

Submission for NTC Consultation RIS - Developing technology-neutral road rules for driver distraction

Alby from Shepparton

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I have reached 65 years of age, having driven in excess of 1,900,000-kilms on the roads since the age of 17. No, I was not a truck driver, rather a office worker, in a Bank in Melbourne for 34 years, my roots were/are in Shepparton where I returned every weekend bar 42 over the 10 years prior to getting married. Easy to work out as I got married at 28y.o. my girlfriend lived in Shepp as did my Parents, 4 Weeks annual leave meant that I would be driving to Gold Coast/Sunshine Coast/Merimbula/Coffs Harbour/Sydney/Adelaide/Perth/Cairns/Alice Springs for our holidays over the holidays, of course this continued once married and still does today.

I Have Never Ever Had An At Fault Accident during my driving years, which commenced when on the family farm around the age of 10y.o.

My parents taught me the value of driving the family equipment including the car on our property and the necessity of staying alert whilst "behind the wheel". The truth is the one accident that occurred was because of someone doing a "U turn" in front of me and could not be avoided.

I think the situation is quite straight forward in that it has been proven time and again that the Use of Mobile Phones by the Public Generally is very distracting and for drivers who continue to use their phones whilst driving are basically in the same category as someone who is in charge of a lethal weapon.

Increase the penalties for Touching a phone whilst in charge of a Motor Vehicle, and don't forget to include Push Bikes/Skate Boards/Roller Blades of any description as these people also cause accidents by wandering in front of someone else causing damage serious injury and death to not only themselves but to whomever they may involve such as pedestrians, or causing drivers to run off the road to avoid them and hitting another vehicle or pedestrian.

It is on this basis that I believe the use of Mobile Phones by Anyone involved in an accident should be taken into account when there is a mishap between people. It is not Always the Driver's fault if a distracted pedestrian or skateboarder or bike rider is crossing against a red or amber light.

So then I feel there should be an increase in Penalties Across The Board For All Parties Using Public Roads, whether riding/walking/driving/skating to the tune of \$2,000- for the first offence, then for any subsequent offences another \$2,000- plus cancellation of license for 30 days, then 60 days, then 90 days etc etc. Each stage carrying the \$2,000- fine as well.

Attached to the penalty at each stage should be for the discretion of Police to have the vehicle impounded for 7 days for a first offence and then increasing that penalty by 1 day at each stage as per above.

And so it is time that I finish off my rant, yes I am quite frustrated as on a daily basis that I travel around Shepp City and the rural roads, I see people with their phone up to their ear whilst driving.

I have received calls whilst driving so I simply pull up the the best opportunity in a safe place, turning off my vehicle and either answer the call Or call them back. I do not drive if I have been drinking, I do not take illegal drugs or legal drugs that would impede my driving.

I believe that the use of mobile phones whilst driving is the same as giving a 10 year old child a loaded weapon to play with, the law makers and enforcers have a Responsibility to keep us safe, and that is not occuring.