

24 August 2021

Inquiry into Road Safety in Tasmania

Mr Tim Mills,
 Inquiry Secretary
 Parliament House Hobart 7000

Accidents relating to alleged speeding

1. Was the estimated speed exceeding the posted speed limit (was it excessive)
2. What other factors contributed, road conditions, fatigue, drink drugs or incorrect driving maneuver, suicide. Or mechanical fault.

Passing lane etiquette.

1 A slow moving vehicle (travelling below the posted speed limit) should on approach, entry and progress through a defined section of road featuring an overtaking lane should not increase speed and maintain the speed at that level used prior to entering the passing lane section. The err of the slow moving vehicle must be to allow other vehicles to pass within that section without exceeding the posted speed limit.

This problem is an everyday one experience by road users.

Vehicle lights:

- 1 It is evident that another safety hazard is the inappropriate use of and faults of headlights.
- 2 Drivers need to be educated that park lights are designed for just that, **parking**.
- 3 In fog and low light vehicle head lights should always be switched on.
- 4 Faulty head lights are commonplace and retro fitting bright lights that dazzle oncoming drivers is dangerous. A maximum candle power standard defined and regulated for the low beam setting is in need of regulation.

40Kph speed limit on major roads where a police car with flashing lights is parked on the side.

1. Investigate mainland states on the success and use of this law.
2. Investigate if this law was a factor in the recent double fatality road accident on the Bass Highway at Exton. August 2021)
3. Take a conga line of traffic moving on a highway with what's happening forward of say a caravan of truck and suddenly a driver up front needs to suddenly reduce speed from

say 110kph to 40kph to comply with this law, the result to cars at the rear of the conga line pulling up with little or no warning has the potential for a serious accident situation.

4. Investigate and make recommendation as to the future of this law being appropriate for use on highways.

Investigate the number of major road crashes at T junctions relating to minor roads meeting major arterial roads.

1. The junction where Pateena Road meets Illawarra Road between Perth and Launceston, the location of a recent serious car accident needs urgent attention.
2. A short reduced speed limit or 80 kph with emerging traffic warnings should be considered as an immediate upgrade of this junction.
3. All T Junctions meeting main arterial highways should be subject to an audit to ensure they are appropriately signed giving motorist exiting the minor road appropriate warning that a T junction is ahead.
4. On exiting a minor road onto the Bass or Midland highways from a T junction directional lane arrows should be painted on roads. This would be helpful for overseas visitors used to driving on the right hand side of the road to adjust to the correct lane on the major highway.

Mobile phone usage.

1. Its not uncommon even on the open highways to witness drivers appearing to look down at what is obvious a mobile phone on their lap.
2. Driving in peak hour traffic through Wellington Street Launceston and checking the rearview mirror at red light stops it is a regular event to see the driver at the rear looking down reading or texting messages on their phones. Cameras to catch these drivers need to be looked at installing.
3. It's also not uncommon to see drivers on the open highway looking down most likely reading messages on their phones.

Road Upgrades.

1. It goes without saying that the Tasman Highway throughout its length is in need of a major upgrade.
2. The Bass Highway between Launceston and Devonport is need of a priority upgrade.

In fact the existing highway between Launceston and Deloraine has defined lane width of that used on one side of a dual lane highway and on completion I pointed out to the Minister in charge at the time that the defined lanes were less in width to those on the Bass Highway between Deloraine and Devonport. On referring it to an advisor standing beside him it was acknowledged that my observation was correct.

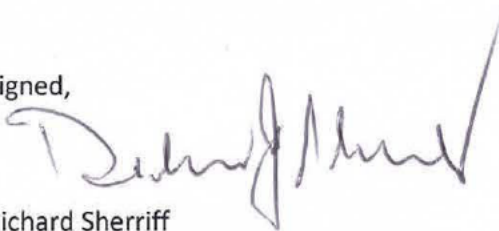
What we have between Launceston and Deloraine is one side of a dual lane highway being used as a single lane carriageway.

Short section Dual lane Highway Design

Where dual lanes merge into single lane sections more use of directional arrows painted on the road would be helpful by alerting drivers exiting a dual lane section that they are now driving on a single lane section.

In fact for visiting drivers our highways would be very confusing at times as they enter and exit these dual lane sections, often they are very short in distance. This problem is exasperated at night for visiting drivers.

Signed,



Richard Sherriff

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