

24 June 2021



AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE ASSOCIATION MEDIA RELEASE

AFPA BACKS ACT GOVERNMENT MOBILE TELEPHONE CAMERAS

The Australian Federal Police Association (AFPA) welcomes the ACT Government's announcement regarding the installation of mobile telephone cameras across the ACT.

The ACT Government passed laws in the Legislative Assembly on Tuesday, 22 June to clear the way to install mobile phone detection cameras.

AFPA President Alex Caruana said that these cameras would contribute to road safety in the ACT.

"We know that mobile phone usage while driving is a significant issue in the ACT, and we also know that driving while distracted is one of the 'fatal five' causes of fatal road collisions.

"Using a mobile phone while driving has been a legislated offence for some time now, but people continue to ignore the law. Last year, ACT Policing issued over 1000 traffic infringement notices, which is staggering, and I think it's safe to assume that those numbers are only a fraction of people committing the offence.

"I want to congratulate Minister Steel and the ACT Government for the introduction of this technology, and also for implementing an extensive education campaign leading up to enforcement," Mr Caruana said.

The roll-out of the mobile phone cameras will form part of the ACT Government's commitment to 'Vision Zero', which the AFPA fully supports.

Mr Caruana said that nearly all modern cars have Bluetooth capabilities, so there is no valid reason why people would drive while holding their mobile phones. If their cars don't have Bluetooth capability, the onus rests on drivers to invest in technology to facilitate hands-free use.

"The legislation on phone use while driving is clear-cut. Use an approved phone cradle and sync your phone to the audio system via Bluetooth. If you have to respond to a text message, pull your car over in a safe place and then send the message.

“Every collision on ACT roads has outcomes. A fatal collision not only devastates families and communities, it also comes with a high cost to first responders. ACT Policing officers, ACT Ambulance paramedics and ACT Fire and Rescue firefighters are all affected by their work responding to collisions.

“Is it really worth the two seconds to look at a notification on your phone when that action could end up killing or seriously injuring you, someone you love, or an innocent bystander?” Mr Caruana said.

For comments:

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