

15 October 2020

REF NUMBER: IR-01-20-26138

M.R.M

fyi-request-13675-444f764f@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear M.R.M

I refer to your Official Information Act request dated 5 September 2020 for information relating to low level speed enforcement.

You requested:

1. *In a newspaper article (refer <https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/122652835/top-cop-says-no-change-on-speed-but-history-proves-otherwise>) it was stated that police are targeting that bracket of 1 to 10kmh above the posted speed limit as research showed that by targeting the average mean speed, it would reduce crashes. Please provide me with copies of the research that the police relied upon when a) deciding to target the above quoted bracket of drivers, and b) commenting to the media as also above quoted.*

Speeding, including speed limit exceedance and inappropriate driving speed, is a well-studied aspect of road safety; large scale international reviews have concluded it to be the primary source of traffic-related mortality [1,2]. Speed has the greatest impact on the outcome of any crash, such as whether you survive it, or how severe the injuries are if you do.

Evidence shows us there is an exponential relationship between speed and the risk of fatal crashes. This means that as speed increases, fatal crash risk increases by a proportionally greater amount. For example when mean (average) driving speeds reduce by a modest 5 km/h, this reduces fatal crash risk by a substantial 28% [2,3]. If all drivers slow down and drive within the speed limits, safety will significantly improve.

There are a number of studies that have shown a high proportion of speed-related risk is attributable to lower-end excess speeds, because these excess driving speeds are more common in the driving population [4]. There is also evidence that speeding at both lower and higher-end excess speeds reduce when police enforcement is also applied to lower excess speeds [5]. Police aims to reduce speeding across the board, and bring mean speeds down, by reminding drivers that routine speeding is not acceptable and in doing so will make our roads safer.

Police National Headquarters

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Attached to this letter I have provided reference to some of the literature on the role of speed in road safety outcomes, and the role of speed enforcement in managing driver speeds and behaviour.

Please also note the comments I made in the recently published article was a reminder that there is no threshold for exceeding the speed limit. The speed limit is the speed limit and all drivers should comply with speed limits. There has been no change in policy.

You have the right, under section 28 (3) of the Official Information Act 1982, to ask the Ombudsman to review my decision if you are not satisfied with the way I have responded to your request.

Yours sincerely



Acting Superintendent Gini Welch
National Manager
National Road Policing Centre

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3. World Health Organization. (2017). *Managing speed*. Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organization.
4. Greaves, S. P., & Ellison, A. B. (2011). Personality, risk aversion and speeding: An empirical investigation. *Accident Analysis and Prevention*, 43(5), 1828–1836. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aap.2011.04.018>
5. van Lamoen, N. K. (2014). The impacts of a reduced speed enforcement tolerance threshold on road safety outcomes. In *Proceedings of the 2014 Australasian Road Safety Research, Policing & Education Conference*. Melbourne, Australia. Retrieved from http://acrs.org.au/files/arsrpe/full-paper_1947.pdf

For further reading:

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Blackwell, R., Zanker, S., & Davidson, J. (2017). Understanding low-level speeders to increase speed compliance via road safety campaigns. *Journal of the Australasian College of Road Safety*, 28(2), 47–55.

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Gavin, A., Walker, E., Fernandes, R., Graham, A., Job, R. S., & Sergeant, J. (2011). Creation and validation of a tool to measure the real population risk of speeding. *Proceedings of the Australasian Road Safety Research, Policing and Education Conference*. Retrieved from <http://casr.adelaide.edu.au/rsr/RSR2011/6BPaper%20002%20Gavin.pdf>

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contributions of low and high level speeding to the road toll. Retrieved from http://zanran_storage.s3.amazonaws.com/www.rsconference.com/ContentPages/909393619.pdf

Luoma, J., Rajamäki, R., & Malmivuo, M. (2012). Effects of reduced threshold of automated speed enforcement on speed and safety. *Transportation Research Part F: Traffic Psychology and Behaviour*, 15(3), 243–248.
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