



# Victoria Police

## Traffic Camera Office



### Mobile Speed Camera Policy & Operations Manual (Gatsometer MRC System)

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## **Mobile Speed Camera Program Philosophy**

The philosophy behind the Mobile Speed Camera Program is based on well documented evidence of the relationship between speeding and road trauma. The program aims to reduce road trauma through changing driver behaviour by creating a broad community perception through general and specific deterrents that the chance of detection is so high that speeding is not worth the risk. The Mobile Speed Camera Program has been based on a range of carefully designed principles of operation.

### ***Operating Principles of the Mobile Speed Camera Program***

Mobile speed cameras deployed strategically across the State on a daily basis will provide the basis for the perception that if you speed you will get caught.

General deterrents against speeding will be provided by high volume advertising about the risks of speeding and the dynamic relationship between speed and impact forces, and the visibility of mobile speed cameras operating across the State on a daily basis.

Specific deterrents against speeding will be provided by the issuing of speed infringements to drivers who have been detected speeding.

General and specific deterrents will be aimed at influencing driver behavioural change, higher compliance with the posted speed limit, lower mean travel speeds and reduced incidence and severity of collisions across the community.

When combined with the influence of educational programs in media advertising, in schools and other key forums, changed behaviour is aimed at being sustained over time to result in higher levels of voluntary compliance.

Voluntary compliance will not be universally achievable, and a program profile will always be necessary for both general and specific deterrents.

To achieve these objectives in the most effective manner, the enforcement activity must be consistent, meaningful and applied at the high-risk times of the day.

To achieve the essential ingredient of community support and program ownership, there must be a popular belief that the enforcement is fair, impartial and objectively administered in the community interest based on the achievement of road safety objectives.

## **Mobile Speed Camera Site Selection**

Mobile speed camera site selection is a critical element of the program, and the guidelines in this Manual have been carefully developed to meet technical and legal requirements.

Mobile speed camera use at properly selected sites will also be able to withstand public scrutiny, clearly demonstrating fair and reasonable speed enforcement in the interests of improving road safety through the enforcement of the designated speed limits.

Every road considered for evaluation as a mobile speed camera site MUST have a documented history of serious and major injury collisions within the previous 2 years; or be the subject of a validated written complaint of excessive speeds, resulting in a written assessment by a TMU Sergeant or above indicating that driver behaviour demonstrates a significant risk of speed-related collisions.

Where possible, mobile speed camera enforcement activity should be conducted at times during which collisions have occurred or at the particular times when complaints of speed have been identified.

Correspondence received at the TCO from persons claiming that specific sites are inconsistent with Victoria Police policy, or otherwise inappropriate for mobile speed camera enforcement, will be referred direct to the relevant TMU for enquiries and reply to the TCO. The TCO will provide the final response to the correspondence author. TMU's are not to respond directly.

## Mobile Speed Camera Sites – Definition and Deployment

A mobile speed camera site may be a single point on a road, or a stretch of road. The camera site however, must meet each of the guidelines provided in this Manual. For example, if a section of road a kilometre in length meets all of the collision evaluation criteria, but only meets the technical considerations (eg. no reflective objects in or near beam etc) in one or two locations within the site, then the approved site must be confined to those specific areas.

Where possible, sites in both metropolitan areas and regional towns should be defined by the closest intersecting streets on either side of the site with the entire length of a site being kept to a minimum. In rural areas the site length should be no greater than 5 kilometres. This will make it easier for motorists to determine (when referring to the infringement notice) where the alleged offence occurred.

Speed camera sites should also have a single speed zone within its perimeters where possible, to further assist the motorist as to the designated speed limit being enforced at the time of detection. This may not be practicable at some camera locations due to the location of the speed signs or default speed limit in respect of the intersecting street perimeters.

### **Peak Traffic Periods**

Mobile speed cameras as a general rule should not be used during peak traffic periods, particularly in the inner Metropolitan area. It is a waste of an expensive resource (and generates criticism and ridicule) to operate a speed camera during peak periods when traffic volumes reduce the traffic flow to speeds lower than the posted limit.

In some extenuating circumstances, camera operation in this traffic period may be necessary. This will need to be validated by the Regional Traffic Inspector.

## **Target Road Classifications**

Mobile speed camera enforcement can occur on any type of road classification from freeways, to primary arterial networks through to local access streets depending on the results of site evaluations conducted by the local TMUs.

## **Special Occasion Sites**

Regional Traffic Inspectors may personally approve mobile speed cameras to be used for speed complaints relating to special occasions or proactively in areas where intelligence indicates the risk of speeding on a special occasion (eg. snow traffic, holiday traffic etc.) provided the sites comply with speed camera policy and operational guidelines. Enforcement should only be at the times identified in the complaint or the times of the specific event.

## **Mobile Speed Camera Sites: Physical Field Criteria**

Each mobile speed camera site being evaluated for selection and rostering **MUST** satisfy the following physical field criteria: -

### **Criteria 1**

Sites must be safe for the speed camera operator, members of the public (motorists and pedestrians) and the mobile speed camera equipment (vehicle/ tripod). Particular regard should be given to the degree of visibility and road surface approaching the direction of the camera operations. Safe access for pedestrians and driveways should also be considered when setting up the vehicle, tripod and associated cables.

## Criteria 2

A site shall not be:

On a bend in the road;

Descending down unsuitable gradients or within 300 metres of the bottom of a gradient or hill **UNLESS** the site has a significant speed related collision record;

**Unsuitable gradient** is defined as a slope that causes a vehicle in top gear (or drive) to **increase** indicated speed against maximum deceleration (NO BRAKE OR ACCELERATION) from a commencement speed at the top of the slope at the posted limit. This must be determined by the relevant TMU.

**This restriction does not apply to mobile speed camera enforcement of the ascending traffic flow or where a Regional Traffic Inspector provides written approval for a particular location.**

Within 200 metres of a change to a speed zone, applicable to the same length of road, subject to the provisions of the next paragraph.

Notwithstanding above, a Regional Traffic Inspector may provide written authorization for mobile speed camera enforcement of speed limit signs with additional information on or with the sign indicating a school zone only or a school zone with declared school days.

Before giving authority, the Regional Traffic Inspector must consider the following:-

- Media coverage and community awareness is undertaken to encourage voluntary compliance and lessen complaints;
- Whether the information on the speed limit signs applies to declared 'school days' or a 'school zone' only (no additional information regarding school days) which does not restrict the sign to certain times or days and applies whenever it is displayed;

- The speed limit on the length of road prior to the speed limit sign indicating a school zone only or school zone with declared school days;
- The proposed site meets the Physical Field Criteria; and
- There has been pro-active police presence and re-active police enforcement for a reasonable time preceding a speed camera operation.

NOTE: Declared school day means any day that falls within a period declared by the Roads Corporation, by notice in the Government Gazette, to be a school days period for the purpose of *regulation 203 of the Road Safety (Road Rules) Regulations 1999* but does not include a Saturday or Sunday or public holiday.

### **Criteria 3**

Sites must not require a camera vehicle to be positioned:-

In a way that is likely to cause any interruption to the traffic flow; or

In contravention of the Road Rules – Victoria

**Consideration may be given to exercising the exemption contained in Rule 197 (1) (c) of Road Rules – Victoria 1999 in relation to stopping on pathways, dividing strips and nature strips in a built-up area where an operator is using the vehicle for speed camera operations.**

### **Criteria 4**

A site shall not be on or near an overpass, or facing any elevated adjacent road that may carry traffic past the extended mobile radar beam.

### **Criteria 5**

Careful **background** evaluation of each site shall be conducted for any sources of reflection in an arc between the far extremity of the left hand side of the beam and directly opposite the camera equipment including: -

The possibility of vehicles entering or leaving intersections, or travelling along service roads;

Pole mounted electricity supply transformers:

Mobile speed camera set-ups should not include sites where there are train lines which are obscured by dense foliage - the operator is unable to determine whether a train is present at the time a target vehicle is photographed.

Tram and train lines: Other than (c) above, the speed camera operator must indicate on the Incident Log of the Camera Operator's Statement the times that any photographs are taken where a tram or train is within the area of the beam;

**Note: Where this occurrence is frequent, the site maybe deemed as permanently unsuitable or in the case of trains, restricted to operate on the opposite side of the roadway (where the train lines would be behind the speed camera).**

- Metal signs - house sale / auction signs and similar;
- Centre strip traffic signs such as No U Turn, No Right / Left Turn, Keep Left, posted speed limit signs and large advisory cross street signs;
- Armco road barriers or chevron signing;
- Metal bus stop shelters, public telephone booths, Australia Post letterboxes;
- Sheet metal garage doors, fences, factory walls and closely spaced iron picket fences.

Individual sites that are approved may become temporarily unusable due to parked cars or trucks. Camera operators must monitor the site continuously during operations and shut down the camera if vehicles or other reflective surfaces become stationary in or near the extended radar beam.

## **Criteria 6**

Careful **foreground** evaluation shall also be conducted of each site, to ensure that there are no sources of reflection within 20 metres of the speed camera vehicle when positioned against the kerb or where the camera vehicle / tripod is set up on a nature strip, no reflective surfaces to be within 40 metres of the camera.

A distance of 50 metres from the camera vehicle / tripod has been calculated by the Testing Officer where very tall / large vehicles or double parked vehicles are positioned in the foreground to ensure that there are no sources of reflection.

## **Criteria 7**

**As part of their site evaluation process, speed camera operators shall conduct a full inspection of the camera site, in both directions, prior to commencement of the camera session. The inspection shall include checking of the speed limit applicable to the length of road allocated for camera enforcement, and verifying that the camera set-up and target vehicle detection is within the designated street boundaries.**

## **Authorised Operators**

Only those mobile speed camera operators trained and authorised in the use of the Gatsometer MRC system are permitted to set up and use the Gatsometer MRC speed camera device.

## **Camera Concealment / Disguise**

To maintain community confidence in the mobile speed camera initiative, it is important for the operational use of the device to be seen as fair and reasonable. Under no circumstances are camera vehicles, tripods or portable flash units (when used) to be disguised by signs, logos, breakdown of vehicle (eg. boot open or spare wheel / jack visible etc), tree branches, lamp posts, rubbish bins or any other covert means.