

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into the Increase in Victoria's Road Toll

Mr Brian Ward

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**SUBMISSION CONTENT:**

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Submission to the Victorian Parliamentary inquiry into the increase in Victoria's road toll

1. Any death or serious injury on our roads is tragic. But who knows whether the relative road toll figures are increasing or not. The road toll would be more meaningful if expressed as a rate per 100,000 vehicle kms travelled for example. The rate may be decreasing if there are more cars on the road doing more kms.
2. It seems that billions of dollars are being spent on wire rope barriers, freeway construction, 'metro tunnels' and other road projects. But not enough on driver education. A drivers licence should be seen as a privilege not a right. All drivers should be regularly retested for a new licence not a simple rolling ten year renewal. I suggest retesting every 5 years. This would force drivers to keep up to date with road rules and take more interest in their driving skills. Regular licence testing would identify declining driving skills due to disabilities or age.
3. I am not a fan of automation in cars. It encourages lazy driving habits. There are many worthwhile safety aids, but if a driver cannot parallel park, turn on windscreen wipers and lights or stay in their own lane then I would question the adequacy of their driving skills. Unfortunately car manufacturers sell their cars on the basis of bluetooth, self parking and apple play capabilities. Perhaps government policy should encourage car makers to focus their advertising on the performance and safety characteristics.

Brian Ward  
26 January 2020

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