



Minister for Transport and Main Roads Minister for Digital Services

Our ref: PET54317
Your ref: A1296840

9 July 2024

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Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to petition 4016-24, lodged with the Legislative Assembly on 11 June 2024 calling for motorists caught speeding through school zones, in locations with faulty Flashing School Zone Signs (FSZS), not to be issued with an infringement.

The traffic environment around schools is one of the most complex road transport environments normally met by drivers and children. This is because traffic density and pedestrian movements are concentrated in short periods in the morning and in the afternoon. As a result, traffic conditions near schools can seriously affect the safety of children travelling to and from school. School zones are one of several engineering treatments available to road authorities to improve safety for school children near schools.

School zones are marked by regulatory signs which inform road users regarding what must be done by law in different situations. For instance, a school zone sign will tell drivers the reduced speed limit that they must drive within when driving in the school zone. The sign also shows the times and days the speed limit applies. Obeying these signs help to protect drivers, passengers, bike and personal mobility device riders, and pedestrians. Road users must obey all instructions on regulatory signs or risk being issued a fine and demerit points deducted from their driver licence.

In 2012, the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) commenced installing FSZS, a school zone sign that incorporates a flashing annulus and twin flashing lights that flash during the operation of the school zone, in risk-assessed school zones in order of priority to alert motorists to slow down when the zone is operational. The flashing lights on school zone signs are provided as an active reminder but are not required to give regulatory effect to the sign. Even if there is a fault or malfunction, the reduced speed limit still applies at the signed time.

When the design of the FSZS was first developed, TMR has advised they were aware these signs may not always work from time to time. This cannot be avoided as, unfortunately, all electrical equipment can fail at any given time.

I am advised that, to ensure the safety of school children is prioritised, the design of the FSZS was developed so that even when the annulus does not flash, the sign contains all information a motorist needs to know to slow down. I am advised that the signs were designed to look the same as the many static signs that are also used in school zones.

The safety of school children is the priority and not enforcing the speed limit when motorists are speeding presents an unacceptable risk to school children. School children's safety comes first and it is a motorist's responsibility to follow the signage around schools whether a flashing or non-flashing sign is displayed. If a motorist is unsure if they are driving in a school zone, they should always slow down for the short distance required to maintain the safety of Queensland's school children.

I am pleased to advise the vast majority of motorists travelling through school zones do the right thing and are complying with the signed posted speed limit.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bart Mellish', with a stylized, flowing script.

BART MELLISH MP
Minister for Transport and Main Roads
Minister for Digital Services