

Economic Development Committee

Inquiry into the road safety benefits of fixed  
speed cameras

Submission 19

# Economic Development Committee Secretariat

## QUEENSLAND PARLIAMENTARY SERVICE

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Dear Sirs,

Please accept this as my submission to your committee.

"We are fast approaching the stage of the ultimate inversion: the stage where the government is free to do anything it pleases, while the citizens may act only by permission; which is the stage of the darkest periods of human history, the stage of rule by brute force."

Ayn Rand, The Nature of Government

As I know your time is limited and as I do not want to bore you and would like to have my submission fully understood I will keep it brief and as far as possible concise. It is only 6 pages. My two recent letters to the minister are included as is a précis of my conversation with [REDACTED] at the end, as are replies from a Mr. [REDACTED].

Where appropriate extracts from letters are included in brackets (GL1, GL2 etc and MS1, MS2 etc and in italics), these may be skipped over if you wish to save time.

What follow immediately below is a recent letter to the editor. Please read this at least.

Government and our Participation

I keep seeing calls in the Noosa papers for greater involvement by the public in governmental affairs. If only it were so easy!

Here is my experience.

I heard of a "community" group in my area, but had no idea how to contact them or where they met. A request for this information from the relevant Department met with a non-answer despite repeated requests over 18 months.

When I finally accidentally stumbled upon their, meeting times, place and a contact phone number I rang the chairwoman to ask to be invited. She hung up on me. So having no other alternative I attended my first meeting of the group without an invitation. I pointed out to the group that the chairwoman had hung up on me, and that I had invited myself.

After attending a few meetings I asked if I could address the group, this was granted. I then addressed the group on a highly technical matter in front of Department representatives. They could find no fault at all with my arguments.

At a latter meeting with three MP's present I tried to bring up that subject again only to find myself gagged.

I attended my last meeting of the group with a piece of tape over my mouth and a sign that said, "I am a member of the community too".

After that when I heard the minister say that she was acting on advice from the "Community Group" I simply had to have a cynical laugh to myself.

I recently wrote to a new minister in the same portfolio asking to help her and asking that she act honestly and ethically. I received a reply from her department that referred me to web sites that did not contain the material I was asking for and the letter contained an outright provable lie.

So recently I wrote to another MP (*Evan Moorhead MP no less*) involved in the same issue and here is an extract from the close of that letter.

"I am thoroughly disenchanted with the political system, people are calling for more participation from the populace, but there is no point, you are comprehensively lied to and ignored. It is only idiots like me that persist, and I don't know why I do it!

I know that government knows what to do as it always does the exact opposite. It is very disheartening but also very dangerous for our democracy."

You see the bureaucrats and the politicians know what is best for us, they will tell us what to do and we must simply obey. And this is democracy?

So often we are treated like children, and because of the two party system we can have no say in what is going on.

An example of current government policy and its absurdity is, we cannot

drink the water from our rainwater tanks but must drink recycled sewerage with added fluoride just for the taste! But they are talking about imposing a tax our rainwater tanks. Where is the sense?

(Name and address supplied but withheld.)

The Group was the Adelaide Hills "COMMUNITY" (?) Road Safety Group, the subject was the correct setting of speed limits, and the three representatives of The Department of Transport, could find no fault or argument with what I said, in fact reading between the lines they totally agreed with me. They neither, contradicted me during my presentation, or came up to me latter and said, "you got this piece of information wrong."

These were the same people who I had a 13-year correspondence with whose official answer to my letters was always that I was wrong. The Minister finally wrote to me and said they would no longer answer my letters.

To be concise speed limits cannot be set at more than a 10kph variance from the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile figure except where there is a high accident rate in an area and then everything has been done to address any problems the road may have by altering the road itself. (The 90kph limit on the Bruce Highway at Federal is a good example of this.)

I wrote to the Minister on 14.1.2010 and only wanted to speak to the Minister as my letter to the minister in reply to [REDACTED] GL3 says

*(I have had a 13 year correspondence with the Department of Transport in another state and I am wise enough to know no matter how right I may be and no matter how wrong you may be, you will always be right.)*

It is by definition that any one who writes to the Department critical of their actions MUST be wrong.

I find great difficulty with the terms of reference of the Committee, you only talk about "speeding" your terms do not distinguish between exceeding an incorrectly set speed limit and genuine speeding, which I define as driving too fast for the prevailing conditions. The first should have no penalty attached but the latter should.

Even Mr. [REDACTED] makes no distinction between the two, and there can be a big difference between them. As I said to a previous Minister of Transport, two stationary cars do not collide so all accidents MUST involve speed, it is only the appropriateness that is in question.

As for setting the speed limit with a 3kph "tolerance" well yes if you are going to set speed limits every 3kph. i.e. 60kph, 63kph, 66kph etc. My letter GL3 refers to this, in these terms

*(Firstly let me address the issue of the 3 kph tolerance with you.*

*It is unarguably clear that the tolerance cannot be less than the interval between the speed zones. Ok I know that is an assertion, BUT read on!*

*Let us say we have an 85th percentile of 67kph. So we impose a 70 kph limit. Sorry that was a joke, did you get it?*

*So then we have a 60 kph limit imposed with a 3kph tolerance, so driving at 64 kph has us paying a fine for "speeding". As you can see we actually have an intolerance of 4kph and a direct subversion of the spirit and intention of the Australian Standard.*

*I do not expect you [REDACTED] to address this issue, as the only way you can do so is to revert to good old-fashioned authoritarianism as [REDACTED] did. The state always knows what is best and it will impose its will on the populace even though it is not even obeying its own rules.*

***Only you Minister can authorise such an authoritarian dictatorial decision, and I suspect that you are unaware of the facts. Because to be authoritarian could only be considered corrupt with the entire motoring public paying for that corruption).***

**I find it VERY INTERESTING that in his replies to me [REDACTED] NEVER tries to answer this question.**

How often do we all find ourselves in a long line of cars all doing 15 to 20kph above the posted speed limit? Unless there is a high accident rate in that area (and the Australian Standard says in that case there will be a sign under the speed limit sign saying just that) then this is an incorrectly set speed limit.

You may note that I asked [REDACTED] to give me the address of a web site to obtain 85<sup>th</sup> percentile figures and he agreed. Thus **they do exist there is a web site and the Department has access to it.** I understand why they don't want me to have access to it, but I don't need it, to know that many speed limits are incorrectly set. I knew it in Adelaide many years before the Department there would release the figures to me, when those figures were released they proved me correct. **I had estimated the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed exactly.**

**[REDACTED] says in MS2 (About your request for speed data on Queensland roads, as previously advised, this information may be available from individual road authorities and you would need to contact them directly with your request.)**

**Really the overriding road authority in Queensland does not have 85<sup>th</sup> percentile figures and I have to go elsewhere, when [REDACTED] clearly indicated they had them, promised to give me the correct link to them but actually gave me a false link. Sorry this is what I expect, I knew I would not get them and was surprised when [REDACTED]**

**promised to give them to me. It is blatantly clear why they don't want to give them out, the speed limits are not set correctly.**

As I said in GL2

*(My letter was titled ETHICS and HONESTY. I further said "It would be pleasant if you were to cooperate in this matter and make available the necessary data that I would need to make some meaningful comment on some existing speed limits." You will see later in this letter that every trick in the book has been performed to ensure that I get no data. Unfortunately the reason is obvious the speed limits are not set within cooeee of the 85th percentiles and the Department wants to stop me seeing just how far from the 85<sup>th</sup> percentiles the speed limits are set.)*

As you may tell I have been made extraordinarily cynical by the actions of "government" thus when I heard that speed cameras were to be introduced in Adelaide I immediately understood the potential for raising money because in Adelaide the long straight, flat and safe 60kph dual carriageway roads that litter the city are clearly 70kph roads. When I heard the Senior Traffic Engineer saying the speed limits were set according to the Australian Standard I knew they weren't and in a letter to me he confirmed this.

**The only way to assure the public that you are not raising revenue is to set the speed limits correctly.** They had revenue raising down to a fine art in Adelaide with cameras predominantly in areas with incorrectly set speed limits, such as parklands and just outside the 200M constraint in coming into a township etc.

**Please understand that correctly set speed limits will lower the road toll, that is what the Australian Standard is all about. I have no desire to increase the road toll.**

My letter GL2 says

*(Dear Minister aren't you ashamed at my cynicism? I know I am. Fixing that is in your hands.*

***"With a too prescriptive and punitive regime of setting and enforcement of speed limits the government is saying we know what is best for you, let us tell you what to do, you do not have to think when you drive, you simply have to do as you are told and you will not have an accident."***

***Over all this is a prescription for disaster, both on the roads and for our democracy.***

*If speed limits are to be enforced with a speed camera, which is capable of booking every car on the road for speeding, then we need to be very sure of what we are doing. Police cannot be used in this situation, as they would soon refuse to do the work.)*

However I note with concern the move, which is clearly coming from some unnamed quarter, to reduce the blood alcohol limit to .02, (research shows that there is no detectable alteration in the skill of a driver till .06 is exceeded), and understand that the same puritanical force is at work in setting the speed limits considerably lower than the Australian Standard would have them set.

I recently wrote to Fiona Simpson asking if she supported the speed limits being set according to the Australian Standard. Her reply was "I support speed limits being set on the basis of speed review committees, with input from police and road engineers, informed by crash data and other relevant information." In other words she wants the speed limits set according to my letter GL3

*(The standard does not say that the speed limits will be set by a wise man in an office in Brisbane, and it certainly does not say that they will be set to reap maximum income from "speeding fines". Do motorists drive at 60, 80, and 100 kph to make the speed limits correct? NO if the speed limits were set correctly then there would be an even distribution of 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, and 100kph zones. The odd numbered zones were only introduced after I had this argument with the Department.)*

There is a Macquarie University study that shows that the speeding fines and the loss of licenses commensurate with these are actually a net loss to the state. I suppose there is some benefit in that there is cost shifting from state to federal as people move onto Centrelink benefits.

I would suggest that if the Sunshine Coast owes \$M23 in speeding fines and these are proving hard to collect that is because drivers do not like paying a fine when they were driving reasonably and sensibly.

The current regime of the setting of speed limits needs a thorough overhaul and I do not mean that I want government to find further excuses for lowering them. Correctly set speed limits will tell good drivers that they are good drivers, and point out to bad drivers that they could improve their skills. The current regime tells good drivers that they are bad drivers and bad drivers that they are good drivers, nothing could be better designed to increase the road toll.

It is said the propaganda worked well with drink driving, and I agree. But it will not work with "speeding" whilst the limits are not set correctly. As drivers "know" without knowing that they are driving too slowly and this always leads to inattention and thus accidents.

It should be the case that a rational and reasonable driver could drive for years without a speedo and never be booked for "speeding", if the speed limits were set correctly this would be the case, **it is my aim to make it so.**

I Urge members of the committee to look at the following link. It was in the Advertiser on 28.3.10 and as of 31.3.10 had 223 posts. There should be no doubt incorrectly set speed limits will not be obeyed, thus unless they are, you will be able to always collect lots of easy cash.

<http://www.adelaidenow.com.au/news/south-australia/half-of-south-australias-drivers-flout-the-50kmh-default-speed-limit/comments-e6frea83-1225846616153>

*The Captain of Reality Town Posted at 7:26 AM March 29, 2010*

What their research already shows -and has shown for over 20 years now - is that motorists independently determine what they believe is the reasonable speed to travel under the conditions , and then observe it. So if you're in a 50kmh zone and the road is clear and traffic is light, drivers will tend to go over the posted limit if they think it's safe to do so. Some of the 50kmh zones are criminally stupid, and drivers clearly are voting with their (right) feet.  
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If the committee would like I am keen to appear in person, and could attend Brisbane given a couple of days notice. In fact I am very keen to address the committee, as the Minister clearly will not speak to me.

I would ask the committee to look at my philosophical notes in my notes of the conversation with [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

Geoff Lewis

### GL1 First Letter to Minister

**From:** Geoff Lewis <[REDACTED]>  
**Date:** 14 January 2010 7:06:25 PM AEDT  
**To:** [transport@ministerial.qld.gov.au](mailto:transport@ministerial.qld.gov.au)  
**Subject:** Ethics and Honesty

Dear Minister Nolan,

as a Minister of the Crown I imagine that you would like to think that you and your department act honestly and ethically.

I have been involved in assisting various state governments set the speed limits according to the rules that they have made for themselves.

I have been the cause of a Senior Traffic Engineer resigning. He made the mistake of telling me by letter that the speed limits were not set as he had publicly said. He "misled" (told a politically correct "truth") the public as to how the speed limits were set. I also claim that the signs that are displayed after a speed camera were caused by my insistence, without them a motorists ability



to defend himself are largely removed.

I note with concern your recent pronouncements regarding these matters and wish to speak to you personally to pursue certain issues with you.

My greatest concern is that you **absolutely and unequivocally** can not set the speed limit tolerance at 3kph and still claim to be setting the speed limits according to the Australian Standard. You must conform to this standard if you want to be considered to be acting ethically and thus not be considered to be revenue raising.

We do not need to book motorists for exceeding incorrectly set speed limits.

Do you do the washing up, have you ever cracked a plate?

What makes you think that motorists are any less prone to accidents than you are?

Have you ever investigated the number of suicides in the road toll? I have and I believe if one was to remove the suicides and quasi suicides from the road toll the number killed on our roads would be infinitesimally small, and actually not worth the efforts you seem to be putting into this issue.

Are you aware of the judgement from five Supreme Court judges wherein they called government control "interfering paternalism"? I hope you would be doing all you could to avoid doing this to the generally disaffected public.

It would be pleasant if you were to cooperate in this matter and make available the necessary data that I would need to make some meaningful comment on some existing speed limits.

Yours Geoff Lewis

PS Please note I will be away from 07 [REDACTED] (the number I expect you to call me on) until 27.1.10.

### **Precis of Conversation with Mr [REDACTED]**

Report of the conversation that occurred on the afternoon of 28.1.10 from 16.19 to 16.52 between [REDACTED] Senior Traffic Engineer with the Queensland Department of Transport and Geoff Lewis.

[REDACTED] unexpectedly rang me and explained he was ringing in response to my email to the Minister. It seemed he was ringing to tell me my understanding of how the speed limits were set was wrong. He informed me that the limits were not necessarily set according to the Australian Standard and that there was a Queensland body of rules that were used. He promised to send me a link to this body of rules as well as a link to a site where I could get 85th percentile

figures and another site where I could determine which roads were council roads and which were state roads. **Not surprisingly not one of these links have been received as of 12.noon 2.2.10 despite the fact that [REDACTED] has both my phone number and my email address. I have never been able to get 85th percentile figures from any Department of Transport.**

Until I read and understand the Queensland body of rules I can make no comment on them. Whether state overrides federal is an interesting question, with all recent high court decisions favouring federal over state. I also particularly liked the decision by five Supreme Court judges who said the government was guilty of "**Interfering Paternalism**".

However overall it is correct to say that [REDACTED] informed me that the Department set the limits according to those Queensland rules and that even if motorists were ignoring the speed limit as set, then that was no concern of his and probably greater enforcement of the limit was needed to slow motorists down. (If this is incorrect [REDACTED] you had better let me know.) I said that as far as I was concerned the Australian Standard did not allow that to happen.

**As I understand it the Australian Standard says:**

- The 85th percentile figure is virtually sacrosanct. No motorist should be booked for "speeding" when driving at this figure except in very prescribed circumstances as described latter.

-Some reasonable tolerance clearly needs to be applied to this figure. (I have however never been able to have an honest conversation with any department of transport as to how big a tolerance is to be applied). The speed limit has to be set correctly before this discussion has any meaning at all anyway.

-The standard does contain the provision to artificially reduce a speed limit on a piece of road with a high crash rate but only after all other measures have been tried. Those measures primarily include upgrading the road using a variety of means.

I said to [REDACTED] that the piece of the Bruce highway south of Gympie seemed to be a piece of road with a correctly applied reduced speed limit. I believe that the Standard even indicates that to inform motorists that the speed limit is not set at the 85th percentile signs should be erected saying, in this instance, "high accident rate road".

I discussed with [REDACTED] that on many roads the entire platoon of cars can be travelling up to 15kph above the speed limit and I did not see how it was possible to claim that the speed limit was set correctly when every car on the road would be booked for speeding.

It concerns me greatly when the government knows better than the people. I believe that is called a dictatorship. It also concerns me greatly when the

government is willing to impose it's will using speed cameras, it needs to be sure that it is not doing more harm than good.

Surely [REDACTED] is not suggesting that all speed limits on all roads are set to an accuracy of shall we say 3kph.

If we take a country road with corners and straights, then how do we set an appropriate speed limit, do we set it for the slowest corner or the fastest straight. It seems to me there is a whole heap of hypocrisy, humbug and cant about this entire issue. I wonder if we are suffering the classic "Yes Minister" problem here with the department not willing to tell the minister anything that she does not want to hear.

## Philosophy

In his book *Voltaire's Bastards* John Ralston Saul says "**The technocrat knows best. Without anyone actually saying so, the citizen is eliminated as a participant. He or she is there to be managed.**"

The Australian standard is supposed to ensure that the motorist is heard, not ignored. You may call it **democracy expressed with the right foot.**

I find it very difficult as a citizen to be managed (ignored) in this way. But in this "**democracy**" we have become far too used to being ignored. This is the primary reason that politicians are held in such low regard.

It is a fantasy to argue that a bureaucrat in an office in Brisbane knows better than a driver on Queensland country road what is a safe speed for that section of road, under all conditions of weather and traffic. It is true that the speed limit advises the maximum speed that should be driven, but what happens if the conditions are far from ideal, then the motorist must use his own judgement, **but he has no judgement as he has always been told at what speed to drive.**

[REDACTED] knows as well as I do that during wet weather the 85th percentiles do not drop as expected. The explanation for this is that drivers are already forced to drive below the speed that they would normally be driving at and when conditions change they then drive correctly according to the conditions then pertaining.

### **Things I did not discuss with [REDACTED] but could/should have!**

There was a policeman in Sydney giving everyone a 10kph tolerance on the existing tolerance. If a policeman is faced with a stream of traffic exceeding an incorrectly set speed limit he really has no choice but to ignore most motorists and only book a few. To do otherwise is to demean and dehumanise the policeman.

Or the fact that on many occasions a policeman, as opposed to a speed

camera, will also give a tolerance or even not book at all agreeing that the speed limit is not correct. Police are often caused, by complaints, to patrol a section of road that they would rather not patrol. The speed camera is not capable of such discretion.

Yours Geoff Lewis

## Second Letter to Minister

Minister of Transport Queensland

Dear Minister Nolan and [REDACTED],

I wrote to you Minister in the first instance as I wanted to talk to you.

I did not wish to receive a phone call from an obviously not very well informed person from the Department. Or receive a letter from another person who was only going to say the Department can do no wrong. ie tell me the politically correct truth. ie lies.

My letter was titled ETHICS and HONESTY. I further said "It would be pleasant if you were to cooperate in this matter and make available the necessary data that I would need to make some meaningful comment on some existing speed limits." You will see later in this letter that every trick in the book has been performed to ensure that I get no data. Unfortunately the reason is obvious the speed limits are not set within cooee of the 85th percentiles and the Department wants to stop me seeing just how far from the 85<sup>th</sup> percentiles the speed limits are set.

Thus there is absolutely no point in having a "correspondence" with you [REDACTED]. You have nothing to "correspond" with.

This is why I asked to speak to the minister! There is no point in having a "dialogue with the deaf".

What follows below Minister is a reply to [REDACTED] letter, but you need to understand and reply to it yourself. I only wish [REDACTED] to answer one question in my letter and that is the one on suicides.

Lets look at several issues in turn.

Firstly let me address the issue of the 3 kph tolerance with you.

I know you cannot actually address this issue with me [REDACTED] as to do so would really prove that the emperor has no clothes, and not only that, but was caught out in an indecent act.

It is unarguably clear that the tolerance cannot be less than the interval between the speed zones. Ok I know that is an assertion, BUT read on!

Let us say we have an 85th percentile of 67kph. So we impose a 70 kph limit. Sorry that was a joke, did you get it?

So then we have a 60 kph limit imposed with a 3kph tolerance, so driving at 64 kph has us paying a fine for "speeding". As you can see we actually have an intolerance of 4kph and a direct subversion of the spirit and intention of the Australian Standard.

I do not expect you [REDACTED] to address this issue as the only way you can do so is to revert to good old fashioned authoritarianism as [REDACTED] did. The state always knows what is best and it will impose its will on the populace even though it is not even obeying its own rules.

Only you Minister can authorise such an authoritarian dictatorial decision, and I suspect that you are unaware of the facts. Because to be authoritarian could only be considered corrupt with the entire motoring public paying for that corruption.

Secondly [REDACTED] promised to send me a link to a web page where I could obtain 85th percentile figures, that in itself proves that there is a web page with these figures on it, however I in my letter say that I have never been able to get 85th percentile figures from any Dept of Transport.

You [REDACTED] in return in your letter say, "you may wish to contact individual road authorities direct to receive this information", honestly I wish you would not engage in these petty deceptions, you are the biggest "local road authority" and I am asking you for them. I didn't really expect to get them of course.

Thirdly I was promised a web site where I could get the Queensland MUTCD, the given web site does of course not contain that material. I didn't expect it to. I further suspect that the Queensland MUTCD is identical to the Australian Standard. If it isn't then I am sorry but federal law has precedence.

The site where I could presumably obtain a map of local council roads and your "individual road authority" roads is naturally "damaged or unobtainable".

Why am I not surprised about this?

Fourthly please advise [REDACTED] on what date the suicide statistics were removed from the road accident statistics. I will not enter into what constitutes a suicide as that is far too a slippery slope for you to mislead me on.

Fifthly when you talk about "the extent of speeding on Queensland roads" are you referring to motorists exceeding the speed limit OR driving too fast for the prevailing conditions. I know from ads on TV that the Department likes to deliberately mix the two up for propaganda purposes.

I have had a 13 year correspondence with the Department of Transport in another state and I am wise enough to know no matter how right I may be and no matter how wrong you may be, you will always be right.

I understand that you must always do as your masters tell you even though you yourself in all probability disagree with their philosophy. Having done what they want and not telling them things they do not want to hear, in best Yes Minister manner, you are duty bound to defend what you are doing, even though every day when you drive your car you are aware of the big gap

between what you do and what happens in the street. There is often a big gap between reality and your fantasy.

Having got yourself into that conundrum you simply cannot back out of.

Minister if it were possible to book every car for speeding that "speed" even with the current "tolerance" then I am certain that every driver who drove his car for 7 days would receive a speeding fine. In a couple of months probably 50% of drivers would have lost their licence. I note that in SA 61,000 motorists are very close to losing their licence and SA has had to give licences back. Proof positive that the cameras are only revenue raising.

It is no coincidence that SA introduced speed cameras in the wake of the State Bank disaster, I note Queensland has now got it's self into a similar disastrous situation.

I note Minister that you are of the opinion that NSW and Victoria have the most punitive speed camera regimes. I can not speak for Victoria but NSW has a benign regime. South Australia has a very punitive regime with many incorrectly set speed limits.

I note that in SA in the 50 kph zones 35% of motorists are booked for speeding, and that is with a tolerance of 10kph. You would book more than 50% (probably more than 60%) of motorists if the tolerance were 3kph. It is just a guess but with a Gaussian distribution curve I would guess that the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile figure is 67kph. In other words the speed limit is set with an intolerance of 17kph.

The Australian standard says, "a major factor in the determination of a speed limit is the prevailing traffic speed, as measured by the 85th percentile speed or by the upper limit of the 15km/h pace". And it does say as I have already said that this shall not be varied except in exceptional circumstances.

The standard does not say that the speed limits will be set by a wise man in an office in Brisbane, and it certainly does not say that they will be set to reap maximum income from "speeding fines". Do motorists drive at 60, 80, and 100 kph to make the speed limits correct? NO if the speed limits were set correctly then there would be an even distribution of 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, and 100kph zones. The odd numbered zones were only introduced after I had this argument with the Department.

As I said in my letter to [REDACTED] it is clear that his attitude is "even if motorists were ignoring the speed limit as set, then that was no concern of his and probably greater enforcement of the limit was needed to slow motorists down."

This directly contradicts the intention and spirit of the Standard and you well know it [REDACTED] though you cannot admit it. We are in big trouble when government knows better than the people. The vast majority of drivers, get in their car and drive safely. Just because you cannot set the limits correctly is no reason why they should be booked for exceeding an incorrectly set speed limit.

We live in a democracy, and you [REDACTED] are an instrument in suborning it. These issues can only be discussed with the minister.

Dear Minister aren't you ashamed at my cynicism? I know I am. Fixing that is in your hands. In my response to [REDACTED] I say:

"With a too prescriptive and punitive regime of setting and enforcement of speed limits the government is saying we know what is best for you, let us tell you what to do, you do not have to think when you drive, you simply have to do as you are told and you will not have an accident."

Over all this is a prescription for disaster, both on the roads and for our democracy.

If speed limits are to be enforced with a speed camera which is capable of booking every car on the road for speeding, then we need to be very sure of what we are doing. Police can not be used in this situation as they would soon refuse to do the work. This is why the policeman in NSW was deducting 10 kph from the "booked" speed.

I would sincerely ask you to look once again at the section of my reply to [REDACTED] headed philosophy. For brevity I will not repeat it here.

But add the following thoughts:

Without the anchor of the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile the state has no reason to act reasonably as the lower the speed limit it sets the more money it gains. And its gets to beat the law and order drum at the same time, a true win win for the state but an outright loss for democracy. The state has thus set itself up as judge jury and executioner. (Remember you will not get the police to do the job that you want done.)

If the state wants to infantilise us then initially, the death toll will reduce, as competent drivers will be intimidated into driving too slowly. But once we have a large cohort of incompetent drivers on the road, cause by incorrectly set speed limits and intimidation, the death toll will inexorable start to rise.

And not only will we not have progressed anywhere, in reducing the road toll, but will have reduced our citizens to the level of being infants who can only do what the state allows. This will not be beneficial to the state in fact it will be detrimental and is in fact worst than the worst degree of socialism. Total unthinking obedience is required!

A driver must be encouraged to sit up pay attention and drive responsibly. Blind obedience to incorrectly set speed limits will NEVER achieve this. In fact doing this will achieve the exact opposite. Being forced to drive too slowly encourages inattention and this is probably a greater cause of accidents than speeding is. If speeding is defined as driving too fast for the prevailing conditions it must not be defined as exceeding incorrectly set speed limits.

Research, in NSW, showed that speeding drivers had fewer accidents than those not speeding. This research was done before the introduction of speed cameras of course. This would not be the case now. Your own figures show

how dangerous inattention is.

Let's look at a single carriageway road in the country. Let's say it has an incorrectly set speed limit of say 80kph that should be 100kph. We then have a situation where one driver in ten will insist on obeying the speed limit. What then happens? Well he gets a row of drivers behind him all wanting to drive at a reasonable speed, so they get impatient and overtake. Thus by imposing an incorrectly set speed limit you have made this road more dangerous.

Let's further look at the same road, and say it has two 2 kilometer straights separated by a 60kph curve. What speed limit do we set? 100kph for the straights, or 60kph for the curve?

Do we set the speed limit at 60kph to "protect" drivers or do we set it at 100kph and rely on drivers having sufficient desire not to kill themselves and sufficient judgment to be able to assess the situation and slow down for the corner.

Minister, have you ever driven past a 40 kph road works sign that was not "cancelled"? I know I do it very often. Have you in this case watched what other road users do? Do they crawl along at 40 kph till they come to the next speed sign that may be kilometers away or do they use their common sense and cautiously speed up and resume the correct speed for the road?

So do we want idiots that blindly do as they are told or do we want thinking drivers?

Minister I wish to discuss these ideas with you.

I look forward to speaking to you Minister

Yours sincerely

Geoff Lewis

"We are fast approaching the stage of the ultimate inversion: the stage where the government is free to do anything it pleases, while the citizens may act only by permission; which is the stage of the darkest periods of human history, the stage of rule by brute force."

Ayn Rand, The Nature of Government

First Response from 



I am sorry in the time available I have not been able to include [REDACTED] responses here as they are in pdf format and I cannot transfer them.