



# Annual Report 2022-2023



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## Acknowledgement of Country

The Office of the Road Safety Camera Commissioner pays respect to the Traditional Owners of the land on which we live and work. We pay our respects to Elders and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, who continue to care for their Country, culture, and people.

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# LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL



To:

The Honourable President  
of the Legislative Council

The Honourable Speaker  
of the Legislative Assembly

I am pleased to present to you the annual report of the Road Safety Camera Commissioner for the financial year 2022–23 for presentation to the Victorian Parliament, in accordance with section 21 of the *Road Safety Camera Commissioner Act 2011*.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "N. Taylor".

**Neville Taylor APM**  
Road Safety Camera Commissioner



# COMMISSIONER'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the *Road Safety Camera Commissioner Annual Report 2022–2023*. This is the 12th annual report produced by the Office of the Road Safety Camera Commissioner (Office).

This is the second annual report I have provided to the Victorian Parliament, but my first report on the activities of the Office in my inaugural year following my permanent appointment as the Road Safety Camera Commissioner (Commissioner) on 6 June 2022.

## Lives lost on the road remains too high

Too many Victorians have experienced road trauma during this 2022–23 year, either through sustaining injuries or tragically losing a loved one on our roads. In the 12 months to 30 June 2023, 274 lives were lost in Victoria, which was an increase of 28 additional lives or 11.4 per cent more than at the same time the previous year. Sadly, there were more multi-fatality crashes recorded.

All our road safety partners are working hard to understand why this increase has happened and are looking at how we can fix this. The increase in the number of fatalities is perplexing given that the 2020 calendar year recorded the lowest-ever number of lives lost on Victorian roads (260 lives). However, I note that this figure would have been impacted by the pandemic-related travel restrictions imposed.

Victoria's road safety partners have identified an increase in dangerous driving behaviours. Victoria Police has observed high-risk driving behaviours, including speeding and failure to wear seatbelts, as contributing factors towards this increase in fatalities and injuries sustained. The 2022 Road Safety Monitor report from the Transport Accident Commission (TAC) found over 50 per cent of respondents admitted to illegally using their mobile phones while driving, particularly when interacting with a mobile app.

The causes behind the increase in road trauma are complex and there has been significant commentary over mainstream and social media, and even questions on whether the Victorian Road Safety Strategy 2021–2030 (Strategy) can achieve its goals to halve the number of lives lost and reduce serious injuries by 2030.

The Victorian Government is committed to understanding this rise in high-risk driving behaviour. A parliamentary inquiry established by the Legislative Assembly Economy and Infrastructure Committee (Committee) will examine the impact of road safety behaviours on vulnerable road users. Specifically, changes and impacts identified during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. The Committee's findings, conclusions, and recommendations are due by March 2024.

Before becoming the Commissioner, I spent over 40 years with Victoria Police, including a role as head of Road Policing Operations. I know first-hand the positive and effective role enforcement can play in detecting and changing high-risk driving behaviours.



Road safety cameras are just a part of a suite of road safety solutions deployed to help achieve the Strategy's goals. Research by the Monash University Accident Research Centre (MUARC) has independently confirmed the effectiveness of road safety cameras in reducing road trauma on Victorian roads. MUARC found that along the enforcement leg at fixed road safety camera intersection sites, there was a 47 per cent reduction in casualty crashes.<sup>1</sup>

Following the delivery in April 2021 of a 75 per cent expansion of mobile road safety camera operations, from 9,600 to 16,300 hours of enforcement a month, the MUARC modelling published in June 2023 suggested that this increase has saved over 20 lives and avoided 195 serious injuries a year.<sup>2</sup>

During this reporting period, new road safety camera technology to detect illegal mobile phone use and seatbelt offences was introduced. MUARC modelling from 2019 estimated that these new enforcement cameras can save up to 95 crashes a year that would otherwise result in fatalities or serious injuries.<sup>3</sup> Put simply, cameras can curb risky driving behaviour and save lives.

The leading causes of road trauma and fatalities are from high-risk driving behaviours including speeding, distracted driving, not wearing seatbelts correctly, and alcohol and/or drug impairment. Speeding alone was cited in the Strategy as a factor in 30 per cent of road fatalities and 25 per cent of serious injuries sustained.

Incidents captured by the road safety camera system provide valuable data, to both Victoria Police and the Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS), to target and reduce high-risk driving behaviours through the effective deployment of cameras. The public can also assist with crucial intelligence-gathering by advising Victoria Police or the DJCS of roads in Victoria where recurrent high-risk driving behaviours have been observed. Their input will better target and help eliminate dangerous and problematic driving behaviours from Victorian roads.

## Integrity and transparency of road safety cameras

Aside from Victoria Police, cameras are one of the few road safety enforcement measures that can change driving behaviour, improve road safety, and reinforce safer driving habits. The *Road Safety Camera Commissioner Act 2011* (RSCC Act) accords me with powers and functions that relate to reviewing, assessing, and monitoring the accuracy and reliability of Victoria's road safety camera system.

Through my experience with community policing, I value the important role the public plays in providing intelligence, information, and feedback to improve systems. For the road safety camera system to be effective in identifying, reducing, and changing high-risk driving behaviours, the public has to be convinced of its efficacy and accuracy. Road safety cameras must be perceived to operate within the road network with a high degree of integrity and transparency. This is important to bolster the public's confidence and acceptance that cameras are functioning legitimately as an effective enforcement tool in reducing road trauma.

The ethos of the inaugural Commissioner, His Honour Gordon Lewis AM, in his approach to the role of the Commissioner was to be "the representative of road users, with the task of ensuring within [his] powers, that road safety cameras are accurate and used fairly."

I am committed to protecting this ethos, which is underpinned by my three foundational pillars:



### Integrity

Road safety camera technology must operate accurately, consistently, reliably, efficiently, and effectively.



### Transparency

The operation of road safety cameras is evidence-based and relevant documents are publicly available.



### Community confidence

The community is confident that road safety cameras deliver safety benefits in reducing road trauma and make lasting changes to high-risk driving behaviours.

All three pillars shaped my first year, as I reviewed, assessed, monitored, investigated, provided advice, and made recommendations about the camera system in this reporting period.

In late-2023, I will publish the third community perceptions survey into road safety cameras. This follows the two earlier surveys in **2017** and **2020** and will seek to identify any changes and trends in community perceptions about road safety cameras and road safety.

1. Budd, L., Scully, J., and Newstead, S. 2011. *Evaluation of Crash Effects of Victoria's Fixed Digital Speed and Red-Light Cameras*, Monash University Accident Research Centre.

2. D'Elia, A., Newstead, S., and Petering, S. 2022. *Measuring the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Road Safety Outcomes in Victoria, Australia*, Monash University Accident Research Centre.

3. Stephens A., Stephan, K., and Newstead, S. 2019. *Estimation of the Potential Effectiveness of Mobile Phone Camera Enforcement in Victoria*, Monash University Accident Research Centre.








## New camera technology

New road safety camera technology was introduced on Victorian roads to detect dangerous and unsafe driving behaviours. The new Distracted Driving and Seatbelt (DDS) cameras can detect road users illegally using their mobile phones when driving, as well as drivers and front seat passengers not wearing their seatbelts correctly. The new DDS cameras began enforcement on 1 July 2023.

The introduction of the new DDS cameras is the biggest enhancement to Victoria's camera network since the introduction of mobile road safety cameras. These cameras will provide enhanced detection of the same high-risk driving behaviours observed that have been contributing towards the increase in road trauma.

## Areas of focus

In the previous annual report, I introduced five key areas of focus:

-  1. Collaboration between the road safety partnership.
-  2. Future visions in automated road safety camera technologies and enforcement.
-  3. Perceptions of road safety cameras by professional road users.
-  4. Factors influencing road users' choice of speed when driving.
-  5. Awareness by road users of the link between their speed and road trauma.

As with the last few annual reports produced by this Office, I have reported on the progression of outstanding legacy recommendations. This annual report has drawn attention to the existence of these areas of focus, in some form, in the legacy recommendations made by my predecessors. I have applied my same three pillars-approach when monitoring and reviewing the progression of outstanding legacy recommendations and the actions taken by the road safety partners to acquit them.

The application of the three pillars-approach provides insight to the road safety partnership, industry stakeholders, and the community in how I oversee the strengthening of the road safety camera system through the delivery of recommendations made and important project milestones.

## Stakeholder engagement and collaboration

My first year as the Commissioner emphasised stakeholder engagement and collaboration. It shaped my oversight and expectations for meaningful interactions with the road safety partnership, particularly around sharing information and learnings.

Regular meetings with set agenda topics have cemented my relationships with senior executives within the road safety partnership. The creation of a notification matrix framework by the DJCS has enhanced governance by providing me with early notification of issues arising from the road safety camera system. This has allowed me to better fulfil my role as the Commissioner by providing advice to the Minister for Police (Minister) on any concerns much earlier than previously.

On 14 June 2023, the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) convened the first Road Safety Stakeholder Reference Group (RSSRG) meeting. This group included experts from the DTP, the Department of Health, the DJCS, the TAC, Victoria Police, road and transport research bodies, industry stakeholder groups, experts from specialised fields, and community representatives. The RSSRG will provide feedback to the Minister for Roads and Road Safety and the road safety partnership on road safety issues and proposed projects and initiatives. I am pleased to have been invited to this important grouping and am eager to share my insights and contribute towards Victoria's next Road Safety Action Plan.

My focus on stronger stakeholder engagement and collaboration with the road safety partnership arose out of my experience with a formal investigation I initiated shortly after being appointed Commissioner. I witnessed different government departments and agencies wanting to understand and solve issues and implement recommendations without the needless finger pointing.

Strong communication and collaboration drive resolutions, which drive enhanced camera system integrity and community confidence. In this annual report, I have recognised this commitment for improving engagement and collaboration by the road safety partnership as I reviewed and monitored the actions taken to manage a range of issues that arose throughout the reporting year.

# NEPEAN HIGHWAY INVESTIGATION

The Commissioner initiated a formal investigation on the fixed digital road safety cameras located at the intersection of Nepean Highway and Davey Street, Frankston, following a speed limit reduction. The full **report** was published on 19 October 2022.

## Investigation

### Introduction

On 22 April 2022, the fixed digital road safety cameras at the intersection of Nepean Highway and Davey Street in Frankston (Davey Street intersection) were reactivated for enforcement at a reduced and safer 40 km/h limit. This followed months of testing of the accuracy and reliability of the road safety cameras after they had been deactivated in October 2021 as new fixed 40 km/h speed limit signs were installed along the Nepean Highway for southbound traffic.

Around late-May 2022, the Office began to receive enquiries and complaints from motorists, fined for speeding, because they were unaware of the recent speed limit reduction change. Their concerns were amplified across social media and were later picked up by mainstream media outlets. It was later revealed, in information obtained from the DJCS, that the speed compliance rate observed at the Davey Street intersection was noticeably lower than with other comparable examples of speed limit reduction projects.

After two site inspections and initial enquiries with the DJCS, the DTP, and Victoria Police, I wrote to the Minister on 1 July 2022 informing him that I would be exercising my powers under section 10(e) of the RSCC Act to investigate the processes of the speed limit reduction, implemented near a road safety camera system, and the communication of the changed speed limit with the public. I would examine the impact this had on public confidence through the perceived unfairness of receiving speeding infringements due to potentially inadequate signage infrastructure in place. My investigation would exclude the examination of the accuracy and reliability of the Davey Street intersection cameras because it was not raised as an issue from the majority of complaints received.

### The driving experience

Speed limit reductions along roadways are implemented to address and reduce the risks of road trauma, and in this case, the risks to pedestrians. The public complaints received centred on the perceived lack of promised signage to advise of the reduced speed limit, poor communication, and the installation of infrastructure for outdoor roadside dining. While I found no fault with the operation of the camera system, I was struck by the public's lack of confidence and accompanying anger directed at the cameras after receiving speeding infringement notices.

As part of my investigation, I wanted to understand the confusion the public was articulating. During my two site inspections, I drove along the Nepean Highway several times to mimic the driving experience of the public. I experienced the same confusion with the different speed limits driving northbound (60 km/h) and southbound (40 km/h) through the Davey Street intersection with inactivated electronic speed limit signs.

My investigation focused on the processes involved in reducing the speed limit, near the cameras at the Davey Street intersection, due to the damage to community confidence in the integrity of both the camera and infringement systems. Many people who received infringements believed they were not afforded the opportunity to adjust their driving behaviour because they were not aware that the speed limit had been reduced to 40 km/h.





## Findings

Information from the DTP and Frankston City Council revealed two overlapping and concurrent projects underway in 2021 to reduce the speed limit on the Nepean Highway in Frankston from 60 km/h to 40 km/h.

Frankston City Council managed one of the projects, which was a temporary speed limit reduction event for southbound traffic to support the introduction of outdoor roadside dining. The other project was for a permanent speed limit reduction, in both directions, as part of a broader safer speed limit strategy to reduce road trauma of vulnerable road users, particularly pedestrians. This broader project was managed by the DTP. Both projects incorporated a speed limit reduction for southbound traffic through the Davey Street intersection where the road safety camera system was enforcing speed, red-light, and unregistered vehicle offences.

The investigation found that the unique situation of having two overlapping and concurrent speed limit reduction projects contributed to significant complexities. There was poor collaboration, communication, and information sharing about each project's scope, timing, deliverables, and completion dates between the four key stakeholders. One of the road safety partners was unaware there were actually two separate speed limit reduction projects. The resulting decisions impacted enforcement at the nearby road safety cameras and frustrated the public.

## Conclusion

I found that the speed limit was lawfully and appropriately set at 40 km/h and road users detected travelling through the Davey Street intersection in excess of 40 km/h were exceeding the speed limit. However, I recognised that having two concurrent speed limit reduction projects underway created the previously stated significant complexities.

As a result, I concluded that based on these unusual and exceptional circumstances, motorists detected travelling through the Davey Street intersection in excess of 40 km/h, but below the former speed limit of 60 km/h, should have their offending conduct excused.

## Recommendations

### My recommendations

I made seven recommendations to the Minister as a result of the exceptional circumstances identified. They centred around excusing the offending speeding conduct of motorists, making the reduced speed limit zone more self-explaining to motorists, and improving the communication strategy and collaboration between relevant authorities.

The recommendations in full are listed below.

1. Consideration be given to excusing the offending conduct of those motorists detected by the fixed digital road safety cameras whilst travelling southbound on the Nepean Highway through the Davey Street, Frankston, intersection in excess of the 40 km/h speed limit and yet below the former 60 km/h speed limit.  
  
This recommendation is referred to Victoria Police for attention and advice as to the action/s taken.
2. Consideration be given to excusing the subsequent offending conduct of those motorists detected by the fixed digital road safety cameras whilst travelling southbound on the Nepean Highway through the Davey Street, Frankston, intersection in excess of the 40 km/h speed limit and yet below the former 60 km/h speed limit on subsequent dates prior to becoming aware of the first issued infringement.  
  
This recommendation is referred to Victoria Police for attention and advice as to the action/s taken.
3. Consideration be given to enhancing the traffic management plan for the reduction of the speed limit along the Nepean Highway, within proximity of the fixed digital road safety cameras at the intersection of Davey Street, Frankston, to make this section of the Nepean Highway more self-explaining to motorists that there is a new 40 km/h speed limit in place when travelling through the Davey Street intersection.

This recommendation is referred to the DTP for attention in collaboration with the Frankston City Council and advice as to the action/s taken.

4. Consideration be given to an effective communication strategy that includes updating publicly available material advising the community of the safer and reduced speed limit of 40 km/h along both the northbound and southbound directions of the Nepean Highway between Fletcher Road and Plowman Place, Frankston.

This recommendation is referred to the DTP for attention in collaboration with the Frankston City Council and advice as to the action/s taken.

5. The completion of Recommendation 3 is to be considered as the trigger for issuing infringements to those motorists detected travelling southbound on the Nepean Highway through the Davey Street, Frankston, intersection in excess of the 40 km/h speed limit and yet below the former 60 km/h speed limit.

This recommendation is referred to Victoria Police for attention in collaboration with the DTP and the DJCS and advice as to the action/s taken.

6. The DTP, the DJCS, and Victoria Police complete the review and establish a process for systematic and cooperative engagement, consultation, and collaboration on road and road network projects and, where appropriate, legislative and policy reform that are in the proximity of or impact on road safety cameras.

This recommendation is referred to the DTP, the DJCS, and Victoria Police for attention and advice as to the action/s taken.

7. Consideration be given to continue engaging with the appropriate authority/association to understand the channels of engagement and identify opportunities to inform and influence local government authorities in Victoria of the separate and shared responsibilities for road and road network projects that are in the proximity of or impact on road safety cameras.

This recommendation is referred to the DJCS for attention and advice as to the action/s taken.

## Delivering my recommendations

All four key stakeholders were fully supportive of my investigation as they also wanted to understand what had led to the significant increase in speeding infringements issued. Victoria Police and the DJCS temporarily paused speeding enforcement at the Davey Street intersection pending the outcome of my investigation. The DTP also prioritised completing the permanent speed limit reduction project for northbound and southbound traffic, with the electronic speed limit signs activated in late-August 2022.

My Nepean Highway Investigation report was published on 19 October 2022. All stakeholders accepted my findings, conclusions, and recommendations in full and were keen to learn from this experience. Collaboration immediately improved as a steering committee was created to agree on a plan to progress my recommendations and resume speed enforcement at the Davey Street intersection. Within two months of publication:

- all applicable speeding infringement notices and incidents detected had been withdrawn
- it was clearer for road users approaching the Davey Street intersection that they were within a 40 km/h speed limit zone
- a joint and improved public communication strategy was rolled out to advise the public of the reduced and safer 40 km/h speed limit.

On 12 December 2022, road safety camera enforcement resumed at the Davey Street intersection site. Road user compliance statistics, monitored until the first week of February 2023, showed speed compliance and associated enforcement conditions had returned to an expected pattern.

On behalf of the steering committee, the DJCS kept me regularly informed on the progress with addressing my recommendations. I am satisfied that all four stakeholders have addressed and acquitted the first five recommendations made in my investigation.

In the previous annual report, I identified five areas of focus to consider as I fulfil my role and functions under the RSCC Act. Three of them (collaboration, factors influencing the choice of speed, and the community's awareness of the link between road trauma and speed) contributed to the exceptional and unusual circumstances uncovered by this investigation. The Nepean Highway Investigation demonstrated that my areas of focus warrant further exploration, as well as allowing me to appreciate how complex this situation was.



# ABOUT US

## Office of the Road Safety Camera Commissioner

The Office is an independent oversight body established by the Victorian Government to enhance community confidence in the road safety camera system. It commenced operations on 6 February 2012 under the RSCC Act, which took effect on 31 December 2011.

### OUR VISION AND VALUES

#### **Vision**

Provides a safe environment for Victorian road users and increase community confidence in the integrity, transparency, accuracy, reliability, and efficiency of the Victorian road safety camera system.

#### **Mission**

Collaborates with government departments and agencies and service providers, including non-government organisations, on road safety cameras and to provide road users with an alternative avenue for complaints, quality assurance, and investigations.

#### **Values**

Independence, integrity, and impartiality. To act without fear or favour and carry out our powers and functions with honesty, accuracy, consistency, and respect.

##### **Transparency and accountability**

Provides the Victorian Parliament and the community with expert and objective information about the road safety camera system, and monitors and reviews that information to ensure ongoing integrity, transparency, and community confidence.

##### **Stakeholder engagement**

Developing successful partnerships with key stakeholders and to foster understanding by complementing their collective impact on road safety.

##### **Advancing knowledge**

Advancing knowledge and technological understanding to ensure the road safety camera system operates accurately, reliably, and with integrity.

## Main roles of the Office

### Review

The Office independently reviews and assesses the accuracy and reliability of the operation of the road safety camera system to ensure it complies with the *Road Safety Act 1986* and the Road Safety (General) Regulations 2019. The Office also regularly reviews relevant information made publicly available by the DJCS.

### Managing feedback

Members of the public can lodge enquiries and complaints with the Office about any aspect of the road safety camera system. When systemic issues are identified, the Office can recommend remedial actions to the Minister. The Office may also refer enquiries and complaints to other departments or agencies, where appropriate.

### Investigations

The Commissioner is empowered to conduct investigations requested or agreed to by the Minister into any aspect of the road safety camera system including its integrity, accuracy, or efficiency.

### Provide advice and information

The RSCC Act authorises the Commissioner to provide information about the road safety camera system in response to requests, and to advise the Minister on any matter in relation to the camera system.

## Legislation

### Functions

Under section 10 of the RSCC Act, the Commissioner has the following functions:

- a. To undertake, at least annually, reviews and assessments of the accuracy of the road safety camera system in order to monitor compliance of the system with the requirements of the *Road Safety Act 1986* and regulations made under that Act.
- b. To undertake, at least annually, reviews and assessments of the information about the road safety camera system that is made available to the public by the DJCS.
- c. To undertake investigations requested or agreed to by the Minister into the integrity, accuracy, or efficiency of the road safety camera system.

- d. To receive complaints concerning any aspect of the road safety camera system and:
  - i. if appropriate, to refer a complaint to an appropriate person or body for further action, or
  - ii. to provide information on the available avenues for resolution of a complaint.
- e. To investigate complaints referred to in paragraph (d) that appear to indicate a problem with the road safety camera system and to make recommendations to the Minister to address any systemic issues identified.
- f. To investigate any matter in relation to the road safety camera system that the Minister refers to the Commissioner.
- fa. To provide information about the road safety camera system in response to a request for information from a person or body.
- g. To provide advice to the Minister on any matter in relation to the road safety camera system.
- h. To refer appropriate matters to the Road Safety Camera Commissioner Reference Group for research and advice.
- i. To keep records of investigations undertaken and complaints received by the Commissioner and the action taken in response, if any.
- j. To make available to the Minister, on request, the records kept under paragraph (i).
- k. Any other function conferred on the Commissioner by or under the RSCC Act or any other Act.

### Powers

Under section 11 of the RSCC Act:

1. The Commissioner has all the powers necessary or convenient to perform his or her functions.
2. Without limiting subsection (1), the Commissioner may:
  - a. request information from the DJCS concerning the operation of the road safety camera system
  - b. make copies of, or take extracts from, any document relating to the operation of the road safety camera system.
3. In exercising his or her powers, the Commissioner must comply with any relevant requirements specified by or under any other Act.



## Governance and organisational structure

The Commissioner is a statutory office holder appointed by the Governor-in-Council and reports to the Parliament of Victoria.

During this reporting period, the Office had two full-time permanent and one part-time permanent employees to assist the Commissioner in performing his role and functions under the RSCC Act. This included specialist technical advice, office management, and executive and research assistance. The Office also employed an intern for six months as part of the Victorian Government's Digital Jobs program. Though legally employed by the DJCS under the *Public Administration Act 2004*, staff at the Office are appointed by the Commissioner and work independently of the DJCS. When choosing staff, the Commissioner is required to assess applicants fairly, equitably, and without discrimination, based on merit and other key selection criteria.

There have been periods of vacancies in two of these positions throughout the reporting period that have impacted timely delivery in some areas. The DJCS has continued to provide, where available, support to the Commissioner with access to specialist advice and temporary secondments to minimise the impacts.

With this support, the Commissioner has been able to continue to provide timely and relevant advice to the Minister on issues relating to the road safety camera system, particularly regarding the implementation of new automated camera technology to enforce the high-risk behaviours of distracted driving and seatbelt offending.

## Financial reporting

### Obligations

The Office's annual financial statements for the 2022–23 year are contained within the annual report and financial statements of the DJCS under an exemption determined by the former Minister for Finance under section 53(1)(b) of the *Financial Management Act 1994*. The Standing Directions exemption was designed to reduce the reporting compliance burden, which allows the Office to operate under an alternate governance process that is reported through the Department of Justice and Community Safety Portfolio Entity Financial Management Compliance Framework.

### Attestation

This annual report contains information required under Part 3 of the RSCC Act. The financial reporting obligations are attested as follows.

### Portfolio Financial Management Compliance Attestation Statement

I, Neville Taylor APM, Road Safety Camera Commissioner, certify that the Office of the Road Safety Camera Commissioner has been granted an exemption from the Standing Directions 2018 under the *Financial Management Act 1994* and Instructions. This exemption has been granted by the Assistant Treasurer on the basis that the Office of the Road Safety Camera Commissioner complies with the Department of Justice and Community Safety Portfolio Entity Financial Management Compliance Framework.



**Neville Taylor**  
**Accountable Officer**

27 September 2023

# ROAD SAFETY CAMERA COMMISSIONER REFERENCE GROUP

Section 14 of the RSCC Act authorises the Commissioner to establish a group of advisors known as the Road Safety Camera Commissioner Reference Group (Reference Group).

This advisory group has a minimum of three and maximum of seven members that are appointed by the Minister on the Commissioner's recommendation. The Reference Group is chaired by the Commissioner.

Reference Group members assist the Commissioner by providing advice and information in the performance of the Commissioner's functions under the RSCC Act. The Terms of Reference ensures the Reference Group does not exceed the functions and powers of the Commissioner under the RSCC Act.

## Appointing and re-appointing members

Membership of the Reference Group was due to expire over the 2022–23 reporting period. When appointing, re-appointing, and remunerating board members in non-departmental entities, the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) requires adherence to the following guidelines:

- Appointment and Remuneration Guidelines
- Diversity on Victorian Government Boards.

All existing members of the Reference Group were keen to be re-appointed for a further two-year term and progress my five areas of focus, underpinned by the three pillars-approach. I conducted performance review evaluations and one-on-one interviews with each candidate. I also consulted with the previous Commissioner, Stephen Leane APM, on his interactions with members to gain further insights.

The DPC guidelines required me to consider if diversity of the membership could enhance the skills mix, expertise, lived experience, and perspectives of people with backgrounds that have historically experienced barriers to participation including gender, race, ethnicity, Aboriginality, age, LGBTIQ+ identification, religion, disability, and living within rural or regional environments.

Throughout this process, I learnt about each member's individual specialist skills and experience and their collective value proposition. I concluded that the current members brought a broad, high level of road safety expertise and would provide me the specialist advice I would need to fulfil my role and functions under the RSCC Act. The skills included academic research, engineering, technology, enforcement, policy making, governance and oversight functions, and personal impact and experience with road trauma.

I also identified an opportunity for an additional member to join the Reference Group with expertise in enhanced enforcement through technology development. There is also genuine diversity amongst the members I recommended to the Minister for re-appointment including gender, age, disability, and living within metropolitan and regional environments.

On 24 and 31 October 2022 and based upon my recommendations, the Minister re-appointed all existing members and appointed a new member to the new Reference Group for a two-year term expiring on 21 October 2024.

The members for this new Reference Group are:

**Martin Boorman APM**

Principal

Martin C. Boorman Consulting

- Expertise and experience in applied research and enhanced enforcement through technology development.
- Leader in enforcement programs founded in deterrence theory and social psychology to reduce road trauma by influencing individual and societal level behaviour.
- Advisor relating to regulatory policy, legislative frameworks, enforcement practice, and technology use in the fields of crime and road safety.

**Brian Fildes**

Emeritus Professor

MUARC

- 36 years' experience in road safety research.
- Knowledge in a key area of focus – influencing behavioural change of road users and their awareness of the relationship between the risk of road trauma and speed.

**Tia Gaffney**

Senior Forensic Engineer and

Collision Reconstructionist

William Keramidas and Associates

- Research background in road safety with extensive application within transportation safety, vehicle crashworthiness, occupational health and safety, public liability, accident investigations, and injury prevention mitigation.

**Pauline Kostiuk**

Hearing Officer

Firearms Appeals Committee

- Professional senior manager with a strong policy making background within multi-departmental committees across a diverse range of settings including regulation, resource management, risk management, business process re-engineering, emergency management and response, stakeholder engagement, and education and training.
- Has personal road trauma experience, having lost a family member.

**Duke Trench-Thiedeman**

President

Ability Para Badminton Club

- Paraplegic since a motorcycle accident in 2009.
- Lived experience with the transition from able-bodied driving to disabled driving in a modified vehicle.
- Regular mentor to spinal inpatients at the Austin Hospital and the Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre.
- Former computer engineer of 40 years' experience with strong analytical and technical solution skills.

**Carolyn Unsworth**

Professor

Discipline Lead Occupational Therapy

Federation University Australia

- Academic in occupational therapy education and research.
- Tireless promoter for change in community transport mobility to enable people with disabilities and older people to participate in their communities.
- Expertise around older road users aligns with the Strategy.

## Reference Group meetings

The Nepean Highway Investigation and resourcing issues in the second half of the year disrupted our quarterly meetings schedule, as required in the Terms of Reference.

Meeting No. 54 was held on 6 December 2022 and was attended by five out of the six Reference Group members. Given the recent process to re-appoint and appoint the current group membership, the first part of the meeting focused on agreeing upon the Terms of Reference. As Commissioner, I wanted to reach agreement on how to effectively utilise the membership's breadth of expertise and collective value proposition to fulfill my responsibilities under the RSCC Act.

Additionally, Pauline Kostiuk virtually attended the 2022 edition of the Australasian Road Safety Conference that was held in Christchurch, New Zealand, between 28 to 30 September 2022.





## Advice provided by the Reference Group

During Meeting No. 54, the Reference Group members provided advice and feedback to my three pillars-approach – integrity, transparency, and community confidence in the road safety camera system. We discussed the relevance of the pillars and my five areas of focus and how they related to my work.

### Nepean Highway Investigation

I also received advice from individual members during the Nepean Highway Investigation, particularly Emeritus Professor Brian Fildes, Tia Gaffney, and Martin Boorman. Advice included:

- the driving experience
- enforcement elements identified following a recent speed limit reduction change
- the findings made by the Australian Road Research Board.

Their expert advice and referral to relevant research and credible consultants helped me understand the complexities involved in making roadways more self-explanatory and the challenges of behavioural change management. I ultimately found in my investigation that these two complexities had a major impact on the public's awareness and ability to comply with the reduced speed limit of 40 km/h, when driving through the road safety camera system located at the intersection of Nepean Highway and Davey Street, Frankston.

# YEAR IN REVIEW

According to section 10 of the RSCC Act, the Commissioner is required “to undertake, at least annually, reviews and assessments of the information about the road safety camera system that is made available to the public by the” DJCS.

Throughout the year, the DJCS provides the Office with detailed monthly and quarterly performance indicators of all elements of the operation of the road safety camera system. Each report is scrutinised by my staff to provide me with further independent strategic analysis and technical advice so I can effectively review the integrity, accuracy, and efficiency of the camera system.

I have established a regular meeting schedule with key executives of the road safety partnership, in particular with the DJCS, the DTP, the Road Safety Camera Program (RSCP), the TAC, and Victoria Police. Issues identified within the monthly and quarterly reports are raised in the meetings, as part of my ongoing monitoring and review of the road safety camera system. It was through this process that the DJCS created a notification matrix to escalate any issue or event that may impact on the confidence of the camera system. Not only did this notification matrix facilitate the discussion of agenda topics during meetings, it greatly improved my ability to keep track of multiple and concurrent issues raised. That allowed me to confidently advise the Minister of any matter that I am actively monitoring.

In May of each year, as part of the yearly review of the road safety camera system required in the annual report, the Office requests a 12-month data set from the RSCP – the business unit within the DJCS that manages and operates the camera system – covering the month-to-month performance of fixed, mobile, and DDS cameras. This data set is analysed and validated against prior data and reports received to complete the annual review requirements in accordance with the RSCC Act.

## Governance and transparency

In my last annual report, I indicated that the DJCS was taking onboard my feedback about timely notification of road safety camera system issues identified. A few late notifications, over my first six months as the Acting Commissioner, had impacted the ability to effectively perform my role and functions under section 10 of the RSCC Act, particularly providing timely “advice to the Minister on any matter in relation to the road safety camera system.” Previous Commissioners had raised this same issue.

The DJCS consulted with the Office to develop a notification matrix that clearly outlined a formal process in communicating to me about issues that arose from the road safety camera system that may be of relevance. In June 2023, the DJCS approved and implemented the RSCP Escalation Matrix to the Road Safety Camera Commissioner (Notification Matrix).

### Notification Matrix framework

The Notification Matrix clarifies the process for the DJCS to communicate once-off or recurring/cumulative issues to the Commissioner or the Office. It can also be utilised to identify potential opportunities for the Commissioner to convey key messages to the community and other stakeholders.

The Notification Matrix has three escalation levels – low, medium, and high – in reporting issues or events with specific communication protocols. The DJCS utilises a range of factors to assess the urgency of each issue or event including:

- its nature
- the potential impact on infringements issued, if any
- how it could impact community confidence in the camera system and the RSCP
- the risk of recurrence.

During the reporting period, the DJCS was trialling a version of the Notification Matrix to keep me informed of the issues and events that arose from the road safety camera system. The implementation of an agreed Notification Matrix framework is a significant step in improving the oversight and transparency of the camera system. It improves my ability to plan and allocate resources to monitor developing issues and events. Most importantly, the Notification Matrix has allowed me to alert, where applicable, the Minister on any matter at an early stage. This substantial governance improvement should boost the public trust in the camera system, as I am well-positioned to advocate their concerns and to ensure road safety cameras are accurate and fair.

## Issues monitored by the Commissioner

I am responsible for ensuring road safety cameras are accurate and used fairly. I represent road users and seek answers so I can provide the Minister with formal written advice on any potential impacts on the integrity, transparency, and community confidence of the road safety camera system. To do this, I scrutinise the DJCS monthly and quarterly data and reports, obtain frequent updates from the road safety partnership executives, and closely monitor the development of issues or events raised through the Notification Matrix.

I was alerted to a range of separate issues during the 2022–23 year which had the potential to impact different elements of the camera system, including fixed intersection and highway cameras, the mobile T-Series cameras, point-to-point cameras, and the new DDS cameras. None of the alerted issues impacted the integrity, accuracy, and reliability of the road safety camera system.

The following three issues are examples of the type of monitoring that I did throughout this reporting year. These examples provide insights on how issues are identified and the work the road safety partnership embark upon to rectify matters, including withdrawing infringement notices if deemed necessary.

## ENFORCING NEAR AN INTERSECTION

On 12 July 2022, the DJCS alerted me of the results of an investigation following a public inquiry submitted through the **Cameras Save Lives website** (CSL website) on 8 June 2022. It was alleged a mobile road safety camera operator had parked too close to a T-intersection along Hampton Street in Brighton, while conducting a speed enforcement session. Whilst the following describes the issue and the impact it had as well as the actions taken, it is worth highlighting that it was the only incident of this kind in 79,000 mobile camera sessions conducted during the 2022–23 reporting period.

The DJCS initiated an investigation to identify the exact distance the mobile road safety camera vehicle was stopped near the T-intersection. GPS data was used to pinpoint the location of the vehicle within six metres of the intersection. This was also verified by Serco, the Traffic Camera Services provider. Serco delivers mobile camera enforcement hours on behalf of the DJCS and Victoria Police. Although mobile road safety camera operators are exempt from some elements of the Road Safety Road Rules 2017 when conducting a speed enforcement session (i.e., they can stop on bicycle paths, footpaths, shared paths, dividing strips, and nature strips), they have to otherwise follow the same road rules as other road users. In this case, vehicles are not permitted to park within 10 metres of an intersection unless advised otherwise by parking signs.

As infringements had already been issued to road users captured speeding, Victoria Police considered the circumstances outlined. In the end, Victoria Police withdrew 10 infringement notices issued from this non-compliant enforcement session. All camera operators are required to obey the applicable road rules when setting up and enforcing sessions and this was emphasised to the operators as part of their regular refresher training.

There is a strong working relationship between the DJCS and Victoria Police to ensure timely decisions are made to either not process incidents captured or withdraw infringements issued in circumstances such as this example highlighted. This is consistent with the enforcement guidelines followed by Victoria Police, which provides for the consistency of enforcement to be considered and to remove any doubt of the legitimacy of any offences detected. This is also consistent with the 2011 Victorian Auditor-General's Office *Road Safety Camera Program* report (VAGO report), which concluded that the community should be confident that only offending road users receive infringement notices.



## FREQUENT CHANGES TO THE SPEED LIMIT

On 29 July 2022, the DJCS advised me that Victoria Police requested the quarantine of speeding infringements captured by the fixed digital road safety intersection camera at Duke Street and Ballarat Road in Braybrook (Braybrook intersection) because of a recent change in the speed limit. The DJCS confirmed it had not received prior notification of this speed limit change which consequently impacted on the enforcement at the correct speed. If the DJCS had been notified beforehand, it would have ensured there was sufficient communication to road users of the changed speed limit prior to the cameras being re-activated for enforcement.

Duke Street borders two councils: Maribyrnong City Council and Brimbank City Council. Historically, Duke Street has been a 60 km/h speed limit zone. However, the enforcement direction of the road safety camera system places the cameras within Maribyrnong City Council. Councils wanting to manage changes to the speed limit and install the requisite signage must first seek permission through the DTP.

Permanent 40 km/h signage were installed on 7 October 2021, however Maribyrnong City Council overlooked notifying the DJCS about this change. It was only identified two weeks' later by a testing services contractor while attending the Braybrook intersection to carry out routine testing and maintenance. On 11 May 2022, the Maribyrnong City Council again overlooked notifying the DJCS that Duke Street would return to a 60 km/h speed limit zone, except during school zone hours when it would revert temporarily to 40 km/h. The changes to the speed limit signage were again identified by a testing services contractor attending the Braybrook intersection a week later. The consequence of these oversights meant that the DJCS was unable to reconfigure the camera enforcement to be consistent with the signed speed limit at the time.

On 24 August 2022, I received advice from the DJCS that Victoria Police made the decision to withdraw and refund, where applicable, approximately 1,600 infringement notices issued between 28 March 2022 to 11 May 2022 from the Braybrook intersection. Again, Victoria Police gave due consideration to its enforcement guidelines to provide for the consistency of enforcement.

This example highlights ongoing stakeholder collaboration improvements for the road safety partnership to consider. On a positive note, there is a strong working relationship between the DJCS and Victoria Police when it comes to determining the status of road safety camera infringements that may have been impacted by external factors that were unknown at the time of issuing. The efficiency of this decision-making was also evident in the Nepean Highway Investigation when after the publication of my recommendations, Victoria Police worked closely with the DJCS to promptly determine the final status with the issued speeding infringements and incidents captured.

Again, similar to what was identified in the Nepean Highway Investigation, there are learnings from this Braybrook intersection example that could be considered by the road safety partners. There are opportunities to improve processes so that local councils, authorised by the DTP to conduct approved speed limit changes, are aware of their responsibility to notify the DJCS of planned speed limit changes near existing road safety camera systems. It is pleasing to report that Maribyrnong City Council has advised the Office that it is committed to improving the necessary business processes and knowledge and will work closely with the DJCS to ensure there is no future repeat of this experience.

I will continue monitoring the progression of Recommendation 7 of the Nepean Highway Investigation as I am interested in the processes created to develop proactive relationships between local councils and the road safety partnership in these situations. This Braybrook intersection example confirmed that this recommendation I made was warranted.



## IMPROVED NOTIFICATIONS REQUIRED BETWEEN THE ROAD SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

On 21 February 2023, the DJCS informed me that Victoria Police were withdrawing red-light infringement notices issued from the road safety camera system at the intersection of Williamsons Road and Doncaster Road in Doncaster (Doncaster intersection). This followed the removal of a traffic signal pole that had impacted the visibility of the red-light arrow for road users turning right. The DJCS manages the operation of Victoria's road safety cameras. The DTP is responsible for the planning and operation of roads and transport in Victoria including the setting of speed limits and managing associated infrastructure like traffic lights and signalling.

On 27 October 2022, the DJCS contacted the DTP about a leaning traffic signal pole on the median strip at the Doncaster intersection. The DTP, which maintains traffic signal infrastructure, remediated the situation by tightening the bolts. However, on 18 January 2023, Victoria Police contacted the DJCS after a local police member reported the centre median traffic signal pole had been removed. At intersections, there are two traffic signal lanterns located: a main one nearest to the stop line and a secondary one further into or at the intersection exit. Both traffic signal lanterns support the enforcement of speeding and red-light incidents captured by road safety cameras. Removing the primary traffic signal pole at the Doncaster intersection made it difficult for road users to be aware that a red-light turning arrow was in operation before entering the intersection. Given the ambiguity this created, the DJCS immediately paused processing all red-light turning incidents pending an investigation.

On 1 February 2023, the DTP confirmed with the DJCS that the traffic signal pole was removed on 30 December 2022 for occupational health and safety reasons. This allowed for the planning and implementation of emergency works to remediate the foundation and install a new traffic signal pole. However, the DTP overlooked notifying the DJCS of the traffic signal pole removal, despite it being integral to the operational integrity of the road safety camera system at the Doncaster intersection.

The DJCS and Victoria Police discussed the enforceability of the 25 impacted red-light infringement notices issued. On 16 February 2023, Victoria Police confirmed the withdrawal of the infringement notices after consideration was given to its enforcement guidelines to remove any doubt to the legitimacy of the offending detected. Red-light enforcement for right-turning traffic was deactivated by the DJCS until the DTP confirmed installation of the new traffic signal pole. This would allow for site acceptance testing of the camera system before enforcement recommenced. On 27 March 2023, the DTP advised the DJCS of completion of the remediation works. Three days later, the Doncaster intersection was reactivated for red-light camera enforcement for right-turning traffic.

This situation again underscores the importance of better communication between the DJCS and the business units within the DTP responsible for infrastructure upgrades and repairs. Such critical changes should not come to light because a vigilant member of Victoria Police happened to drive past the Doncaster intersection and recognised there was a traffic signal pole missing. The DJCS should be proactively informed of anything that could impact upon the integrity of the operation of the road safety camera system. The Nepean Highway Investigation uncovered a similar situation of poor communication. Frankston City Council had overlooked informing the DJCS about new fixed 40 km/h speed limit signs installed along the southbound side of the Nepean Highway in October 2021. Instead, this speed limit change was reported by a member of the RSCP who, by happenstance, drove through the Davey Street intersection and realised that the new and reduced speed limit had changed without any prior notification to the DJCS. These examples again highlight an opportunity for improved coordination between state departments and local governments in circumstances like this in the proximity of road safety cameras.

Through my regular meetings with the executives of the road safety partnership, I will continue reiterating that the public does not distinguish which agency or department is responsible for road safety cameras or the road network – it is viewed as one cohesive operation. Accordingly, it is imperative to the community confidence in the road safety camera system that the DJCS and the DTP continue to work in partnership to maintain and improve processes that ensure adequate notification of road infrastructure changes.

## Yearly review of the road safety camera system

### Fixed digital road safety cameras

All road safety cameras in Victoria must comply with the Road Safety (General) Regulations 2019 and be tested annually and certified by an independent and accredited testing laboratory (Figure 1). Additionally, year-round onsite testing is conducted to provide added reassurance to the public that the cameras are operating properly and any issues identified are quickly addressed.

### Camera uptime and downtime

Over the 2022–23 year, the Office received monthly reporting statistics by the DJCS on the testing and outcomes of the active camera systems, including the deactivation of any non-compliant sites.

The monthly camera performance data includes the number of non-operational enforcement hours (downtime hours) across the fixed digital road safety camera system (Figure 2). This Office has been monitoring the downtime hours since the **2020 Downtime Review**, which examined the causes and impacts of the fixed road safety camera system not being able to operate and enforce.

During the 2022–23 year, the uptime of the fixed road safety camera system was approximately 87 per cent (Figure 3). The system downtime reported was largely attributed to technical issues (41.8 per cent) and roadworks (34.3 per cent). In comparison to the 2021–22 year, uptime reporting was approximately 78 per cent. The nine-percentage point increase in uptime for this 2022–23 year was achieved through active management by the DJCS of the fixed road safety camera network. This included implementation of a multi-stage plan which focused on reactivating long-term deactivated sites as per Recommendation 7 of the 2020 Downtime Review. I am pleased to report that the DJCS and the DTP have closed off the last outstanding recommendation from the 2020 Downtime Review during this reporting period.

The Office continued to monitor the causes and the impacts of the non-enforcement of fixed cameras over the 2022–23 year. While managing roadside assets and enforcement equipment is very complex, Figure 2 shows how camera downtime can be categorised.

The Office will continue monitoring the system downtime as part of the regular monitoring of the road safety camera system overseen by the Office throughout the year.

Figure 1: Number of fixed digital road safety camera certifications in 2022–23.

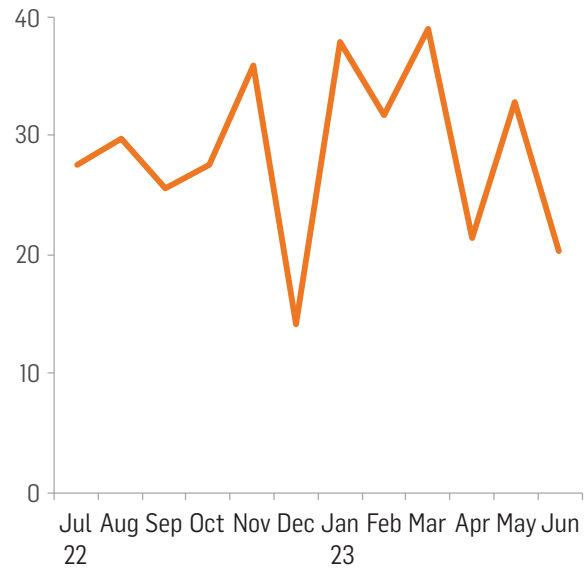


Figure 2: Site downtime by category in 2022–23 (%).

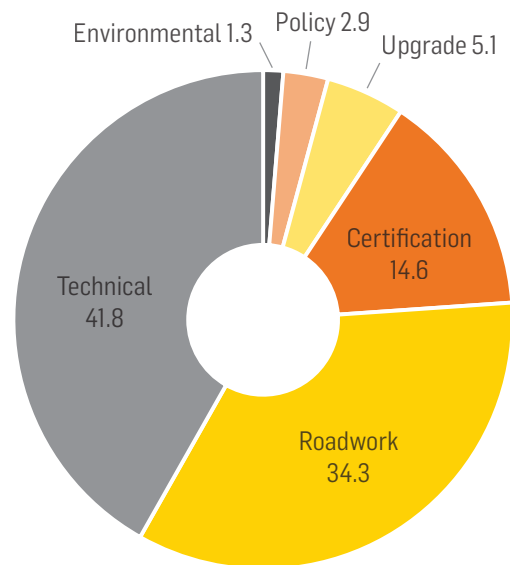
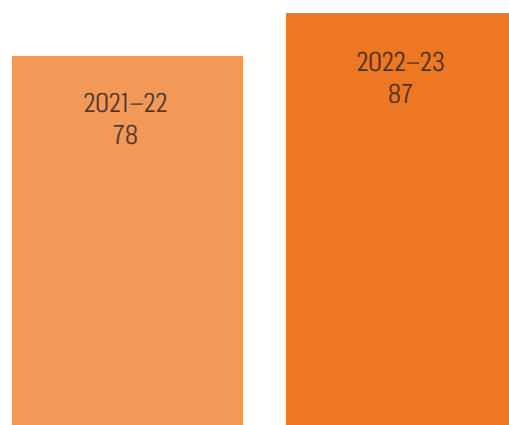


Figure 3: Uptime of fixed cameras in 2021–22 and 2022–23 (%).





## Mobile road safety cameras

In April 2021, the DJCS delivered on a government commitment to increase mobile road safety camera enforcement by 75 per cent to 16,300 hours a month. As stated in my Commissioner's message, modelling released by the MUARC in June 2023 indicated that this increase in hours has saved over 20 lives and avoided 195 serious injuries per year. Additionally, mobile road safety cameras are the primary method of speed enforcement in rural and regional areas. Per capita, rural and regional Victorians are over-represented in road trauma and fatality statistics.

### Camera hours delivered

The mobile road safety camera system has a monthly roadside operational target of delivering 16,300 hours across more than 2,300 approved locations in Victoria. Throughout the 2022–23 year, the Office was provided with monthly reporting statistics on the hours delivered, the results of the annual certification of the mobile road safety camera system, and the volume of speeding incidents captured by the cameras. Across this reporting period, Serco delivered a monthly average of 15,490 hours of mobile camera speed enforcement (Figure 4).

Serco has advised that as a result of the changed labour market conditions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, significant challenges were experienced that impacted on recruitment numbers. Serco has advised that it has improved its recruitment during the 2023 calendar year and is continuing to work with the DJCS and Victoria Police to deliver the required targeted monthly hours.

### Camera certifications

Annual independent testing and certification is conducted on all mobile road safety cameras as required under the Road Safety (General) Regulations 2019. Certification is conducted in an accredited laboratory and it involves the removal of the camera equipment from the vehicle to be tested. A monthly breakdown of the annual certification of the mobile road safety camera system for the 2022–23 year can be found in Figure 5.

### Cameras Save Lives website updates

All information about Victoria's road safety camera system can be publicly found on the CSL website, which is managed and updated by the DJCS. Information provided about the road safety camera system includes:

- the latest news on road safety cameras
- the different camera technologies utilised in Victoria
- the locations of fixed, highway, mobile, and DDS road safety cameras

Figure 4: Targeted enforceable hours of operation of the mobile road safety camera system in 2022–23.

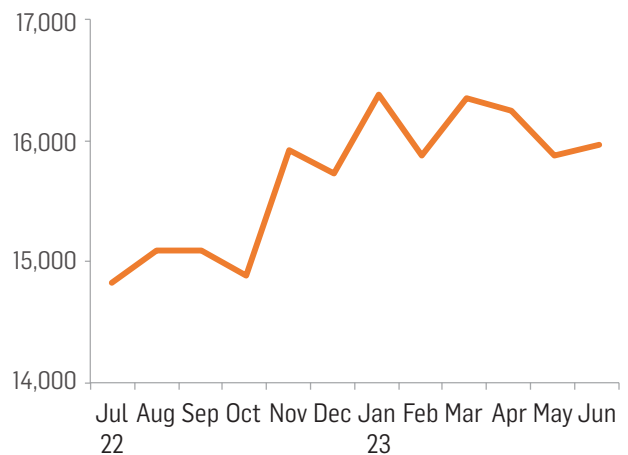
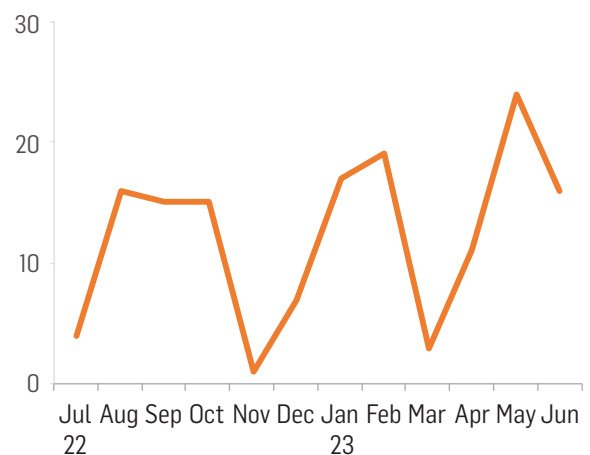


Figure 5: Number of mobile road safety camera certifications in 2022–23.



- the process to suggest new road safety camera sites
- infringement statistics.

On 1 May 2023, the DJCS transitioned the CSL website to the vic.gov.au platform due to ageing and outdated functionality on the former website platform. This transition increased digital standards compliance and readability.

Over the next year, the DJCS will continue to review and improve the website presentation and content. I will report on the progress in refreshing and updating the CSL website in next year's annual report.

## Engagement with the public

The Office is an independent oversight body established to enhance community confidence in the operational accuracy and reliability of road safety cameras in Victoria. The Office provides the public with an alternative avenue for quality assurance, information, and complaints about the road safety camera system.

### Website

The website ([www.cameracommissioner.vic.gov.au](http://www.cameracommissioner.vic.gov.au)) provides information about the Commissioner's role and oversight of the camera system. Previous annual reports and outcomes of formal investigations are published on the website, along with brief biographies of the Commissioner and the Reference Group members. Additionally, information is provided for common complaints and enquiries received including reporting flashing camera incidents via the **CSL website**, and requesting for an Internal Review of infringement notices via the **Fines Victoria website**.

The website also informs the public of any major announcements concerning the integrity of the road safety camera system. In the past 12 months, the website announced the formal commencement of the Nepean Highway Investigation and the Commissioner's work in monitoring the rollout of the new DDS cameras prior to enforcement commencing.

### Website statistics

During the 2022–23 year, there were 8,203 visitors to the website with an average of 22.5 visitors per day. Analysis of the website traffic indicated that 75 per cent of all visitors were from Victoria. Half of all visitors to our website were referred through a Google search, while 23 per cent of visitors arrived via shared links from Facebook posts (Figure 6). The Nepean Highway Investigation had generated significant social media commentary and links to our website were posted and shared by users.

The announcement of the Nepean Highway Investigation was the third most visited page during the 2022–23 year, with the publication of the **Nepean Highway Investigation Report** the sixth most visited page. It is noted that the publication of the **2020 Rosanna Road Fixed Cameras Review** was the seventh most visited page. This may be due to the public wanting further information because of the number of infringements issued at the Rosanna Road and Darebin Street, Heidelberg, intersection. It is worth noting that the 2020 Rosanna Road Fixed Cameras Review found this camera system to be operating accurately. The recommendations made were for the DJCS to develop and implement a Road Safety Camera Strategic Framework to avoid repeating the lengthy camera installation delays experienced at Rosanna Road.

Figure 6: Website referral pathways for public enquiries in 2022–23 (%).

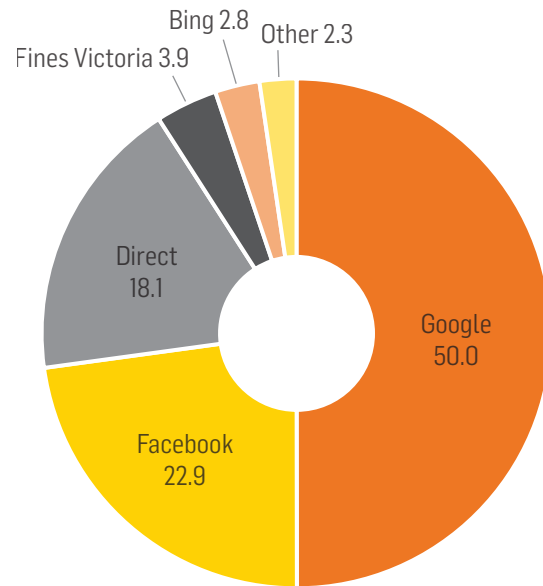


Table 1: Top 10 pages visited on the Camera Commissioner website in 2022–23.

Rank/page	Visits	%
1 Home page	2,105	25.2
2 Contact us	1,530	18.3
3 News alert: Nepean Highway Investigation	820	9.8
4 Have your say	714	8.5
5 How can we help?	623	7.4
6 Publications: Nepean Highway Investigation	600	7.2
7 Publications: Rosanna Road Fixed Cameras Review	593	7.1
8 Enquiries lodged	512	6.1
9 News	451	5.4
10 Our people	422	5.0

## Enquiries and complaints

The **Camera Commissioner website** is the main contact point for the public to provide the Office with feedback, with the other three alternate avenues being emails, telephone calls, and letters.

During the 2022–23 year, 284 enquiries and 192 complaints were received from the public.

### Enquiries received

Of the 284 enquiries received, 65 (22.9 per cent) were for new fixed or mobile road safety camera systems to be installed in areas of concern. This confirms that members of the community perceive road safety cameras as an effective tool in reducing road trauma and driving behavioural changes in road users. It also suggests that the role of this Office may not be as clear as the Commissioner does not recommend or advocate for the installation of road safety cameras. The DJCS operates Victoria's road safety camera system and requests for new road safety cameras can be made to the department via the **CSL website**. The Office and the DJCS may wish to consider whether public communications could be improved to provide greater clarity on where to direct requests for new road safety cameras.

The Office received 86 requests (30.3 per cent) for video footage. Some of the requests were for footage from **traffic monitoring cameras**, which are not part of the road safety camera system. The number of requests received suggests that many people believe the Office has day-to-day operational management of road safety cameras. Again, this is an opportunity to improve the public communications of the role and scope of the Office.

The Office also received 41 Internal Review requests (14.4 per cent) for infringements issued from the camera system. The Commissioner does not issue infringements and has no legislated powers to overturn decisions made by Victoria Police. Based on the addressee of the enquiries received, some members of the public mistakenly believe that the Office of the Road Safety Camera Commissioner is the same as the Traffic Camera Office, which is a business unit of Victoria Police. To avoid future confusion, all Internal Review requests should be made via the **Fines Victoria website**.

### Complaints received

Of the 192 complaints received, 64 (33.3 per cent) related to flashing cameras at fixed intersection camera sites and 76 (39.6 per cent) related to the stopping location of mobile road safety camera vehicles during enforcement sessions.

The flashing camera complaints received were mainly from road users concerned they may have been fined despite not crossing through an intersection on a red-light signal. These complaints suggest that some members of the public are not aware of the robust verification processes in place when reviewing incidents detected by the fixed camera system. All speeding and red-light incidents are reviewed by several automated and manual human verifiers, with Victoria Police ultimately making the final decision to issue infringement notices based on the evidence at hand.

Complaints received about mobile road safety cameras were about camera vehicles stopped too close to driveways or intersections. Some members of the public believed that this impeded their view and made it difficult for them and other road users to safely enter or exit roadways. Public support for mobile camera enforcement is important but it also has to be balanced with road safety objectives. Feedback from the public assists the DJCS, Serco, and Victoria Police to take into account local considerations when determining future mobile camera set-ups for enforcement.

Finally, during the 2021–22 and 2022–23 years, the Office received 108 complaints from the public about infringements received from the cameras at the Davey Street intersection prior to the announcement and after the commencement of the Nepean Highway Investigation. The complaints received helped shape the scope of the investigation as it gave valuable insight into the confusion that road users had experienced when driving along the Nepean Highway through the Davey Street intersection.

# LEGACY RECOMMENDATIONS

An important legislative function of the Commissioner is to make recommendations to the Minister on any issue that impacts the integrity, transparency, and community confidence in the road safety camera system.

These issues may be systemic in nature and affect the reliable operation of the cameras. The Commissioner can make recommendations following reviews, assessments, monitoring, investigations, or receiving complaints from the public, and they are often directed at one or more of the relevant road safety partners to fulfil.

## Governance and tracking improvements

In early-2020, my immediate predecessor, Commissioner Stephen Leane APM, identified a need to improve the governance of all the outstanding legacy recommendations made by every Commissioner since 2012. He undertook the enormous task of collating them to identify which recommendations had been implemented, were still open, unsupported, closed, or duplicated. Commissioner Leane created a Review Roadmap that outlined a plan to engage with the road safety partners to understand the delays and challenges involved in reconciling the outstanding legacy recommendations. The Review Roadmap required the road safety partners to commit to advancing both outstanding and future recommendations and to provide regular progress updates. Commissioner Leane reported on the progress of the reconciliation of legacy recommendations in the **2020–21 Annual Report**.

I engaged the DJCS early in my tenure to prioritise the development of a rigorous and reliable systems approach to meet this commitment by the road safety partners. This resulted in the DJCS designing, in consultation with the road safety partners, the Road Safety Camera Commissioner Recommendations Governance Plan (Governance Plan). The Governance Plan establishes a formal process to coordinate the activities and messages of the relevant

departments and agencies to action the Commissioner's recommendations and to provide regular progress reports.

In May 2023, the DJCS Deputy Secretary of Police, Racing, Victims and Coordination formally approved the Governance Plan and the Road Safety Camera Commissioner Recommendations Tracking Register (Tracking Register). The Governance Plan structures the processes, roles, and responsibilities of the road safety partners to collaboratively manage the acquittal of the recommendations made. The Tracking Register provides greater detail with the proactive management involved in closing outstanding recommendations. Clearer milestones and exit criteria, governance processes and accountabilities, and greater interagency collaboration are set out in the Tracking Register, with all recommendations coordinated by the DJCS regardless of the department/agency responsible for progressing the action.

This work marks a significant governance achievement in ensuring all outstanding legacy and future recommendations are appropriately considered and acted upon. The timely delivery of recommendations will improve the trust in the integrity and transparency of the road safety camera system. The new Governance Plan and Tracking Register makes it easier for me to track the progress of recommendations made, especially ones relevant to my five areas of focus. This formalised process should improve collaboration, engagement, consultation, and cooperation on road safety and road network projects. It also helps identify the necessary work required, including legislative and policy changes, to continue delivering effective improvements to the camera system and road safety benefits to the community.



# Reconciliation of legacy recommendations

## Legacy recommendations closed in 2022–23

Table 2: Closure of recommendations in 2022–23.

Agency	Closed recommendations
DJCS	11*
DTP	6
Victoria Police	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19</b>

\*One of these recommendations was a repeated recommendation to replace the legacy fixed analogue road safety cameras.



### Replacement of the wet-film camera system

2011–12 Annual Report – Recommendation 10  
 2014–15 Annual Report – Recommendation 2

The inaugural 2011–12 Annual Report recommended the replacement of the legacy fixed analogue road safety cameras (wet-film cameras) with fixed digital cameras. The completion of the upgrade of 33 intersection sites with newer digital technology has improved the accuracy, efficiency, and reliability of these camera systems. Some of these upgraded cameras feature a new detection device, taking advantage of the advances in radar technology.

The completion of this upgrade project is a significant milestone for the DJCS. New camera technology enhances road safety benefits for the community. Additionally, the upgrade to new digital road safety cameras aligns with the strategic direction of the RSCP Asset Management Strategy. One of the lessons from the closure of an original legacy recommendation is for the DJCS to continue exploring opportunities to utilise newer camera technology at existing locations.





## Speeding drivers and camera surfing

### 2013–14 Annual Report – Recommendation 3



Point-to-point cameras calculate the average speed of road users over a set distance. Currently, these fixed highway cameras are installed along the Hume Freeway and the Peninsula Link in Victoria. Although this camera technology has been in use in Victoria for more than 15 years, the **2017 Peninsula Link Investigation** revealed that some road users mistakenly believed that these cameras only measured instantaneous speed, unaware that they also measured speed over a set distance. As a result, many road users engaged in the dangerous driving behaviour of camera surfing. This involves road users slowing their vehicles prior to passing a set of road safety cameras, then increasing their speed above the posted speed limit before slowing down again when approaching the next set of cameras. This driving behaviour is risky, and it suggests that many members of the public do not believe that driving at speeds of 5–10 km/h over the speed limit, particularly in 100 km/h and 110 km/h speed limit zones, is dangerous.

Point-to-point camera technology is effective in providing feedback to road users about their driving behaviour over the length of a road, rather than at a fixed point on the roadway. In fact, the inaugural Commissioner recognised the impact of point-to-point camera technology in changing driver behaviour almost a decade ago. The RSCP Point-to-Point Enforcement Strategy provides a pathway for the DJCS to explore the greater use of this effective enforcement system, including trialling different forms of point-to-point technologies such as relocatable-based and mobile-based cameras. From a technological standpoint, the various test sites installed along the Calder Freeway provide opportunities for camera vendors to develop and trial new point-to-point and instantaneous enforcement solutions. From a communications perspective, the DJCS has plans for the CSL website to provide greater clarity to the public about how point-to-point camera technology can be utilised to change high-risk driving behaviours and perceptions about speeding tolerances.





## A team to explore new camera technology

2019–20 Annual Report: Efficiencies Investigation – Recommendation 11

An Innovation and Strategy team was established within the RSCP to examine, consider, advise, and communicate on new camera enforcement technologies available and adopted for use elsewhere. The team has examined various emerging and enhanced camera technologies that may be able to deliver road safety benefits in areas that can only now be possible due to the advances in technology. This includes camera enforcement technology that can clearly capture illegal mobile phone use when driving. This task was previously only able to be undertaken by a member of the police during regular operational duties.



## Speed limits at roadworks

2019–20 Downtime Review – Recommendation 12



Enforcement of reduced speed limits at roadwork sites is an ongoing and critical issue because of the risks to the safety of roadworkers. The RSCP Research and Development Strategy enables the exploration of new road safety camera technologies, that is anchored by innovation and data modelling and analysis. A structured approach to research and development actively supports the road safety goals of the Strategy. The DJCS will examine new camera technology specifically designed for speed enforcement at roadwork sites. While similar technology has been trialled in Queensland at school zones and roadwork sites, any trial in Victoria needs to be specific to local conditions.







## Enforcing reduced speed limits on managed motorways

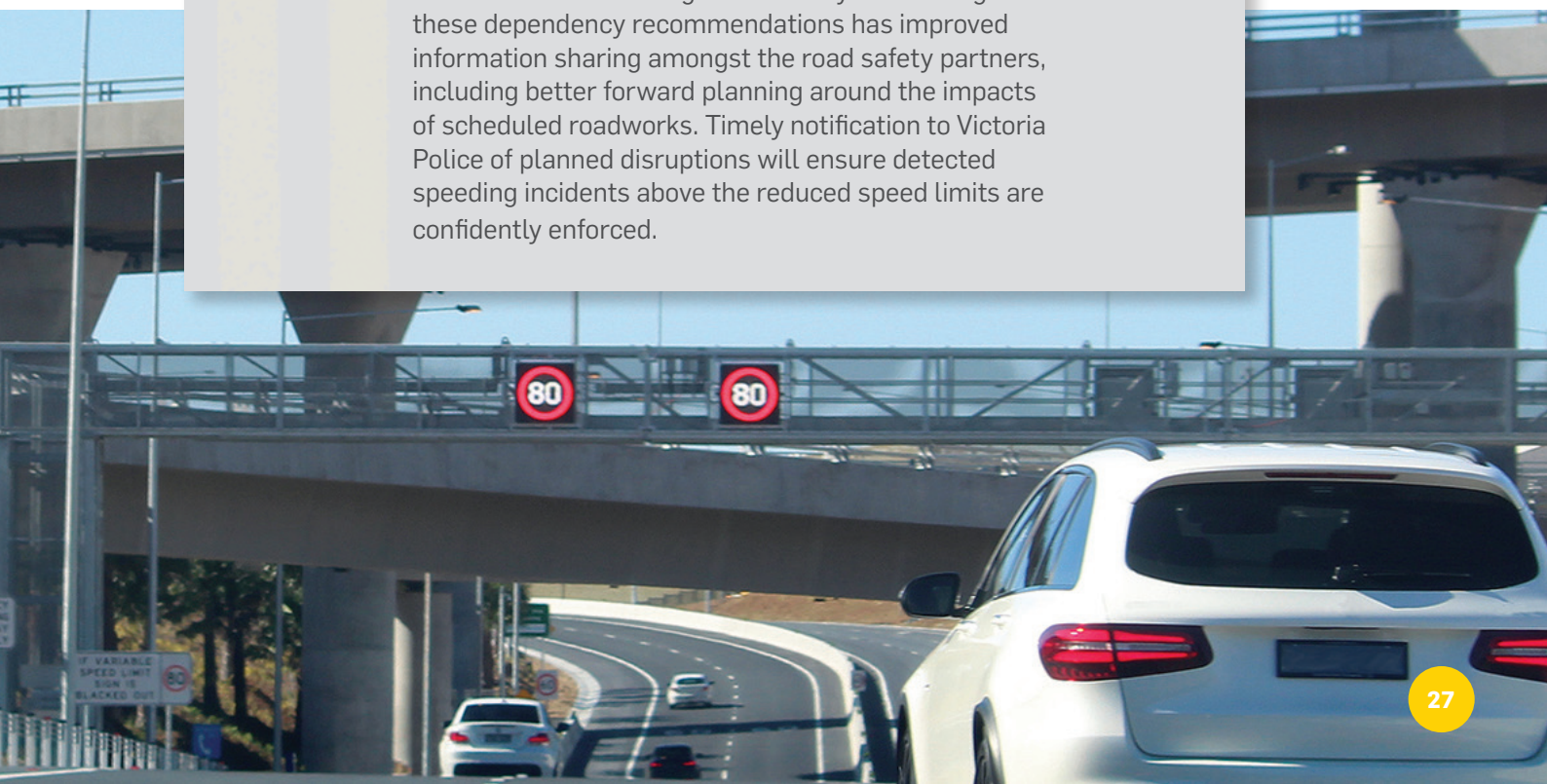
### 2020–21 LUMS Inquiry – Recommendations 1, 4, and 5



Lane use management systems (LUMS) inform road users of the current speed limit and lanes in use along managed motorways. LUMS are used on some Victorian freeways and they feature electronic signs, installed overhead at regular intervals in each lane, to manage speed and traffic flows.

The **2021 LUMS Inquiry** examined the rejection rate data of detected speeding incidents that were not enforced at LUMS sites. Reduced speed limits on freeways are utilised to manage the increased risks during road improvement works or to advise road users of an approaching incident, hazard, or congestion ahead. The recommendations made in the LUMS Inquiry related to enhancing systems and interagency collaboration for more effective speed enforcement, particularly when speed limits were reduced. The inconsistent enforcement identified in the LUMS Inquiry impacted negatively on the integrity of the road safety camera system. There were limited to no consequences for speeding road users endangering the lives of roadworkers at some LUMS sites when reduced speed limits were in force.

The recommendations finalised during the 2022–23 year by the DTP related to improving the quality of information captured and collected from the traffic management contractors, and reviewing the design of fixed LUMS infrastructure and the policies and standards of managed motorways. Finalising these dependency recommendations has improved information sharing amongst the road safety partners, including better forward planning around the impacts of scheduled roadworks. Timely notification to Victoria Police of planned disruptions will ensure detected speeding incidents above the reduced speed limits are confidently enforced.







## Availability of red-light offending video footage

2018–19 Annual Report – Recommendation 3



I committed in the previous annual report to seek progress on the disclosure of video footage to the public of red-light offending captured by the fixed digital road safety intersection cameras. Access to this footage increases the transparency and community confidence of the road safety camera system as it provides supplementary evidence to the public about their dangerous driving behaviour.

I am pleased to report that the DJCS and Victoria Police have supported and finalised this recommendation. Following changes on 1 October 2022 to the disclosure obligations of informants in the *Criminal Procedure Act 2009*, defendants who have elected to contest their red-light offending at court are advised of the existence of any video footage of their offending. Victoria Police is bound by the new disclosure requirements to provide requested available footage to defendants when their court matters proceed to the contested hearing stage.

I will continue monitoring this matter over the 2023–24 year, including any solutions Victoria Police and the DJCS identify in potentially providing this video footage to people before they elect to challenge their infringement notices at court.



## Compelling public servants to cooperate during an investigation

### 2017–18 WannaCry Investigation Report – Recommendation 15

The recommendation to provide the Commissioner with powers to compel public servants to cooperate during investigations was not supported.

I have developed a good and respectful relationship with all the road safety partners. The Office and I regularly meet with managers and senior executives and are provided with updates on any issues potentially impacting the road safety camera system. The Notification Matrix clearly sets out the process on how I am to be informed of issues or events that arise.

During the Nepean Highway Investigation, I experienced excellent cooperation from all four key stakeholders. They provided all requested documents, were transparent in taking responsibility for decisions made, always made time to be available for meetings, and gave detailed written responses to my questions. All stakeholders also demonstrated a willingness to learn from the investigation and implement lessons identified.

Based on this experience and the improvements in collaboration I have witnessed, I believe that this particular recommendation is no longer applicable in the current environment. The existing powers available under the RSCC Act appear to be sufficient to fulfil my role and functions in completing reviews and investigations.

## Ongoing monitoring of outstanding legacy recommendations

### Routine testing of mobile road safety cameras

#### 2011 VAGO Report – Recommendation 5

Recommendation 5 in the 2011 VAGO report sought to strengthen the assurance in the accuracy and reliability of mobile road safety cameras by establishing a program of regular independent testing. It is important to stress that the Auditor-General found that the current annual maintenance and certification testing procedures were “frequent enough to maintain a high level of assurance over the accuracy of the [mobile road safety] cameras.” However, the Auditor-General recommended that more frequent testing would further bolster community confidence with the speed measurement capability of the mobile cameras. I concur with this conclusion and recommendation.

I will continue monitoring the progress the DJCS is making towards establishing a comparable level of testing of the mobile road safety cameras that is currently applied to the fixed digital road safety cameras. During this reporting period, the DJCS commenced work to develop a testing regime.

### Timelier publication of infringement statistics

#### 2019 Identification of Uninhibited Drivers Report – Recommendation 4

I am continuing to engage with the DJCS to improve the timely and consistent publication of infringement statistics, from road safety cameras, on the **CSL website**. While the DJCS has slightly improved the timeframe for publication, challenges still remain. There was a delay of eight months to publish the first quarter of infringement statistics (1 July 2022 to 30 September 2022) on 19 May 2023. It is important for transparency reasons that the publication of the infringement statistics is not unreasonably delayed.

Over the upcoming reporting period, I will be seeking a commitment from the DJCS on a reasonable timeframe for the publication of each quarter of infringement statistics.



## Corporate infringements

### 2019 Identification of Uninhibited Drivers Report – Recommendations 1, 2, 3, and 5

The September 2019 report on the 'Identification of Uninhibited Drivers' found that some corporations chose to pay the higher corporate infringement penalties rather than nominate the responsible drivers at the time of detection. In some cases, this allowed corporate executives, with full private use of a company vehicle, to personally avoid fines and demerit points. The report revealed that some businesses chose to pay the higher corporate infringement penalties to protect employees from potentially losing their driver licences. Some of the excessive speeding offending detected would have resulted in the immediate loss of licence if the individual drivers had been nominated. This is concerning as these drivers have not faced the consequences for their dangerous driving behaviour and have been allowed to continue to place themselves and other road users at risk.

I will be seeking updates from the relevant road safety partners on these recommendations and will report further in the next annual report.



# PROJECT UPDATES

## Expansion and upgrades

### Expanding the road safety camera network

To deliver a key strategic focus area of the Strategy of supporting and enforcing safer driver behaviour, the Victorian Road Safety Action Plan 2021–2023 (Action Plan) stipulated an action to install new fixed digital road safety camera systems across Victoria. The TAC provided \$49.4 million in funding to the DJCS for new road safety cameras at 35 intersection sites and for two sets of highway point-to-point camera systems. When operating, the 35 new fixed intersection sites will expand the road safety camera network by 20.1 per cent. This will deliver important road safety benefits to the community as according to the Action Plan, intersection crashes account for 23 per cent of all lives lost on Victorian roads. Research and data confirms that road safety cameras are an effective tool to reduce road trauma by discouraging high-risk and dangerous driving behaviours through enforcement and education.

### The public's role in identifying required road safety camera sites

The Victorian community plays an important role with improving road safety for all road users and pedestrians. The public, or their local representatives, can suggest a fixed road safety camera location through the **CSL website**. Requests received for mobile and DDS camera locations will be onforwarded to Victoria Police for consideration.

Each fixed camera request is considered by the Fixed Camera Site Selection Committee (FCSSC), which is chaired by Victoria Police and has representatives from the DJCS and the DTP. All requests are carefully measured against robust considerations including historical crash data analysis, statistics on crash casualties, historical public complaints received, local police intelligence about high-risk driving behaviours, data on driver behaviour, engineering and environmental suitability, and existing enforcement options available.

Independent research may also be used to determine the enforcement direction of the camera system.

All of the 35 new intersection sites originated from public requests. All of the approved intersections were identified as high-risk, priority location sites. The MUARC has also confirmed that each intersection site location approved by the FCSSC will deliver needed road safety benefits when enforcement begins. None of these intersection sites would have been identified for new road safety cameras if it was not for the proactive concern for the safety of road users by members of the public.

Constructing, installing, and activating the new camera systems is underway. I am pleased to report that the first three intersection sites were installed and activated for enforcement between 31 March 2023 and 24 May 2023. The new fixed intersection cameras are located at:

- Coburns Road and Barries Road, Melton
- Canning Street (Cordite Drive) and Bellavista Drive, Avondale Heights
- Princes Highway/Dandenong Road and Williams Road/Hotham Street, Windsor.

Over the 2023–24 year, most of the remaining 32 intersection camera sites will be in operation while the location of the two sets of fixed highway point-to-point camera systems will be determined. The DJCS anticipates a mid-2025 completion date to finalise this expansion of the road safety camera network. The **CSL website** will be progressively updated to inform the public of new camera site locations activated for enforcement.



## Hume Freeway upgrades

2016–17 Annual Report – Recommendation 5

2017–18 Annual Report – Recommendation 9\*

2018–19 Annual Report – Recommendation 11\*

The Hume Freeway has had fixed point-to-point highway camera enforcement systems for more than 15 years. During this reporting period, the DJCS made significant progress in upgrading the ageing system. This work delivered on the strategic direction of both the RSCP Asset Management Strategy and a repeated outstanding legacy recommendation for more point-to-point cameras on regional and country roads. The DJCS anticipates completion of the upgrade works by October 2023.

Additionally, new fixed point-to-point highway camera sites have also been approved for installation in Seymour, Euroa, and Creightons Creek. The DJCS anticipates the camera sites at Euroa and Creightons Creek to begin enforcing by March 2024.

*\* Repeated recommendation.*

## In-road sensor upgrades

2019–20 Downtime Review – Recommendation 3

2019–20 Annual Report: Efficiencies Investigation – Recommendations 5 and 9

The RSCP Asset Management Strategy established an asset renewal review process for the DJCS. This has identified potential efficiency gains in reducing camera network downtime through the replacement of old piezoelectric sensor technology at 20 fixed intersection sites, with a more modern and less maintenance intensive technology.

## WannaCry updates

2017–18 WannaCry Virus Investigation Report – Recommendation 9

2017–18 WannaCry Virus Investigation Report – Recommendation 15

In the 2022–23 year, the DJCS closed two more recommendations stemming from the 2018 WannaCry Virus Investigation Report (WannaCry Report).

### Network security update

The WannaCry Report illuminated the cyber security challenges faced by the DJCS in securing various aspects of the road safety camera system. The DJCS has established a project to improve the security of camera devices and networks to prevent network security breaches. This is a complex technical project that requires a reconfiguration of the camera network to keep it secure. Upgrades of the technical security provisions and infrastructure are required, as well as managed and secured network services being delivered through a qualified telecommunications partner. This project will deliver its program of work through multiple phases:

- requirement specifications
- detailed design development
- pilot
- system-wide rollout.

It is anticipated that the network security upgrades will be completed by June 2025.

### Asset management system upgrade

The new specialised and fit-for-purpose IBM Maximo Application Suite has replaced the ageing asset management software used by the DJCS. The new computerised maintenance management system became operational on 26 June 2023. It was designed to manage the fixed road safety camera network with improved automation of processes to reduce administrative burden. This new asset management system should deliver efficiencies in managing deactivations, reactivations, and testing and maintenance schedules.

Delivery of this new system progresses the closure of Recommendation 5 of the WannaCry Report and Recommendation 13 of the Efficiencies Investigation Report. The DJCS expects both recommendations to be closed in the 2023–24 year.

## New road safety camera technology in Victoria

The DJCS began exploring the possibility of acquiring new camera technologies to deliver better road safety outcomes when finalising a recommendation made in the 2014–15 Annual Report. Recommendation 1 required the DJCS to assess how the Smart Vehicle Enforcement program confronted various dangerous driving behaviours in Manchester, United Kingdom. Having implemented the RSCP Asset Management and the Procurement and Delivery Strategies, the DJCS is well-prepared to pro-actively seek and acquire new camera technologies specific for the Victorian environment.

I have highlighted throughout this annual report that road safety cameras are an effective tool to change high-risk driving behaviour and reduce the incidences of road trauma. In the 2022–23 year, significant progress was made in delivering new road safety camera enforcement technology for use in Victoria.

### Victorian Road Safety Strategy 2021–2030

One of the key strategic focus areas of the Strategy is supporting and enforcing safer driver behaviour through deterrence in both active and passive enforcement activities. Advances in technology will expand the ability to identify, encourage compliance, and deter dangerous driving behaviours. In terms of enforcement, the Strategy has focused on high and low-level speeding, drug and drink-driving, and distracted driving and seatbelt offending to halve the number of lives lost and reduce serious injuries sustained on the roads by the end of this decade. The Action Plan committed \$33.7 million to deliver new road safety camera technology to detect, enforce, and deter dangerous distracted driving behaviours and seatbelt offending.

Driving distracted while using a mobile phone to text, browse, or email increases the risk of being involved in a crash by a factor of 10. This is borne out by the fact that 11 per cent of all fatalities are due to driver distraction. During the 2022–23 year, Victoria Police issued 19,763 traffic infringement notices for illegal mobile phone use. Despite seatbelts being mandatory in Victoria for more than 50 years, statistics from the TAC indicated that a quarter of all vehicle occupants who lost their lives on Victorian roads in the last five years were not wearing their seatbelts (where the seatbelt status was known).

### New road rules

After an initial trial in 2020, new road safety cameras to detect illegal mobile phone use and seatbelt offending were introduced on 31 March 2023 to coincide with changes to the Road Safety (Drivers) Regulation 2019 and the Road Safety (General) Regulations 2019. Changes to the Victorian road rules align with the Australian Road Rules and include:

- defining portable devices to include mobile phones, tablets, and laptops
- clarifying the use of mobile phones and other portable, wearable, mounted, and inbuilt devices when operating a vehicle/motorbike as a learner, probationary, or fully licenced driver/rider.

The **VicRoads website** has summarised the changes to the road rules and penalties.

### Deployable camera enforcement technology

The new DDS cameras are self-contained units mounted on trailers and can be deployed at any approved sites on urban, regional, and rural roads. Strict procedures are followed to ensure the DDS camera trailers are safely secured and set-up. All trailers are equipped with a comprehensive security and environmental monitoring system and operate through a combination of solar and battery-supported power.



The high-definition cameras can operate over multiple lanes and take high-resolution photographs from different angles to capture drivers illegally using their mobile phones and not wearing their seatbelts correctly, as well as their front seat passengers not wearing their seatbelts correctly. The cameras can operate in any weather condition, day and night.

Artificial intelligence ('AI') software examines each image taken to identify potential incidents captured for further manual review by trained individuals. Images where no offending is identified are deleted for privacy reasons. For further details on the new DDS cameras, visit the [CSL website](#).

## Distracted driving and seatbelt cameras launched

On 31 March 2023, the new DDS cameras were launched to coincide with the new road rules. For the next three months, road users detected by this new camera technology received an advisory letter explaining that they have been captured driving distracted and/or not wearing seatbelts correctly. The aim of this advisory letter period was for Victorians to educate themselves with the new road rules and make immediate adjustments to their high-risk driving behaviour.

During this three-month advisory letter period (31 March 2023 to 30 June 2023), up to three DDS camera trailers were deployed across Victoria and delivered more than 2,000 operational hours a month. During this time:

- 1,449,799 vehicles drove past the DDS cameras
- 4,676 advisory letters were issued for illegal mobile phone use
- 5,015 advisory letters were issued for incorrect seatbelt use by a driver
- 1,357 advisory letters were issued for incorrect seatbelt use by a front seat passenger.

## Integrity, transparency, and community confidence with new camera technology

As the Commissioner, I need to be satisfied that any new camera technology that is introduced in Victoria meets the highest thresholds of integrity and transparency to ensure community confidence in their use. As I mentioned at the beginning in my Commissioner's message, to achieve a reduction in dangerous driving behaviour with road safety camera technology requires the public to have a high level of trust in the integrity of the cameras and how they are deployed to make the roads safer.

Over the last 18 months, I was provided information from the DJCS about these new DDS cameras prior to launch. These covered capabilities demonstrated during testing, images identified for further review by the AI software, and the set-up procedures to ensure the accuracy of the cameras.

During the advisory letter period, my engagement increased with the DJCS, the DTP, the TAC, and Victoria Police. The DJCS and Victoria Police, in particular, both provided me with regular progress updates as the DDS cameras prepared to go live with enforcement on 1 July 2023. These updates included various technical, resourcing, and regulation deliverables required from the different road safety partners. I and members of the Office also attended a site visit to a DDS camera location to view the camera system in operation. We were also provided with a live demonstration of the manual verification processes involved in reviewing the images identified by the AI software.

## Integrity

### AI software

I have examined and am confident that the AI software component technology is used solely as an intelligent image filter. The AI software utilises a broad set of parameters to identify key elements of an image that may indicate a potential distracted driving or a seatbelt offence. These images are retained for subsequent reviews by trained and qualified human verifiers. The decision to issue infringements for offences detected by the DDS cameras rests with Victoria Police and not the AI software.

### Camera set-up

The following are the strict guidelines and procedures that must be adhered to when setting up a DDS camera system for an enforcement session:

- the validation of site locations and safety considerations
- the requirement to consider the external environment at the enforcement site (e.g., awareness of any impeding power lines)
- the camera system is adjusted and fine-tuned to provide the most optimal passing vehicle position and camera angle
- test images are taken and reviewed to ensure accuracy of the set-up.

After all data and operator checks are validated, an enforcement session is able to commence. Having reviewed these enforcement set-up guidelines and procedures, I am satisfied incidents captured by these DDS cameras are accurate and can be relied on for enforcement.

## Review of infringements

Members of the public, who have received infringement notices for driving distracted or not wearing a seatbelt correctly, can view the captured images on the **Fines Victoria website**.

If members of the public believe they have been unfairly fined or there are valid reasons the fine/s should be withdrawn, they can lodge an Internal Review to Victoria Police, via the **Fines Victoria website**. This is the same review process available for offending captured by the other road safety camera systems.

## Transparency

### Site selection

Victoria Police select the DDS camera sites for enforcement by following a similar process and criteria used to approve fixed and mobile road safety camera locations. Potential location sites are evaluated against internal policies and available data including:

- various indicators of offending behaviour
- proximity to vulnerable road users
- external environmental factors
- feedback from both the operational elements of Victoria Police and the public
- collision and trauma data (noting that driver distraction can still occur in low-speed conditions where minor injuries data may not be available).

I am re-assured by the robust process in using available information and intelligence to make data-driven decisions on site selections for enforcement by the DDS cameras. Anything less than a data-driven decision-making process opens the road safety camera system to accusations of revenue raising.

Over time, as the intelligence and information captured by the DDS cameras matures to provide a sufficient baseline of data to be analysed for learnings and trends, I expect to see some changes to the site selection, camera rostering, and operational tasking by Victoria Police. This includes the evaluation and re-evaluation of selected sites to determine if the following are (still) applicable considerations:

- Validated complaints received about road users using their mobile phones or other portable devices illegally, or not wearing their seatbelts correctly.
- Anywhere deemed necessary by Victoria Police to ensure effective enforcement and encourage overall improvement to driver behaviour and road safety.
- The physical road environment is likely to encourage a higher frequency of distracted driving behaviour or the incorrect wearing of seatbelts.

## Communication

Since the new road rules commenced on 31 March 2023, communications from the DTP (provided via VicRoads), the TAC, and the DJCS (via the CSL website) were consistent about the impacts that distracted driving and the incorrect use of seatbelts have on road trauma. The advisory letters received by road users captured by the DDS cameras included a QR code linking to a story of a State Emergency Service volunteer who had attended the aftermath of a road fatality. The deceased driver was momentarily distracted by his mobile phone and crashed his vehicle into a concrete barrier.

Additionally, the advisory letter and the information on the CSL website were consistent on the messaging that the enforcement by the DDS cameras had not yet commenced. People who received advisory letters were directed to the VicRoads website to familiarise themselves with the new road rules and to make choices to drive more safely in the future.

All the communications I reviewed had a strong road safety message and reinforced the dangers of using a mobile phone while driving and not wearing seatbelts correctly. I am also satisfied that the communication campaigns during the advisory letter period made it clear that enforcement by the DDS cameras would begin on 1 July 2023.

## Community confidence

### Privacy

Protecting the public's privacy is important as this camera technology records images. Prior to the rollout of the DDS cameras, the DJCS engaged with the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner (OVIC) to ensure privacy was appropriately considered and addressed, with a Privacy Impact Assessment conducted by an external, independent consultant.

The AI software utilised does not have any facial recognition capabilities nor can it capture or analyse biometric data. It can only filter images to determine potential illegal mobile phone use or seatbelt offences. If no offending is detected, the images are not retained and are permanently deleted within 24 hours.

### Verification process

The DDS cameras will operate under the same robust manual verification processes used to verify red-light and speeding offences captured by the fixed and mobile road safety cameras. All potential offences detected are verified manually by up to four independent, highly trained, and qualified individuals. They apply a high standard of evidentiary proof-approach when scrutinising images under review. Ultimately, Victoria Police makes the final decision to issue infringement notices captured by the DDS cameras, as it does with offences captured by the fixed and mobile road safety camera systems.



I am satisfied that the verification processes adopted for the DDS camera system are equal to the high standards currently in place to verify offences captured by the other road safety camera technologies.

### Ongoing monitoring

The 2020 Road Safety Camera Commissioner Perceptions Wave 2 Survey (**2020 Survey**) found that 63 per cent of people supported the application of automated road safety camera enforcement to detect distracted driving and seatbelt offending. To increase this strong support for the new DDS cameras, I will monitor the enforcement rollout and focus my attention on the following three areas:

1. Site selection and approval procedures.
2. Management of serious indictable offences detected by the DDS cameras.
3. Appropriate processes in place to seek a review of infringement notices issued.

## Future visions: advancing Victoria's road safety camera system

Both the Strategy and the National Road Safety Strategy 2021–30 aim to halve the number of lives lost and reduce serious injuries sustained on the roads by the end of the decade. To help achieve this, I am interested in the application of new camera technology to create lasting changes in driver behaviour. I will continue encouraging stakeholders to explore new camera technologies and will work with the road safety partnership to ensure the highest standards of governance are applied. As indicated earlier, the community must be confident that new camera technologies introduced can accurately and reliably detect dangerous driving behaviours.

The DJCS is identifying new and emerging road safety camera solutions that can be used on Victorian roads. The DJCS chairs an inter-jurisdictional reference group with representation from New Zealand and other Australian jurisdictions. Learnings are obtained from other jurisdictions of their experiences in implementing new road safety camera technology that are not currently in use in Victoria.

As part of the Office's stakeholder engagement, the Senior Technical Officer receives updates from the DJCS and the DTP about new camera technology solutions being actively explored including proof of concepts, market scans, trials, and implementations. My Senior Technical Officer provides me with independent advice about the accuracy, reliability, and road safety benefits that these new camera technology solutions may be able to deliver.

## Advancing fixed road safety camera technology

### Calder Freeway test sites

*2013–14 Annual Report – Recommendation 3*  
*2020–21 Rosanna Road Fixed Cameras Review – Recommendation 3*

The 2020 Survey found that 57 per cent of people supported the use of automated point-to-point camera enforcement technology. Several legacy recommendations identified the value of expanding the point-to-point camera system as well as improving the public communication of the road safety benefits they deliver. These benefits have been independently confirmed in a research report published in February 2021 by the MUARC, following an evaluation of the effectiveness of the point-to-point camera system along the Hume Freeway. The report found there was a 28 per cent reduction in casualty crashes associated with the installation of these camera systems.<sup>1</sup>

The DJCS Road Safety Camera Strategic Framework encourages the DJCS to proactively explore new road safety camera technologies. Coupled with the RSCP Point-to-Point Enforcement Strategy, the DJCS is actively exploring the expansion of its point-to-point camera network with new and innovative technology to address gaps in road safety enforcement on regional and metropolitan roads.

The DJCS has established permanent test sites along a 28-kilometre stretch of the Calder Freeway to test new and emerging point-to-point camera technologies developed by five camera vendors for Victorian-specific conditions. This may include future innovative camera technology that can measure and enforce speed within variable speed limit zones and roadwork sites.

The Calder Freeway sites are for testing only and will not enforce any incidents detected. Data obtained will enable the development of camera technology for instantaneous and point-to-point speed enforcement in Victoria. Construction of the test sites has commenced and is expected to be active from late-2023, with the remainder activated by early-2025.

The DJCS and the DTP will review road safety camera legislation and regulations to identify and progress any changes to ensure point-to-point cameras can be used for enforcement where speed limits vary, and to ensure new mobile, relocatable, and other emerging camera technology systems are covered by legislation.

## Advancing mobile road safety camera technology

### Optimising mobile road safety cameras

The DJCS developed a Mobile Speed Enforcement Optimisation Plan ('MSEOP') business case. Currently, mobile road safety cameras capture instantaneous speed at a set enforcement point on the road. The MSEOP will examine and run trials of new and emerging mobile road safety camera technology. This may include mobile point-to-point enforcement, relocatable point-to-point enforcement at roadwork sites and school zones, and in motion or roaming instantaneous speed enforcement.

### AI-assisted rostering tool

The Victorian Centre for Data Insight is developing a mobile road safety camera AI-assisted rostering optimisation tool. Victoria Police currently determines the rostering of mobile road safety cameras for monthly enforcement. The potential of this AI-assisted rostering tool provides an automated data-driven approach to site rankings and rostering. Data analysed includes information from the road safety partners such as crash and accident data, traffic volume and flows, roadside data, and road risk ratings.

The data is analysed to determine the level of enforcement a site requires to reduce the likelihood of serious road trauma. The aim is for the data to be utilised in the mobile road safety camera monthly rostering system to help optimise and balance the requirements between targeted enforcement at high-risk locations and general enforcement. The analysed data sets can potentially help identify new location sites for enforcement.

By the end of 2023, the AI-assisted rostering optimisation tool should have completed its analysis of the various data sets and have generated sample mobile road safety camera rosters for Victoria Police to review.

## Advancing intersection and railway camera technology

### Intersection blocking cameras

In 2021 and 2022, new AI camera software technology was trialled to explore the possibility of detecting road users entering intersections without a clear exit pathway, thereby blocking the intersection for road users travelling in alternate directions. This is a breach of existing road rules and create traffic blocks and related road safety risks to other drivers, cyclists, motorcyclists, and pedestrians attempting to weave around the blockage.

The DTP trialled two types of camera technology at different intersections – one had both vehicle and tram traffic, the other was near a freeway with on and off ramps. Similar to the DDS camera technology, the AI software can identify intersection blocking offences and filter out non-applicable incidents.

Analysis of the data and results of these trials are ongoing. A preliminary finding identified some benefits with improving line markings at intersections as this may discourage people from entering or stopping when there is no clear exit pathway. I will report on the outcome of the trials when they become available.

### Railway level crossing cameras

In 2021, VicTrack led a trial of new camera technology to explore the feasibility of detecting driving offences when railway level crossing gates were active. The cameras were affixed to a pole and used radar and video analytics technology. The results and learnings from the trial are still being considered and I will report further when they become available



# SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

## Freedom of information

The *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act) ensures the public can access our documents.

The Office did not receive any freedom of information (FOI) applications during the 2022–23 year.

### How to make a freedom of information request

To make a FOI request under section 17 of the FOI Act, applications submitted must meet three requirements:

1. The request has to be in writing.
2. Sufficient information related to the required documents needs to be provided.
3. Payment of the application fee or seeking a waiver of the fee due to financial hardship reasons.

Access charges (e.g., photocopying or search and retrieval fees) may apply once a decision on a received request has been made.

Applicants should address their requests in writing to:

FOI Officer  
Office of the Road Safety  
Camera Commissioner  
Locked Bag 14  
Collins Street East  
MELBOURNE VIC 8003

Or email: [commissioner@cameracommissioner.vic.gov.au](mailto:commissioner@cameracommissioner.vic.gov.au)

To find out more information about lodging a FOI request, you may telephone the OVIC on 1300 006 842 or visit its website at [www.ovic.vic.gov.au](http://www.ovic.vic.gov.au)

## Public interest disclosures

Public interest disclosures were previously known as protected disclosures or whistleblower complaints.

The *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012* (PID Act) ensures anyone reporting improper conduct and corruption in the Victorian public sector can do so with confidence. Their identity will not be revealed and they will be protected from actions such as bullying, harassment, or legal action.

Under the PID Act, the Office cannot receive public interest disclosures.

No public interest disclosures about the Commissioner or employees of the Office were made during the 2022–23 year.

### How to make a public interest disclosure

Please address disclosures of improper conduct or detrimental action by the Commissioner or employees of the Office to:

Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC)  
GPO Box 24234  
MELBOURNE VIC 3001

Or email: [info@ibac.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@ibac.vic.gov.au)

For further information on making a public interest disclosure, you may telephone IBAC on 1300 735 135 or visit its website at [www.ibac.vic.gov.au](http://www.ibac.vic.gov.au)

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This is my second annual report to the Victorian Parliament, but the first covering my inaugural year as the Commissioner. My interaction with all senior executives of the road safety partnership have been beneficial and productive, particularly the commitment to regular meetings and early notification of any issue that may impact the road safety camera system.

I would like to acknowledge the following people from the road safety partnership, ministerial offices, camera vendors and testers, contractors, and other agencies for their assistance, cooperation, support, and welcome during my first year:

## Victorian Parliament

- The Hon Anthony Carbin MP  
Minister for Police
  - Kieran Barns-Jenkins, Chief of Staff
  - Michelle Gordon and Rebecca Johnson, Ministerial Advisors
- The Hon Ben Carroll MP  
Minister for Roads and Road Safety
  - Michael Livingstone, Chief of Staff
  - Emma Henderson, Ministerial Advisor.

## Department of Justice and Community Safety

Kate Houghton PSM, Secretary & Rebecca Falkingham, Secretary

- Bill Kyriakopoulos, Deputy Secretary, Police, Racing, Victims and Coordination and Corri McKenzie, Deputy Secretary, Police, Fines and Crime Prevention
- Vivienne Clare, Executive Director, Police and Community Safety and Craig Howard, Executive Director, Fines and Enforcement Services
- Trent Rhodes, Director, Road Safety, Road Safety Camera Program and Sitthana Theerathitwong, Acting Director, Road Safety, Road Safety Camera Program.

## Department of Transport and Planning

- Natalie Reiter, Deputy Secretary, Policy, Precincts & Innovation
- Marcelo Vidales, Executive Director, Road Safety Victoria and Frances Taylor, Acting Executive Director, Road Safety Victoria.

## Transport Accident Commission

- Joe Calafiore, Chief Executive Officer
- Samantha Cockfield, Head of Road Safety.

## Victoria Police

- Chief Commissioner Shane Patton APM
- Deputy Commissioner Wendy Steendam AM APM, Specialist Operations
- Assistant Commissioner Glenn Weir APM, Road Policing Command and Acting Assistant Commissioner, Justin Goldsmith, Road Policing Command
- Superintendent David Griffin, Road Policing Enforcement Division.

## Frankston City Council

- Phil Cantillon, Chief Executive Officer
- Doug Dickins, Manager, Engineering Services
- Sally Prideaux, Coordinator, Urban Design Policy and Planning.

## Australian Road Research Board

- David McTiernan, National Leader, Transport Safety
- Emily McLean, Leader, Infrastructure Safety Management
- Kenneth Lewis, Senior Professional, Mobility Futures.



## Sercos Asia Pacific

- Rowena Powell, Operations Director, Citizen Services
- Jeannine Biviano, Managing Director, Citizen Services.

All have been very responsive, engaged, and dedicated towards improving collaboration and information sharing. I am struck by their commitment to reducing incidences of road trauma by progressing the priority actions within the Strategy and Action Plan.

Again, I am very grateful to all the Reference Group members for continuing to provide thoughtful input, suggestions, and advice with approaching my work, areas of focus, and in conducting investigations.

Despite some resourcing challenges, I would like to thank my staff for their diligence and support during my first year. They provided me with an impressive and outstanding collective value including specialist technical advice on current and emerging camera technologies, policy and strategic advice, stakeholder engagement, data analysis, and research capabilities. I want to thank the following:

- John Pini, Senior Technical Officer, who returned to the DJCS in December 2022 after concluding his 12-month secondment. I wish him the best with his future endeavours.
- Jason Chen, Office Manager, for remaining the one constant during this reporting period.
- Thanuja Herath, Data Analytics Intern, who completed her six-month fixed-term employment in January 2023. I wish her all the best with her career change within the Victorian Public Service.

Finally, I want to thank an important member of the Office who resigned shortly after the conclusion of the 2022–23 year. Zhi Peng Ye, Senior Technical Officer, was always willing to provide me with support and answer my questions, despite being on an extended period of leave. He has been with the Office since it began in 2012 and has served for over 11 years. He has provided exceptional technical advice and steady support to four Commissioners. On behalf of all previous Commissioners, I want to thank Zhi for his unwavering commitment to making the road safety camera system more transparent for the public. He will be sorely missed and I wish him the very best with his future endeavours.

# GLOSSARY

Acronym /Abbreviation	Description
2020 Survey	2020 Road Safety Camera Commissioner Perceptions Wave 2 Survey
Action Plan	Victorian Road Safety Action Plan 2021–2023
AI	Artificial intelligence
Braybrook intersection	Duke Street and Ballarat Road, Braybrook
Commissioner	Road Safety Camera Commissioner
Committee	Legislative Assembly Economy and Infrastructure Committee
CSL website	Cameras Save Lives website
Davey Street intersection	Nepean Highway and Davey Street, Frankston
DDS cameras	Distracted driving and seatbelt cameras
DJCS	Department of Justice and Community Safety
Doncaster intersection	Williamsons Road and Doncaster Road, Doncaster
DPC	Department of Premier and Cabinet
DTP	Department of Transport and Planning
FCSSC	Fixed Camera Site Selection Committee
FOI	Freedom of information
FOI Act	Freedom of Information Act 1982
Governance Plan	Road Safety Camera Commissioner Recommendations Governance Plan
IBAC	Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission
LUMS	Lane use management system
Minister	Minister for Police
MSEOP	Mobile Speed Enforcement Optimisation Plan
MUARC	Monash University Accident Research Centre
Notification Matrix	RSCP Escalation Matrix to the Road Safety Camera Commissioner
Office	Office of the Road Safety Camera Commissioner
OVIC	Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner
PID Act	Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012
Reference Group	Road Safety Camera Commissioner Reference Group
RSCC Act	Road Safety Camera Commissioner Act 2011
RSCP	Road Safety Camera Program
RSSRG	Road Safety Stakeholder Reference Group
Strategy	Victorian Road Safety Strategy 2021–2030
TAC	Transport Accident Commission
Tracking Register	Road Safety Camera Commissioner Recommendations Tracking Register
VAGO report	2011 Victorian Auditor-General Office's Road Safety Camera Program report
WannaCry Report	2018 WannaCry Virus Investigation Report
Wet-film cameras	Fixed analogue road safety cameras



Road Safety  
Camera  
Commissioner

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