

Speed Zones - How low can we go?

Written by Jason (Neutral)

Wednesday, 04 January 2012 00:00

Well it's been a while since our last blog entry and with the new year comes all the news reports about the year ahead.

We are Brisbane based and for those of us up here who use public transport we have all heard about the public transport fare increases. 15% across the board and this will continue each year for the next few years.

I love the governments argument that tax payers are picking up the bill for public transport users, the funny thing is many public transport users are tax payers.

Anyway the reason for this post was a report I saw on seven about a call to further reduce speed limits across the country by 10kmh.

When I was growing up the local speed limit on suburban streets was 60 and highways was 100. We played cricket in our street and called out, car, every time we heard one coming. Drivers slowed and once we moved our wickets off the road they passed and the game went on.

There was no aggro from the drivers and we felt safe.

We used to travel in dad's Kingswood without seat belts and the technology in the cars back then was primitive. ABS, traction control, air bags, brake force distribution and stability control were terms that we had never heard of.

Today some of those old cars are still around but many modern cars are safer now and the above mentioned terms are standard on most cars. Speed limits are 40kmh in my local area and 50 is now the local limit, most highways are still 100.

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If speeds have been reduced since those days when we were kids and cars are much safer why do we need to continue to reduce speeds?

Every time I see an accident on the news it appears to be a car that is split in two or someone who has had a head on.

Don't get me wrong I'm all for driver safety but reducing a speed limit is not going to stop the p player who is doing 90 in a 60 zone nor the guy who drives home after a few to many beers.

I recently filmed a vehicle test with a number of various cars all traveling at the same speed. Once they hit a predetermined point they all braked, the stopping distanced varied up to 20 meters between the cars.

When we see ads on TV about wiping off 5 or driving safely the cars used in the filming actually have their ABS disabled so that car locks up, if it was not disabled the car would stop much earlier.

Surely focus should be placed on distractions like mobile phones, sat navs and kids. OK the kids can stay.

We all drive around now with our heads buried in the dash watching the speedo instead of the road ahead in fear of getting our photo taken. You could drive from Brisbane to Sydney and stay under the speed limit but in one section of road at the bottom of a hill you just creep over and your done. So once bitten you spend the rest of your driving days watching the speedo in fear.

The other thing I don't get is speed cameras, for one they take your pic and send you a bill and photo a few weeks later. If you're speeding and don't get pulled over there and then what's deterring you from causing a fatal crash 1km down the road. Every k over is a killer, or so we are told but it's OK, the police will send you a notice in a few weeks, if every k over is so dangerous speed cameras don't address the offending behaviour there and then.

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We all know that speed cameras don't really do much to curb driver behaviour, every time I travel down the M1 cars bolt past at high speed then slow down past the fixed speed cameras then off they go again. The highway is longer than the 100 meter section the camera monitors.

Is it just a slow news period or do people really believe that reducing speed zones by 10kmh is the most effective way to reduce the road toll. Maybe they should just ban cars and force us all to use the over priced public transport system.