

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into the Increase in Victoria's Road Toll

Mr Jim King
[REDACTED]

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SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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I regard myself as a good driver and have only had a couple of very minor driving incidents during my now 50 years of holding my Drivers Licence.

Like the majority other users of our road system I am cautious, considerate of others, aware of other road users around me, observant of the actions of others and I fully concentrate on my driving when behind the wheel. Unfortunately there are a minority of road users who do not follow similar traits as the majority when they are driving - speeding, drink driving, drug driving, unlicensed driving, unregistered vehicles, driver distractions - the list goes on.

We read virtually on a daily basis of drivers being caught for a myriad of offences which they themselves have control over and at times when that control totally disappears fatalities occur - sometimes taking out innocent victims because of that drivers stupidity.

What happens when a fatality occurs - significant traffic chaos lasting hours, road blocks, congestion, police investigation lasting hours at the scene, berating of the majority of drivers in general statements about speeding, drink/drug driving, doubling fines on Public Holidays, increasing fine levels, more speed cameras, promised (but seldom seen) greater police presence on our roads over "danger" periods (Christmas/Easter, etc).

When an "offender" finally gets to Court and is made answerable for his/her actions the general public is subject to a range of excuses raised by defence counsel that the offenders behaviour was out of character, limited in responsibility due to abuse as a child, having mental issues which mitigates the degree of responsibility, etc, etc, etc. In the meantime the families of those killed on our roads are left questioning the legal/justice system and the "worth" of their family member/s when so say questionable sentences are handed down.

From my years behind the wheel I think we are approaching the problem in a manner doomed to fail - we are NEVER going to get to the stage of zero road tolls - that is a fallacy and a line used by politicians and bureaucrats to justify increased fines and publicity campaigns.

I would like to see an Annual Report on our roadtoll in which details of the circumstances of each fatality are revealed together with the police investigation findings as to the cause of each fatality. This would give a degree of accountability for the time taken to clear the scene of each fatality which in-turn would give the majority of drivers a clear reasoning why such delays and costs were incurred in the investigation process. This information is available NOW but there seems to be a reluctance in releasing such details due I believe to PRIVACY ISSUES. Surely some general information can be released without jeopardising any subsequent/on-going court action.

By having such a report the entire driving community will be able to be informed about each fatality and may embrace changes made as a result rather than begrudge increased fines, tolls, TAC charges, etc.

Also the driving community could appreciate the targetting of groups of drivers who are reported as causing the majority of fatalities - drink/drug drivers, unroadworthy/unregistered vehicles, unlicensed drivers, speeding drivers. It would also highlight the growing trend of suicide drivers - trees/semi-trailers/etc.

The authorities are continually asking Victorian Drivers to be accountable and responsible for their actions - what about the Police being responsible and accountable to the public for their investigation of road fatalities ??? Finally Police resources should be heavily targeting drink/drug drivers, unlicensed/suspended licence drivers, unregistered/unroadworthy vehicles, speeding drivers, unpaid tolls/fines, distracted drivers, etc via greater presence on our roads.

The soft option of relying on speed cameras, red light cameras and hand held units increasingly catches a majority of "good" drivers rather than the minority who continually flouht the law and appear to be getting away with it. You can have any number of "Terms of Reference" that you like - the basic fact is that there are many who are currently using our roads who should not have a licence for that priviledge - they are the ones who need to be forbidden from driving on our roads - only then will the roadtoll have a chance of reducing due to genuine accidents rather than those caused by the growing number of "absolute morons" on our roads.

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File1:

File2:

File3: