

SUBMISSION TO:

**PARLIAMENT OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF
AUSTRALIA**

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STANDING COMMITTEE
ON COMMUNICATIONS,
TRANSPORT AND THE ARTS.**

**MANAGING FATIGUE
IN TRANSPORT**

**Presented by SLEEP DISORDERS AUSTRALIA,
Tasmania Branch.**

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SLEEP DISORDERS AUSTRALIA

History of National body.

Sleep Disorders Australia is a voluntary group offering assistance and support to those persons and their families who are living with some form of Sleep Disorder. It provides assistance to and education of, its members, the public at large and the medical fraternity, in all areas of Sleep Disorders. It undertakes awareness programmes within the Community to heighten the care, treatment and support of persons with Sleep Disorders. It raises funds to carry out the above objectives

Following extensive research by Professor Colin Sullivan of the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Sydney during the 1970's Australia lead the way in research and treatment of the disorder come to be known as SLEEP APNEA. A Sleep Study Unit was set up at the Hospital and patients were being treated for the disorder. Sleep Apnea is a disorder whereby the sufferer's sleep is fragmented by periods of breathlessness and deep sleep is never reached thereby making the sufferer sleepy and drowsy during the day and often falling asleep at work, in the home and at the wheel of a motor vehicle. In those early days all patients had to travel to Sydney for their Sleep Studies. As the numbers of patients increased, in 1980 the SLEEP APNEA RESEARCH ASSOCIATION was formed in NSW as a support group for these people.

As training and awareness of the disorder grew in the Community and more Sleep Units were being opened up throughout the Country, various off-shoots of this organisation were formed in the early to mid 90's and these were set up in Queensland, ACT, Victoria and South Australia.

On 29th August 1996, A Limited Liability Company was formed under the title of SLEEP DISORDERS AUSTRALIA. Incorporating all of the above bodies.

HISTORY OF TASMANIA BRANCH

OUR SUBMISSION

The facts and research related to in this submission are into ROAD TRANSPORT ONLY, but can relate to all forms of other transport and may be of benefit to the Committee when deliberating on other transport areas.

Sleep disorders Australia has prepared a separate submission in relation to this subject and the matters raised by that body are:

OBJECTS OF SLEEP DISORDERS AUSTRALIA

PREVIOUS INQUIRY BY NSW PARLIAMENT

WHAT IS SLEEP APNEA

THE OCCURRENCE OF SLEEP DISORDERED BREATHING AMONG MIDDLE AGED ADULTS.

FATIGUE, ALCOHOL AND PERFORMANCE IMPAIRMENT.

DRIVE SAFE - HOW TO AVOID FATIGUE

SELF REPORTED VEHICLE ACCIDENTS

PEOPLE WITH UNTREATED SLEEP APNEA HAVE WORSE DRIVING SKILLS THAN A DRUNK DRIVER.

COMMERCIAL MOTOR VEHICLE DRIVER FATIGUE AND ALERTNESS STUDY.

DRIVING WITH SLEEP APNEA.

CRUISING AND SNOOZING.

DROWSY DRIVING IN THE USA.

EFFECTS OF PARTIAL AND TOTAL SLEEP DEPRIVATION ON DRIVING PERFORMANCE.

INTERNATIONAL FATIGUE CONFERENCE.

CURRENT TASMANIAN PROJECT

With the assistance of the Motor Accident Insurance Board's Injury Prevention and Management Foundation, the Tasmanian Branch of Sleep Disorders Australia has been undertaking a Driver Fatigue Awareness Programme (See pamphlet attached).

This programme is aimed at cutting the road toll and accidents that are caused by fatigue and un-diagnosed SLEEP APNEA.

Success has been obtained by :

- 1. Preparation and playing on Commercial TV channels of a commercial based on driver fatigue.**
- 2. The printing of the enclosed pamphlet.**
- 3. The setting up and maintenance of an Internet Web site at www.sleepoz.org.au.**
- 4. The running of public awareness meetings at major centres in the State.**
- 5. Placing advertisements and promotional features in the local press detailing the problems associated with driver fatigue.**
- 6. Follow up personally with replies to the advertisements.**

During 1999 - 2000 the programme will again be running with the assistance of MAIB and sponsors.

PROPOSED PROJECT.

It is proposed that a DRIVER FATIGUE AND ACCIDENT RESEARCH CENTRE be set up at the University of Tasmania, Newnham Campus on the lines of that set up at Monash University, but on a much lesser scale. (See attachment regarding Monash University).

REASONS FOR THE PROJECT

The information available to date in Tasmania in relation to accidents is limited (See attachments).

It is proposed that a research group be set up to provide more accurate information on accidents etc. and in particular the cause of accidents.

CURRENT SITUATION

Of the 47 deaths in 1998, 5 were due to inattentiveness, 4 due to unknown and 16 other.

It is our contention that with more resources and research these figures could be further refined.

The same can be said of the 1499 injuries.

With the set up of our suggested Research centre we will be able to accurately target the areas required.

CONCLUSION

THAT FUNDS BE MADE AVAILABLE TO SET UP THE RESEARCH CENTRE AFTER PROPER INVESTIGATION HAS BEEN UNDERTAKEN WITH THE RELEVANT AUTHORITIES.

WE WOULD LIKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO PUT OUR CASE IN PERSON TO THE COMMITTEE.