The NSW Police Commissioner

I heard on the ABC Radio News this morning that the NSW Police has the most onerous per capita responsibilities than any state or territory in Australia, meaning that each NSW Police Officer is responsible for more New South Welshman than their counterparts in other states.

[**I note that the annual fatality rate in NSW has floated between 288 and 383 during the last five years, with the current fatality rate above the five year average of 350**](http://roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au/downloads/dynamic/nsw-road-toll-daily.pdf).

I have read a few reports on motor vehicle accidents and the various costs that follow, not limited to:

The fixed speed camera program was first introduced in NSW in 1999. Prior to that mobile speed cameras had been in operation since 1991. Unlike the remaining Australian states and territories (and the entire USA), NSW opted to provide three warning signs that inform that a speed detection camera is approaching and the speed that the motorist should not exceed.

The writer understand that the unusual concession to warn speeding motorists was at the behest of a few minor parties in the NSW Parliament back in 1999.

Presently, there are 94 fixed digital speed cameras in NSW

Mobile speed camera vehicles are marked and operators place portable warning signs 50 metres before and after the vehicle. Another warning is provided up to 250 metres before the vehicle. Warning signs ensure that all motorists see and recognise the enforcement activity. The signs also encourage motorists to stay within posted speed limits.

Does the NSW Police Commissioner believe that the NSW state fatality road toll would be lower if –

the warning signs were removed from the 94 fixed digital speed camera;

Transport for NSW, Centre for Road Safety’s webpage did not display the general location of mobile speed cameras; and

additional .

Editor, Suzanne Monks – (02) 8741 6675
NSW Police

Dear Ms. Monks

**Dangerous and reckless motor bike driving on the Old Pacific Highway just south of the Hawkesbury River Bridge each (fine day) weekend has caused road bicycle riders to desist cycling the once popular 35km leg from Hornsby to Mt. White**

**More and more motor bike riders that *‘get their jollies’* from *Bending their Bike* through corners to *“make sparks fly”* and *“throttle up the straights”* over the** [**3.85km**](http://www.muggaccinos.com/Warm_Fuzzy/NoshStops/Cafes/PitS/MotorBikes/pieintheskyroutemap.jpg) **road section between Brooklyn Rd and** [**Pie in the Sky Café**](http://www.muggaccinos.com/Warm_Fuzzy/NoshStops/Cafes/PitS/MotorBikes/pie_in_the_sky_circa_2017.htm)**?**

**Does ‘*The Open Road Magazine’* have any information on why NSW is ‘out of lock step’ with the rest of Australia and the USA by puzzlingly alerting motorists of an upcoming fixed speed camera?**

The [**Writer**](http://www.muggaccinos.com/Warm_Fuzzy/NoshStops/Cafes/PitS/MotorBikes/writer.htm) has administered a road cycle group, [**Muggaccinos**](http://www.muggaccinos.com/Warm_Fuzzy/NoshStops/Cafes/PitS/MotorBikes/writer.htm), which had provided a 95km (ave) on-road bicycle ride on the perimeter of Greater Sydney each Sunday for 21 years. [**Over  150 different road cyclists**](http://www.muggaccinos.com/ChoresnCrew/ChoresMainPage/ChoresnCrew.htm) have cycled on *Muggs'* rides over that period. We visit over 30 different [***Nosh Stop***](http://www.muggaccinos.com/Warm_Fuzzy/NoshStops/NoshStops.htm) each year.

The [***Pie in the Sky Café***](http://www.muggaccinos.com/Warm_Fuzzy/NoshStops/Cafes/PitS/pie_in_the_sky.htm) **(*former clientele*)** at North Cowan has been a regular [***Nosh Stop***](http://www.muggaccinos.com/Warm_Fuzzy/NoshStops/NoshStops.htm) for *Muggs'* cyclists as evidenced in our [***PitS***](http://www.muggaccinos.com/Warm_Fuzzy/NoshStops/Cafes/PitS/pie_in_the_sky.htm) webpage.

Alas, increasingly over the last few years, more and more motor bike riders have used [***Pie in the Sky Café***](http://www.muggaccinos.com/Warm_Fuzzy/NoshStops/Cafes/PitS/MotorBikes/pie_in_the_sky_circa_2017.htm) (***current clientele***) as a temporary base camp to “*ride loops*” [**down to Brooklyn Rd, pause for up to a few mins until any motor bike riders ahead have commenced their return leg**](http://www.muggaccinos.com/Warm_Fuzzy/NoshStops/Cafes/PitS/MotorBikes/Road_map_3%2C85km.htm) and then ascend back to [***PitS***](http://www.muggaccinos.com/Warm_Fuzzy/NoshStops/Cafes/PitS/pie_in_the_sky.htm). These ascents are regularly at high speed through the bends, and higher speed along the straights maxing at 130km p/h), often in close proximity to fellow motor bike riders, and with some bellowing loud exhaust noise due to [**illegal exhaust system modification**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zlwuJ2XfwXo) as evidenced in the following two YouTubes:

* [**Police Chase, Fast Riders and a crash. Old Pacific Highway**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wwEnB02DSpo)

Two

* [**Riding with Subscribers: with a Crash and a Police Encounter**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZWiEICkgNEA)

The below two articles evidence that motor bike rider, Ben James, was recently sentenced to six years jail for killing a road cyclist, Steve Jarvie, only two kilometres from [***PitS***](http://www.muggaccinos.com/Warm_Fuzzy/NoshStops/Cafes/PitS/pie_in_the_sky.htm):

* [**Cyclist hater boasted about causing fall that caused rider’s death**](http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/nsw/cyclist-hater-boasted-about-causing-fall-that-caused-riders-death/news-story/2af2d32a4f6d4d2261d5f2077c377012)
* [**Ben Smith jailed for eight years over death of cyclist Steven Jarvie**](http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/ben-smith-jailed-for-eight-years-jail-over-death-of-cyclist-steven-jarvie-20170703-gx3bhd.html)
* 2 –

The [**Writer**](http://www.muggaccinos.com/Warm_Fuzzy/NoshStops/Cafes/PitS/MotorBikes/writer.htm) visited Hornsby police station concerning the above about a year ago. He spoke to a police officer about his concerns who said that they do patrols. But as soon as the patrols are finished mayhem recommences, as evidenced in the above two You Tubes.

Patently, it would be materially more cost effective for the police to be allowed to utilize hidden electronic equipment [listed in A. and B. below] to deter this dangerous and immature behaviour:

1. speed cameras along the straight sections and post out speeding fines to offenders; and
2. sound level measurement equipment along the straight sections and post out traffic sound breach fines to offenders.

See: [**RMS - Mobile speed cameras**](http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/business-industry/heavy-vehicles/safety-compliance/speeding-camera-enforcement/mobile-speed-cameras.html)**.**

[**There are presently 94 fixed speed cameras in NSW**](http://roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au/downloads/2015-speed-camera-review.pdf) **with warning signage.**

Below is an extract from [**THE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF SPEED CAMERA USE**](http://www.monash.edu/muarc/research/our-publications/muarc242)by Amanda Delaney, Heather Ward, Max Cameron of Monash University Accident Research Centre  Sept., 2005:

**3.2. NEW SOUTH WALES**

“The fixed digital speed camera program was first introduced in NSW in 1999. Prior to that however, mobile speed cameras had been in operation since 1991. The aim of the fixed camera program was to target crash risk and crash severity at black spot locations.

Therefore, the positioning of the fixed speed cameras was focused on locations where there had previously been a high incidence of casualty crashes or a number of particularly severe crashes. Signs indicating the presence of speed cameras are located throughout the state indicating the operation of speed cameras.”

The Writer understands that no other state, or territory, in Australia (or the USA), provides two prominent street signs (or even a single warning sign), either side of each fixed speed camera, that alerts approaching vehicle drivers to slow down, thereby –

1. defeating the purpose of the cameras to detect and penalize drivers that are speeding and thereby putting other drivers and nearby pedestrian at risk; and
2. instilling in the minds of some NSW drivers “You can break the speed limit, because the bureaucrats in NSW warn you to slow down if there is a fixed speed camera ahead.”

Below is an extract from a pro-motorists website, [***CarGuide***](https://www.carsguide.com.au/car-advice/speed-and-red-light-camera-locations-in-australia-45276):

**“….the police take a particularly dim view of using a radar detector, or speed-evasion device, which are used to warn drivers of a nearby speed camera or radar.”**

* 3 –

The Writer understands that the unusual decision to provide warning signs (back in the late ‘90s) was the result of a political deal to win the votes of some independents in the NSW Parliament in order to get approval for the cost of the fixed speed camera program.

The Writer believes that if the NSW Government was sincerely interested in lowering the fatality road toll it would –

1. legislate to have the warning signs removed;
2. increase the number of discrete mobile speed cameras that detected offenders and posted out the fines; and
3. increase the usage of [**‘speed and penalty warning signs’**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Point_system_%28driving%29#/media/File:Demerit_point_warning_on_King%27s_Highway_12_in_Ontario,_Canada.jpg)

**Question 1:**

Does the NRMA have any historical information on the rationale of why NSW’s fixed speed camera program is not in lock-step with the remainder of Australia or the USA? In particular, was any deal done with a minor party/ies which required warning signage?

**Question 2:**

Does ‘*The Open Road’* have any information on whether the NSW Police –

* are allowed to deploy discrete/hidden mobile speed cameras; and
* if so, has the NSW Police done so?

***Food for thought:***

The demerit point limit (accrued within a three-year period) to impose a ‘driving disqualification’ for an ‘Unrestricted license’ should be increased from 13 points (in NSW) to 24 points, because back in the late 1970’s when the 12 demerit points limit was introduced (copying the implementation in Germany and the USA), there were less than 5% of the number of speeding cameras and red light cameras that exist in Australia today. Hence, 12 demerit points was almost 40 years ago an appropriate limit. The current limit of 13 points for an ‘Unrestricted license’ in NSW suggest that the authorities were far too generous to motorists in the late ‘70s.

Yours sincerely

Philip Johnston aka[***Bank Teller***](http://www.muggaccinos.com/ChoresnCrew/Scribe/Scribe.htm)