

Secretary: *A. Alford*

RECEIVED

7 NOV 2003

Submission to House of Representatives Inquiry into
National Road Safety

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STANDING COMMITTEE ON
TRANSPORT AND
REGIONAL SERVICES

Tony Healy

Thankyou for the opportunity to make a submission to the inquiry. I am a citizen with a strong interest in road safety. I would like to make the following points:

Speed Cameras

Recent argument from the Centre for Independent Studies that speed cameras don't work contains serious flaws, which I address in a paper available at OnLine Opinion:
<http://www.onlineopinion.com.au/view.asp?article=839>. My main points are:

1. the crash types excluded from the speed category by Buckingham should not be excluded; they are caused or exacerbated by speeding and can be addressed by anti-speeding measures. Examples include jack-knifing, slippery roads and aggressive driving. So the proportion of crashes caused by speeding is not 7 percent as Buckingham claims, but the 30 to 40 percent claimed by road safety researchers
2. crashes are biased towards low speeds for many reasons, but this does not indicate that lawful travelling is more dangerous than speeding. For example, many crashes occur when vehicles are entering or leaving the traffic stream, and thus travelling slower than the stream or even stopped.
3. the plateauing in crash statistics that Buckingham comments on has several possible explanations, but Buckingham does not consider them. For example, they could result simply from education and advocacy programs having reached all reasonable drivers, and now being stalled on a hard core of speedsters. Or they might result from the effect of talking on mobile phones, which became prominent during the 1990's and which causes crashes.
4. the Australian experience clearly shows speed cameras reducing fatalities where they're installed. Crash

reductions range from 46 percent to 95 percent over three year periods.

Evidence from professional researchers [1],[2] is clear that speed cameras reduce speeding and crashes. Speed cameras should be preserved and their use expanded.

Examination of Activity Designed to Subvert the Law

Laws relating to speeding are devised by experts and agreed by the community to protect everyone including innocents. Yet some groups engage in substantial efforts to subvert the operation of those laws by disguising their number plates, using radar detectors and other measures. Consideration should be given as to whether tolerance of this is consistent with our approach to unlawful activity in other areas.

Distracted Driving

The problem of distracted driving will increase as various in-car navigation and other devices are deployed. Many cars such as Landrover Discovery and some trucks now include DVD screens that let the driver watch movies while driving, which is very dangerous. Road safety policy needs to monitor this area carefully, especially with a view to finding technical solutions. For example, some makers of devices disable complex functions when the vehicle is moving.

Usage Based Insurance

Some insurance firms in the US offer insurance that's based on the distance the driver covers in a year. This is determined from an electronic recording device fitted to the vehicle. Most customers who choose this method pay lower premiums. Such a system would play a useful part in introducing greater competition and rewarding safer driving behaviours.

1. Independent evaluation shows speed cameras save lives,
NSW Roads and Traffic Authority, 21 September 2003,
referring to ARRB Transport Research report
[http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/newsevents/speedcamerarelease2109
2003.html](http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/newsevents/speedcamerarelease21092003.html)

2. Robin Anderson and Andrew Edgar: Mobile Speed Cameras in
the ACT - Slashing Speeds and Cutting Crashes, ARRB
Transport Research, 2003
[http://www.monash.edu.au/oce/roadsafety/abstracts and paper
s/081/081.htm](http://www.monash.edu.au/oce/roadsafety/abstracts_and_papers/081/081.htm)