

6 August 2018

Committee Secretary  
Transport and Public Works Committee  
Parliament House  
George Street  
Brisbane

Dear Committee Secretary,

I am writing in support of tolls on our toll roads being reduced.

We are grey nomads, self-funded retirees, and are finding it increasingly difficult to find the money in our budget for the many road tolls. This is especially the case when we travel in our motorhome (campervan) as the toll charges are so much dearer. For example, we live on the south side of Brisbane and one of the directions we like to travel is to the Sunshine Coast. To do this the best way is over the Gateway Bridge, a normal cost to a car and a caravan of \$4.47 which is costly enough, but to us with our motorhome, we have to pay nearly 3 times the price, \$11.84. This is because our motorhome is over 4.5 tonnes and so is classed as a "Heavy Commercial Vehicle", similar to a big commercial sem-trailer or a B-double truck! This is in direct contradiction to its use which is private, and to Transport and Main Roads Dept classing our vehicle as "Registration – Special Vehicle (Motor Home)" and "Purpose of Use: PRIVATE".

Even smaller motorhomes, under 4.5 tonnes, which are also for private use, are still dearer than a car and caravan as they are classed as Class 3 "Light Commercial Vehicle", and would attract a toll of \$6.71 on the Gateway.

In regards to the class of vehicle, on the 13th December 2017 I wrote to The Honourable Mark Bailey MP, Minister for Main Roads, outlining our predicament (the following 3 pages are provided for reference) but the subsequent undated reply just said, in part, "There are currently no plans to review the vehicle classifications for toll roads. However your comments will be taken into account in any future consideration on this matter."

Our concern is that, that review may be a very, very long time coming, if at all.

Yours Sincerely,

Joy Dockray

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
13<sup>th</sup> December 2017.

The Honourable Mark Bailey MP,  
Minister for Main Roads,  
Department of Transport and Main Roads,  
GPO Box 1412,  
Brisbane. Qld. 4001.

Dear Mr Bailey,

I am writing to ask you to review the Transport Infrastructure Act 1994, specifically the Vehicle Classes, the types of vehicles, and their definitions, in relation to tolls under Section 93 Schedule 5.

“Class 2: Cars” definition includes cars towing caravans to be charged the same as if they weren’t towing at all. We are not people running a business. We are retired grey nomads who chose a motorhome (or campervan) configuration instead of a car and caravan. We are being penalised for this choice because we are being charged “Class 4” tolls, i.e. nearly 3 times that of a car and caravan, the same as big commercial semi-trailers and B double vehicles, purely because our motorhome has the appearance of a “truck” and our gross vehicle mass is greater than 4.5 tonnes (we are 5 tonnes). Even motorhomes with a GVM of less than 4.5 tonnes are charged Class 3, which is still not equitable.

Department of TMR offers discounts to its official “Seniors” members of the community for vehicle registration which is commendable and very helpful with a limited budget. As Seniors we do not expect to be given a discount to use our toll roads but we also do not expect to have to pay anymore than our fellow travellers who have chosen a car and caravan combination. We also do not expect to have to pay the same as a heavy commercial vehicle, the cost of which can be written off under business expenses.

We are aware we can use the free alternative routes instead of the tolled roads, and at present we are being forced to do that, but isn’t it in everybody’s interest, especially the community’s, to keep as much ‘through’ traffic as possible off suburban streets?

To redress this unfair aspect of the current toll charging system, I propose a minor amendment to be made to Class 2 to include motorhomes/campervans (regardless of gross vehicle mass), that have already been categorised in the vehicle registration by TMR as “PRIVATE”.

Yours Sincerely,

Mrs Joy Dockray  
[REDACTED]

PS The following 2 page attachment is provided to demonstrate my case.

Attachment

The following demonstrates how completely unfair the current toll charging system is for our motor-home.

The vehicle class place the emphasis on the weight of the vehicle which is only just 5 tonnes.

It is my strong opinion that the issue has arisen because of the *introduction of automatic tolling*. Toll collections through automatic tolling obviously save labour costs for the collection agencies, but if they rely on arbitrary algorithms to determine the category of the vehicle they can, in cases like this, become an inequitable system.

For example, in case number [1] and [2] below, their typical toll charge is levied whether they are towing or not and our motor-home is almost three times their charge.

***Typical travel combinations for Grey Nomads***

**[1] Car [usually 4 wheel drive, 4WD] and caravan.** Land Cruiser, it has a braked towing capacity of 3.5 tonnes. With a GVM of 3.2 tonnes, it gives you a total weight of 6.7 tonnes. Approximately 16metres long and with 8 road wheels.

Categorised as ***Class 2***

Toll charge example

\$2.64

[see table below]



**[2] 5<sup>th</sup> wheeler [always a large 4wd towed vehicle].** Some of these vehicles are enormous, but the typical one pictured below would have a GVM of approx 6.5 tonnes. Approximately 16metres long and with 8 road wheels.

Categorised as ***Class 2***

Toll charge example

\$2.64

[see table below]



[3] *Our single unit motor-home*. 8.7metres long GVM exactly 5 tonnes and with 6 road wheels [some similar motor-homes would have just 4]. There are only 2 axles, not 3, even though there are 6 wheels.

Categorised as *Class 4* The same charge as that of a very large heavy commercial vehicle – ie a *fully laden semi-trailer*.

Toll charge example  
\$6.99  
[see table below]



If TMR insist that the charging category must be based on weight, then to make the system equitable, I would suggest that the weight [for non-commercial vehicles] should be set at 7-8 tonnes.

A better suggestion though is that for non-commercial, “private” passenger use vehicles, they all be charged as Class 2 irrespective of their GVM.

In the interests of fairness, I respectfully suggest that the system should be changed.

Yours sincerely

Joy Dockray

**Current toll prices [Govia charging table]**

Toll Point	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4
Murarie	\$2.24	\$4.47	\$6.71	\$11.84
Kuraby	\$1.32	\$2.64	\$3.96	\$6.99
Loganlea	\$0.85	\$1.69	\$2.55	\$4.49
Heathwood	\$1.40	\$2.79	\$4.18	\$7.38
Paradise Road	\$1.40	\$2.79	\$4.18	\$7.38
Go Between Bridge	\$1.57	\$3.13	\$4.70	\$8.31
Clem 7	\$2.51	\$5.02	\$7.54	\$13.31
Legacy Way	\$2.51	\$5.03	\$7.54	\$13.33
Bowen Hills to Kedron	\$2.69	\$5.38	\$8.07	\$14.25
Bowen Hills to Toombul	\$2.69	\$5.38	\$8.07	\$14.25
Kedron to Toombul	\$2.02	\$4.03	\$6.05	\$10.69