



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON PLANNING, TRANSPORT AND CITY SERVICES  
Jo Clay MLA (Chair), Suzanne Orr MLA (Deputy), Mark Parton MLA

Submission No 41 – Chris McGrane

Inquiry into the impact of revised speed limits in Civic – Petitions 31-21 and 38-21

Received - 17/10/21

Authorised – 04/11/21

Submission to the

**INQUIRY INTO IMPACT OF REVISED SPEED LIMITS IN CIVIC –  
PETITIONS 31-21 AND 38-21**

**COMMITTEE CONDUCTING THE INQUIRY: STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
PLANNING, TRANSPORT AND CITY SERVICES**

**Submission prepared by:**

Chris McGrane

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I would like to express my views on the recent changes to the speed limits on Northbourne Avenue.

**a) road user advice and education effectiveness prior to the 5 July implementation;**

The public information campaign regarding the speed limit changes was completely inadequate. The ACT Government sent letters of notification to people in the suburbs surrounding Civic. However, no letters were sent to residents in other parts of the ACT. I live in Bonner and received no letter. Northbourne Avenue is a major arterial highway. Like many who live in Northern Canberra, I use this highway regularly. Thus, failing to send notification letters to people in Northern Canberra was a serious mistake, and one that severely undermined the effectiveness of the public education campaign.

Other elements of the campaign were equally flawed. Prior to July 5<sup>th</sup>, there was a “grace period” in which cameras would identify vehicles that exceeded the new limit, but would not issue a fine as a result of this identification. Other jurisdictions have used such grace periods to issue warning notices to those in breach of the new limits. Sadly, the ACT Government opted not to educate the public in this manner. The many thousands of motorists who breached the new limits during the “grace period” received no notification that they had exceeded the limit. Consequently, the first notification that I, and thousands of other motorists, received regarding the new limits was an infringement notice. I actually received multiple infringement notices. This was a horrible way to learn about the new limits. The fact that so many people learned about the new limits this way speaks volumes about the ineffectiveness of the public education campaign prior to the 5 July implementation.

**b) effectiveness of warning signage;**

The warning signage in the newly designated 40kph zones was also inadequate. The signs in these areas are small and difficult to see – especially at night, when I often use Northbourne Avenue. Billboard sized speed limit signs are used in many areas of the ACT – they are used precisely because small signs are an inadequate way of advising motorists of highway speed limits.

**c) reasons for the continued and abnormally large number of breaches;**

I have received four separate infringement notices for breaching the new speed

limits. Like the thousands of other Canberra residents who have received such notices, I did not intentionally break the law. Like the thousands of other motorists, I breached because I was completely unaware of the new speed limits. The continued and abnormally large number of breaches is the direct result of the inadequate public education campaign regarding the new speed limits and the ineffective warning signage in and around Civic.

**d) strategies for rectifying causes of the infringement rate;**

Billboard sized speed limit signs are used in many jurisdictions to advise motorists of highway speed limits. The introduction of such signs in Civic would alleviate some of the problems I have identified in sections b and c of my submission.

**e) impact on the community of the new fines and whether the level of this impact justifies a fines waiver for the month of July**

I received four separate infringement notices for breaching the Civic speed limits in July 2021. As a result, I stand to pay a staggering amount (\$1,204) in fines. I'm an office worker with an average income. I have a few thousand dollars in savings – most of which I will need in order to meet routine expenses over the next 12 months. My savings would be significantly eroded if I had to pay these fines.

These fines will place many other motorists in an even worse financial situation. Thus, I urge your committee to recommend that the ACT Legislative Assembly waive all of these fines.

Yours Sincerely,  
Chris McGrane