

**Submission**

**No 5**

## **INQUIRY INTO SCHOOL ZONE SAFETY**

**Name:** Mr Edward Ellis

**Date Received:** 24/09/2011

# School Zone Safety (Inquiry)

I have found the rules governing the installation of school zones too rigorous and general. They do not make allowances for differing locations. Currently the RTA sets the rules that govern the School zones. There is one set of rules that apply across the entire State. The RTA has inflexible guidelines, they do not allow for differences at various locations. I believe that the local Council Traffic Committees should set the placement and location of school zones. The local Council Traffic Committee know the local area much better, is more flexible and can change the area if needed. They are able to respond quicker to changing needs, and have better local input. There is also an RTA member representative on the local Council Traffic Committee. Therefore I believe that the power to set the school zones should be transferred from the RTA to local Council Traffic Committees.

The main problem encountered and complained about with school zones is getting motorists to conform to the speed limits. To encourage motorists to conform to the speed limit the school zones need to have some alterations made.

## **VISIBILITY**

Illuminated flashing signs should also be placed at ALL school zones.

## **TIME OF USE**

The time of each zone should also be relevant to each school. As an example, with a school starting at 9 am the main relevant time when children are arriving at school is between 8.30 and 9.15. Generally children are not allowed to be at school before 8.30 and should be in class well before 9.15. Thus the school zone time could be halved to 8.30 - 9.15 (from the current 8 – 9.30). This would be much more evident and appropriate with the flashing lights. Again when motorists see no children they become blasé and tend to ignore the zones, because they see no children about.

## **LOCATIONS**

School zones should only be in place where children actually cross the road or utilise the roadside area. I believe that there are many locations where the school zones are in place, but where no children ever cross the road or enter the road area. This is particularly noticeable on main roads where there are often no children ever seen crossing or near the road. Thus when motorists see no children they can become blasé and tend to ignore the zones. Examples of this can be seen on the Central Coast Highway at East Gosford where there are two School zones. Both schools have bus and parents pick up and drop off areas in the side streets. At no time do cars stop to drop off or collect children on the Central Coast Highway as the highway is marked "No Stopping". No child crosses the highway to or from a vehicle. One school where the children do cross the road during the day has an overhead bridge, with lifts on both sides, which enable children and others to cross the road safely if the need arises. In these two locations the school zones should be removed from the main Highway, but kept in place in the side streets, where they are more relevant. This

example is repeated many times across the State. Thus school zones should only be in place where there is a defined need. This is not the current situation.

There are also areas where no school zones are currently in existence, but there is a need. An example where there is a need for a school zone but none in place, is on the main highway at Terrigal High School. The school has a school zone on Charles Kay Drive (the main entrance) however some children exit and enter the school via Terrigal Drive, where there is no school zone in place. Again, the Council Local Traffic Committee could easily and quickly remedy this situation.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Edward Ellis, J.P.', written in a cursive style.

Edward Ellis, J.P.