened risk in places where accidents are more likely to occur. Do you have suggestions for alternatives to speed cameras to alert drivers to areas of increased road risk?

Mr STEWART: Yes, you need a lot more roving police officers and a lot more blue flashing lights. When I was road safety manager of the western region, I used to get extra police up from Sydney and we, in a

sense, perhaps misused the random breath test to pull people over during school holiday periods and warned them of fatigue. The police officer would pull them over, "Blow here." "Okay." "Where are you from?" "Oh, we left Adelaide this morning." "Where are you going to?" "We are going to get to Brisbane tonight." "Here is a leaflet from the RTA with the motels and rest areas. Don't you think you should stop off at Gilgandra at the motel?" It made the police the good guys. They were not always punishing. There was plenty of blue flashing light. In fact that was an objective. I had extra police rostered on shift so that everybody who went through the western region on the Newell Highway during school holidays would see a blue flashing light, none of this police hiding behind the bushes for three hours to catch the big one. No. Get out and be seen. Spend the money on roving police patrols rather than cameras.

CHAIR: We have heard what you said about *Wheels* magazine. We smiled because I have been asking several of the witnesses about that particular incident where the journalist was sponsored by *Wheels* magazine to drive from Melbourne to Sydney and obviously, as you said, he travelled, at times, at 130 kilometres an hour. He said, "I did not get booked." He did, however, slow down where he knew there were speed cameras in place and he stuck to the speed limit in zones other than the 110 kilometre an hour sections. Aside from the fact that you referred to 130 as being possible on some sections of the Hume Highway, currently it is not. What do you think about point-to-point or speed averaging cameras? Would they contribute to reducing fatigue by enforcing people to stop? If they were exceeding, they might stop at a restaurant and take a break.

Mr STEWART: Yes, they will have an effect on that narrow segment of road. As an engineer, I just shudder at the cost of the concrete, the steel, the girder, the construction, the maintenance, the calibration, and I am looking at that hundreds of thousands of dollars, which is only addressing speeding, not seatbelts, not overtaking, not drink-driving. It is only addressing it on that 20 kilometres of road whereas a police car is seen. I used to get extra police up from Sydney for the western region, and the western region was the Victorian border to the Queensland border to Lithgow to Broken Hill. It is a deterrent.

CHAIR: Absolutely. I was talking in terms of one option.

Mr STEWART: That is my opinion. That amount of capital investment has an effect, but that amount of capital in a police officer and a car would be more effective on a wider area.

CHAIR: From your experience you would also be aware that one can construct those speed-averaging cameras at a far cheaper cost, as they are in the United Kingdom, for example, where several local councils or local traffic responsible areas put them up and they are simply a pole with a camera. Obviously they do relate through electronics. Do you have a view on that because that is a much cheaper option?

Mr STEWART: I think it is a misuse of technology, a misuse of that amount of equipment and that amount of machinery. It is a big-brother-watching-you society.

CHAIR: Can you move away from technology? You talk about psychology. Does it have an effect and is it part of the training, part of the educational process?

Mr STEWART: It has no effect now because drivers of cars are not booked for exceeding the average speed. The average is only enforced for truck drivers.

CHAIR: That is correct.

Mr STEWART: I think you will find it will create a public reaction, and that is a political problem, when you start enforcing that on ordinary people. They will feel victimised. They will feel "Big brother is watching me. I do not like it." Whereas if a police officer pulls you over—

CHAIR: They better not travel overseas then. Thank you, you have covered that.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: Mr Stewart, I have questions arising from the presentation you have given. What you have given is incredibly thorough. Were you aware that we heard this morning from the Police Acting Commissioner and the Roads and Maritime Services personnel that they receive data on a crash scene from the airbag deployment? One of your earlier comments was that a lot of the reporting on a crash site was amateur or guesswork from the police officer. They are suggesting that it has got a lot more scientific recently.

Mr STEWART: I mean no disrespect to police but less than 10 per cent of police are highway patrol; 90 per cent of them are general duties. The odds are that you will often get a general duties police officer who does not have the training. At 7.14 in my paper I make the recommendation why do we not bite the bullet and have all new vehicles built with a black box recorder after so many years in the future. We need objective data. It is entirely possible that speeding contributes only to 11 per cent of crashes not 40 per cent.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: I forget the acronym, but they are suggesting that some equivalent in modern vehicles now records the speed rate and the deceleration rate when the airbag is deployed. You make the point that it was guesswork.

Mr STEWART: Yes, but you have an awful lot of energy to do damage to people when you are doing 95 kilometres per hour, the legal speed limit. There is a huge amount of damage. Compared to 105, it is very difficult to determine.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: I am very keen to hear about your 100 point system. Mr Holstein wants to ask you about that. In terms of smaller offences, today we have heard from witnesses from The George Institute for Global Health and many other witnesses that the 10 kilometres and over one point demerit and \$100 fine is not sufficient. Would you agree with that, given your views on the current demerit point system?

Mr STEWART: We have problems with speedo accuracy. When I was living at Somersby and working in Newcastle, I had a car where the speedo was seven kilometres out. To cruise at 110, I had to be doing 103. In all honesty somebody could buy that car, zip out and go past a few cameras—wham, wham, wham—notch up a couple of offences and they thought they were doing 110. In actual fact they were doing 117. Speedo accuracy is better now, as the cars get better. The benefit of a police officer—the retired police officers I consulted had 150 years of experience. It is in my submission in section 6. They can apply a common sense approach. They can see the road conditions, pull the person over and issue a caution. Back when I was working with Roads and Maritime Services from 1990 to 1997, I had police officers who were angry, saying, "What is the use of the camera issuing an offence three weeks after they are dead? If I pull them over with a blue flashing light, put the wind up them, book them or caution them, then they will not go down the road and kill themselves." Nought to 10 and above, it is so easy to do, and then you get the problem that people are so busy watching the speedo that they are not watching the road. You have to have some sort of float, but you do need enforcement. You need to say, "Okay, at this point we are going to book you." I think the police officer at the time can judge that better than the camera.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: From your knowledge and your experience and your contacts currently in Roads and Maritime Services, are there concerns about accuracy of speed camera calibration and the accuracy of speed cameras? In Victoria there was a situation where thousands of people had their points restored and there were refunds. Have you come across problems in New South Wales?

Mr STEWART: Not that I am aware of but whenever you have equipment you will have calibration and maintenance problems. You will have machinery, equipment budgets and you are spending time on that. I favour less technology. I am not favouring zero cameras, but less, and more people on the roads. I had discussions with the police that I worked closely with in 1990 to 1997 that they can issue an offence "drive in a manner dangerous". The speed limit could be 60 and the car could be doing 30. There could be primary school kids or a flock of sheep or something and the police officer can get the opinion that doing 30 kilometres an hour in a 60 kilometre zone was "drive in a manner dangerous". You do not need equipment for that. It is a problem. Calibrations can drift. All machinery calibration can drift and it has to be maintained regularly.

CHAIR: I will jump in quickly because that is one that intrigues us all. Hearing you talk about calibrations reminds me that we probably do not do this as well as we should and I would be seeking your opinion on this where you have speed advisories on some of the major highways to tell you exactly what speed you are travelling at. I have seen these frequently on the Hume Highway where I travel. Overseas they are regular, particularly when approaching towns and you will see the smiley or disgruntled face looking back at you to tell you what speed you are travelling at. What do you feel about those in terms of calibration and education?

Mr STEWART: I think that is a marvellous device. You are giving the motorist feedback and it is not punitive. It is educational, it is warning. The cost of technology has come down enormously, of course, with electronics over the past 10 or 20 years so those sorts of things can be a useful educational tool to warn people. Flash it up and people can say, "Whoops."

CHAIR: It is something we need to consider.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: Your submission is fairly extensive and thank you for the further information in regard to a better demerit point system. Without going through that, can you explain how you think that would be better than the existing system and would it be fair to say that the system that you are outlining is more lenient than the existing system; yes or no? Then I am interested about your thoughts "more carrot-stick" and the rewards-based incentive demerit system, if you could touch on that as well.

Mr STEWART: The more carrot-stick, I guess, is a whole range of activities with educational programs.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: You touched on insurance as well.

Mr STEWART: Yes. Magistrates could sentence people to do an educational course. There is immense benefit in having police not being merely punitive. I used the police in the western region quite a bit for this. I have given you an example of the blue flashing lights, school holidays, plenty of interaction, plenty of visibility. Other things such as bicycle helmets in remote communities: Coonamble, Walgett, Bourke, Brewarrina, those places. The amount of money is chicken feed. It is a tiny amount of money. The police would book people on bicycles by giving them a lottery ticket and the mayor would be there. We are making it cool. We are addressing the culture that it is cool to wear a bicycle helmet by having police interact more, which is why I suggest the one point penalty with no dollar penalty enables the police to interact more often. At the present time a police officer has to have a pretty strong reason to believe that an offence is being committed before he activates the blue flashing light and pulls you over. He has to be pretty sure that you have offended and he can book you. If it is marginal, he will say, "Oh, blow. Let it go." What I am suggesting is that in those cases where it is marginal, he is not applying a penalty. He pulls you over with a blue flashing light and says, "You were wandering over the lane. I am not going to book you, but you get a caution, a one-point penalty", so you have more interaction. It makes the police more good guys, not just punitive. You need the unique education experience of the blue flashing light in the rear vision mirror and the deterrence that that creates as well. Sorry, have I answered your question adequately?

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: Yes.

Mr STEWART: Sorry, I did not describe my scheme. Why? Because the hundred allows you to have more gradations. It is not just a situation that suddenly whack, whack and your licence is gone. You can be a little bit over the speed limit, so if you are going down a hill and you did not realise. On a long holiday weekend with double demerit points—bang, bang—two offences and your licence is gone and you have not had time to adapt and say, "Uh-oh, I am up at 30 points. I am at 40, I better be more careful. I am now at 50." You lose the gradualism to modify your behaviour.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: You have answered on some fronts about the need for there to be more carrot than stick and greater leniency. Would your system of 100 points require more paperwork and bureaucracy to implement and administer the program?

Mr STEWART: I do not see that there is more. You have a system now where tickets go in and they are coded. The bureaucracy of the administration to my way of thinking would be very much the same. You do have a large bureaucracy with the Office of State Revenue and the land tax and all the different things. I do not see a significant increase in administrative difficulty.

Mr CHRIS HOLSTEIN: A lot more people would be on points for a lot longer?

Mr STEWART: Exactly. At the moment it is so hit-and-miss. You can have bad luck, you get hit twice and you are gone. Or you can drive for six months and you never see a policeman, particularly out west. I am now living out near Dubbo. You can drive for months and never see a police officer, so you get rewarded for getting away with it. The psychology is not there. More police on the road and more interaction are going to give you more little pricks of the conscience.

CHAIR: Your original submission made reference to a young driver education program run by Sergeant John Imeson. Can you tell us about that program? I observe that they have a similar type of program in the United Kingdom; drivers who are close to having their licence suspended can attend the program and regain

a small number of points. That is part of the carrot approach that you have been advocating for in terms of demerit points. Do you believe that such a program should be advocated for New South Wales?

Mr STEWART: Yes, indeed. I was thrilled with what John Imeson did. He is in Penrith, which is the Sydney region. When I came into the Roads and Traffic Authority as an engineer having been in what is now called the Environment Protection Authority and private industry I encountered cynicism toward driver education programs. I thought it must be possible to educate and inform people better. I encountered cynicism amongst road safety experts who said there has never been anywhere in the world that has done a decent driver education program because all it does is make people more confident to take more risks. They said that you teach them how to skid and do all these things and they just take more risks and that counteracts it.

What John Imeson did was to take young teenagers and people who were perhaps about to offend who were referred to him by DOCS [NSW Department of Family and Community Services], FACS [Family and Community Services], community services or welfare and he would run a series of fun evenings with the ambulance officer and the fire brigade officer. It even included taking them for a ride in a police car around the block and explaining to them that we have to enforce the law. It is building bridges, creating the human side of it, taking away alienation and giving some education that says, "Look, life is serious. Be careful when you get behind the wheel." There must be scope. I think I am suggesting in my submission that road authorities need to do some research. It has been neglected. It has been just brushed off and people have said that driver education does not work. But it must be possible to tailor driver education towards attitude and it could count for extra points. If somebody is getting up to 60, 70, 80 or 90 points they may think, "Oh dear. I will go and do this driver education course and obtain some more brownie points." By that interaction they can learn.

Driver education is possible. I did a one-day training course at Amaroo Park when I worked for what is now called the Environment Protection Authority. It did not teach advanced driving. It simply taught braking technique: how to apply the brakes and how to brake better. That, to me, was very good. It is possible to have driver education courses that can in my view achieve a meaningful benefit in driver behaviour and in reducing the road toll. That is my view.

CHAIR: In the graduated licence scheme there is a benefit if you participate in that type of course or have lessons with a trained instructor. Can you relate that to what we have been talking about here? Do you see a connection with people who are perhaps nearing their licence withdrawal under the demerit scheme voluntarily taking part in something like that and gaining back a couple of points?

Mr STEWART: Yes. I have suggested this sort of citizen panel that perhaps could be administered by the NRMA or someone where a person who might lose their licence, they might be a professional driver, can go and plead with the panel for an extra 20 or 30 points. You only get it once or twice, I have suggested. That is to try to overcome this sort of random nature that people can get away with bad driving behaviour for months or years because the police enforcement is so low. I have had it put to me that it is impossible for professional drivers not to get caught sooner or later. You are over by five or 10 kilometres, you are going down a hill or whatever and suddenly the camera has got you. That is just my comment.

Mr DARREN WEBBER: I have heard an idea before that certainly seems to have merit. It is the discounted insurance premium system for good behaviour, which goes back to the carrot versus the stick approach. However, how do you propose a system like that would work? I have heard of the idea but there are the practicalities of insurance companies having to be on a level playing field. Do you have any ideas as to how that could work?

Mr STEWART: You would have to abolish the fee for an individual motorist to access their driving record with the RTA so that come insurance renewal time the insurance company can say that your insurance premium is \$800 and then deduct the number of points. If you are a 100 per cent driver you deduct 100 points. So you go in and get a printout. You can say, "Here is the printout. These are my points. I am on 93 points and so I get \$93 off my insurance premium."

Mr DARREN WEBBER: If motorists were able to access their demerit point history presumably for free, or the insurance company on their behalf, you could implement some sort of discount now with the current regime?

Mr STEWART: Yes, if the insurance companies wanted to do it. I do not know how the economic incentives would work out but you need to abolish the fee. I have not caught up with it but it used to be that you

had to pay \$10 or \$15 to find out your points. There needs to be some way you could simply get a printout that at date X these are your demerit points.

CHAIR: Thank you for appearing before us this afternoon and for talking to your new paper. We very much appreciate it.

(The witness withdrew.)

The Committee adjourned at 4.22 p.m.
