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May 2011

VAGO. Redlight /Speed cameras submission.

I write my first ever submission to illustrate issues seen over the last few years.

Although there are too many individual locations to detail individually, I find many just fail with various concerns.

- 1) Camera on down-hill section of Princes Highway in Hallam?
<http://tinyurl.com/43dmh5m>
- 2) 3 cameras on 1 corner in Hawthorn and yet none active. A fourth 100m to the north, also unused. <http://tinyurl.com/3zb2z2w>
- 3) Dead, unused wet-film cameras, at least these ones seemed to be in historically dangerous locations but now un-used, allowed to silently rust away.
- 4) New camera locations on sites where traffic flow and site access (Network and power) seem to be more important than putting at a truly dangerous intersection.
- 5) Zero (0) cameras on the Monash freeway (and also the Eastern freeway) yet 20+ cameras on the Eastlink toll-road, yet no history requiring such installation.
- 6) Certain roads with excess cameras and none on others. E.g. Warrigal Road has 10 cameras along it but only 5-6 of them working.
- 7) The 'Precommissioned cameras' list turned up last year (just before election)
32 cameras are now on hold. 20 were just upgrades, so 20 dangerous locations are not switched back on due to this review. Surely the upgrades could have been turn on, the 12 odd NEW sites could await review.

Ok that's a fair few points and I will detail a few.

Changing zones (Schools etc)

Victoria has confusing school zones and also now shopping zones with 40k limits.

Several camera sites are put in strange school zones.

(http://www.arrivealive.vic.gov.au/initiatives/safer_roads_and_roadside/speed_and_sp/types_of_school_speed_limits.html)

There are 3 speed rules and putting a camera in a 60km/h school zone required additional video cameras to capture the fact the zone limit had changed, just crazy.

<http://tinyurl.com/4x3ahwk>

But around the corner there is another camera in a 40k zone (same school).

<http://tinyurl.com/3l99amc>

Warrigal road at Batesford Rd, Homes Glen has a 40km/h zone between 7am and midnight.

<http://tinyurl.com/3m4efcg>

1 camera is located in the middle of this unusual speed zone and the other old one is an unused wetfilm (on a downhill slope). The new camera is currently on the precommissioned list too.

Furthermore, putting cameras in areas with speed zones that change, MUST ensure that the signage of changing limits is clear AND detailed for road users.

People commonly think it is a trap ONLY and has no road safety reasoning.

Cameras are tested regularly but the signage is not checked once installed.

Many variable signs are faulty and have lights out or in some cases have non-reflective signs taped over the top (Victoria Street, Richmond etc).

Another major bug for drivers is the various down, up, down, up speed limits and having cameras in these areas is a big trap for many drivers. Better signage is urgently needed here or a set limit in the amount of speed changes over certain distance/areas. Lower the speed for the entire zones if needed.

Testing

The testing of camera locations is carried out by various 3rd party companies.

No public information is available on them or their testing or their results.

Often they can spend many hours on sites and there seems to be issues yet the public never know WHY there was an issue and what was rectified.

Surely if 'Y' camera is known to be faulty, the public should have access to the reports and use them in case they decide to contest the fine.

Calibration results before and after should be accessible online or free by request.

The current certificate online is wholly blanked out and worthless, as it only shows a serial number is valid, no info on what the serial relates to and what it means.

The testing companies regularly test on OPEN roads with other cars driving through, causing errors in their test and they often speeding to achieve speeds required for the test.

Apart from limited roadworks signs and witch's-hats the cars drive through the locations along with others (I'm unsure how the redlight cameras are tested as they would need to pass through after the red goes making it truly dangerous). I have photographs of vehicles speeding past kindergartens and doing illegal turns over double lines/median stripes to enable shorter turn-around's to get back to the site faster.

Section 83A

A truly alarming issue is the Police/Courts reliance on the Section 83a in cases yet the drivers have NO chance against it as ALL information relating to it is sewn up by the police and unavailable to drivers. Too many cases are taken to court destined to lose because they can't get more information on the camera system to prove overall issues at some locations.

As seen with many, many, many Eastlink cases, the Judges are now giving drivers the minimum penalties if they can show good cases without actually proving the 83a is wrong. I have sat in on several cases, there is a court session set aside JUST for the Eastlink cases and the time/money wasted is amazing. This needs a proper review from scratch as Dandenong Court has just lost a Judge due to the amount of cases she needed to sit on.

Location and reasoning

There needs to be clearly published information on EVERY location as to why it is there and what it has achieved since becoming active. Many locations are setup with no reasoning and many locations go unprotected where there is known issues (E.g. Springvale Junction)

Often cameras are removed for roadworks or nearby works and never replaced or explained that the location is now safe.

Springvale Junction - used to have a camera, roadworks and never replaced.

Dandenong Town Hall - had building works and never replaced.

Swanston and Victoria St - Building works and camera removed, unknown if it's coming back.

All these location were dangerous but because they might not be able to rebuild the camera sites they go unprotected. Building works comes before road safety.

Online information

The current Government 'CamerasSaveLives' website is impossible to find facts in between the spin. Listing 2000+ possible mobile location and 600 weekly locations makes it impossible to wade through to discover dangerous areas being covered. Too much information makes it totally pointless

<http://www.camerassavelives.vic.gov.au/Utility/Hot+Topics/CSL+-+Mobile+Camera+Locations+-+Hot+Topic>

Exact Daily or Weekly locations should be published so drivers can discover the more dangerous locations and identify bad road spots.

Camera types and uses

There are many various camera types used and reasons as to why/how they are used.

Wetfilm – mostly phased out and rusting. Are they still 100% reliable?

Unused/Unfinished – poles sitting with no camera heads and or flashes missing.

Multiple corners – cameras in very close proximity or cameras opposite each other shooting other directions.

Cameras by various manufactures – different boxes, setup, results. Are they 100% the same specifications?

Dual Redlight/Speed – most commonly used now but located where Services are available rather than dangerous locations.

Mobile speed camera cars were once proposed to be clearly painted and signed to alert drivers to dangerous areas when the camera was operating. Now they are hidden in non-standardised car types. Road users are upset because they also have exclusions to park in dangerous, illegal locations to work and this sends the wrong message out.

Camera locations should ALL have road signage and the fixed cameras should clearly painted to stand out from the nearby signs and buildings. They are drab, dull grey and covert in many locations behind poles/signs. This one is one of many behind signs, <http://tinyurl.com/4492wel> .

GPS Poi locations.

There is a big online market for GPS Poi (points of interest) locations of speed/redlight cameras and the Government should themselves release the Pols for accurate locations to be freely downloaded. This could also contain known blackspots, etc too.

Fines

The current fine system takes several weeks to receive in the post and then any further review needs payment to purchase the photo (or go into the CBD to view)

Why is the image(s) not included in colour on the fine? The process to print the fine including image would shortcut a lot of the review process and allow drivers to see if in fact the fine is true and accurate.

As you can see this is just the tip of the iceberg and it is refreshing to see and audit underway, I can detail many, many more issues but time won't allow it currently but I'm happy to discuss in person or on the phone.

I thank you for taking this submission

Dallas Goldberg

www.CamerasCutCrashes.com.au

Addendum

Here's a couple more in points form from an associate -

- 1) Non operational Cameras should be removed or covered. (Often sudden braking by drivers due to camera's cause rear end collisions).
- 2) Camera signage should include lanes/directions covered with a symbol. E.g. One lane (I), Two lanes (II), Three lanes (III). (Flashing camera's cause inappropriate anxiety to innocent drivers passing the location at the same time, as speeders).
- 3) When Camera operators take test photo's with a flash, drivers should receive a letter noting that the photo of their vehicle was a test only photo.
- 4) Any car photographed & not speeding should receive a letter, noting that they were not speeding & that the flash was for another vehicle/test/etc.
- 5) An analysis of accidents at camera locations should be conducted to perform an analysis for the community, of the effectiveness of cameras. E.g. the collision rate of Camera intersections Vs non-Camera intersections.
(Often sudden braking by drivers causes rear end collisions, for other motorists).
- 6) When Cameras are used at intersections with turning lights, signs should indicate that motorists can enter without penalty the non-turn lane or vice-versa to avoid obstacles like broken glass.
- 7) 'Speed camera ahead' signage should indicate the type of camera used, such as Speed over distance etc. (Often sudden braking by drivers causes rear end collisions, for other motorists).
- 8) When Cameras are used on roads/intersections with gradient the gradient of the road should be on the Speed Camera signage. (Vehicles will naturally increase speed on downhill gradients & naturally take longer to gain momentum on up-hill right turns for example E.g. Springvale & High St Rd).