



10 August 2021

Mr Tim Mills
Secretary
Road Safety in Tasmania Select Committee

Dear Mr Mills

Submission to Road Safety in Tasmania Select Committee

This submission relates to some general matters, based upon my observations as a driver and driving mentor with the Greenlight Program. I also own a caravan with my wife which has led to some observations.

These are just general observations and are not supported by evidence or detailed data.

Observations

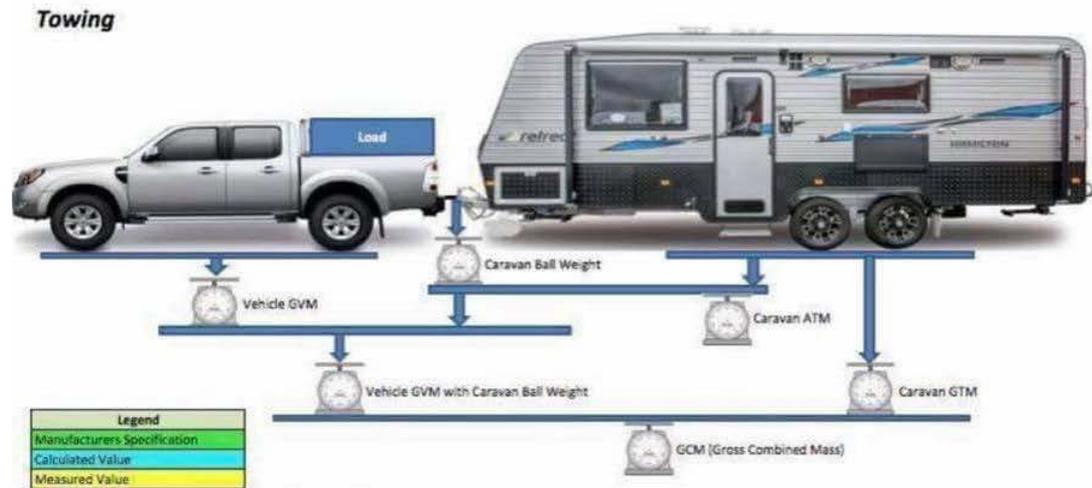
Speed limit for trailers

The current speed limit for trailers in Tasmania is the applicable speed limit for the road. This is the case for all of Australia, except for Western Australia. That state, with much better roads, has a speed limit for vehicles, including trucks, of 100 kph, unless there is a lower limit applying. This would be especially helpful for caravans, most drivers of which travel at a modest speed, but some of whom see the speed limit as the lower end of the speed to be travelled.

Weight of caravans

I have never seen a policeman or Road Safety Officer take an interest in the weight of caravans or trailers. There are many excellent facilities to do this. In my experience, many car/caravan combinations exceed their Gross Combined Mass and most caravanners take little interest in this because it is rarely policed. Caravans seem to be getting heavier.

If, or when, there is an accident, the insurer takes an interest. This should not be ignored. I enclose a handy diagram of weights



Bullbars

Bullbars can comply with Australian Design Rules and usually do. However, it is common to see bullbars with attachments along the top of the bar, in breach of the ADRs. These attachments include light fittings, fishing rod holders and fixed aerials.

Often these vehicles can be observed parked and could be conveniently given a warning.

Road markings

Lane markings are often worn out. This can lead to confusion about which lane a car should be in. In Hobart, many lanes are substandard and compromised by cars parked outside the allocated parking position. Council officers could deal with this as part of their rounds, observing poor markings and booking cars parked outside the position. An advertising blitz on this would help.

Obscured signs

Many road signs in Tasmania are obscured by trees. Responsible officers frequently travel on these roads and should report any deficiency.

Direction of travel

In New Zealand the direction of the lane on the road is conveniently marked on the road. Often the Tasmanian situation can be confusing as roads move between separated roads and joined roads and I am sure this marking would assist drivers.

Speed limits

Speed limit changes can be frequent, and the signs should be repeated every couple of kilometres. If it is so important to police speed, these signs would be a modest cost. These could be painted on the road.

In Tasmania, these are signs every that Tasmania Police is now concentrating on speed this month. This never changes. In other states, the focus changes each month and provides a point of interest.

Police seem to concentrate on low hanging fruit, eg the Southern Outlet and to not target the really dangerous driving on the many poor roads in Tasmania.

Older drivers

Whilst there is a process, anecdotally we all know older drivers who are incapable of safe driving who are allowed to continue to drive. A stricter regime, perhaps with a test and no discretion for 'local travel' would provide more certainty. Doctors should have no role in this.

Potholes

Potholes seem to exist forever with no clear program for dealing with them. Responsible officers travel on these roads and should provide a report. There should be a target for repair of say 30 days.

Thank you for reading my letter. I hope there are one or two ideas to take up.

Yours faithfully

Peter Bowen