

# Media Release

**The Hon Melissa Horne MP**

Minister for Casino, Gaming and Liquor Regulation

Minister for Local Government

Minister for Ports and Freight

Minister for Roads and Road Safety



Tuesday, 14 February 2023

## NEW DRIVER DISTRACTION ROAD RULES TO SAVE LIVES

The Andrews Labor Government is introducing new driver distraction road rules to keep Victorians safe and reduce road trauma.

Minister for Roads and Road Safety Melissa Horne today announced the new driver distraction road rules will come into effect across the state from 31 March.

Distraction is a key contributor to road trauma with research showing the risk of drivers crashing increases when texting, browsing or emailing. Distraction is also involved in at least 11 per cent of fatalities – equal to 20 people each year whose death is avoidable.

The new rules will extend existing mobile phone rules to cover modern technology – as one third of drivers admit to using their phone illegally while driving.

It will bring Victoria in line with the Australian Road Rules, and cover in-built vehicle systems, mounted devices, wearable and portable devices such as smartwatches and tablets.

Learners and probationary drivers are at a much greater risk in their first years of driving so stronger conditions will apply, including not touching any portable device, taking phone calls or using voice control unless parked.

A two-second glance at a device means you are travelling blind for 28 metres while driving in a 50km/h zone – and the distance jumps to 55 metres when travelling at 100km/h.

Motorists caught driving distracted will receive penalties of four demerit points and a \$555 fine. Community awareness campaigns will run over the coming months to educate drivers on the devastating risks of distraction.

The Labor Government is also investing \$33.7 million as part of the *Victorian Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030* to introduce new mobile phone and seatbelt detection camera technology that will help catch people using their mobile phones and not wearing their seatbelts while driving.

Illegally using a mobile phone while driving significantly increases the risk of being involved in a serious crash and the new cameras are estimated to prevent 95 crashes that result in injury or death per year.

Mobile phone and seatbelt detection technologies involve AI-enabled camera systems that can capture high-resolution images of passing vehicles in all conditions, including poor weather and low light levels when distracted driving is even more dangerous.

The new camera technology will be operational on Victorian roads in coming months. A three-month warning period will apply from the technology's activation before drivers face infringement and demerit penalties.

For more information on the new road rules visit [vicroads.vic.gov.au/drivingdistractions](https://vicroads.vic.gov.au/drivingdistractions) and on the mobile phone and seat belt detection cameras visit [camerasavelives.vic.gov.au](https://camerasavelives.vic.gov.au)

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Roads and Road Safety Melissa Horne

*"Distraction is deadly – which is why we're introducing these new road rules to protect the lives of Victorians."*

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*“Everyone has a role to play in keeping our roads safe, so when you’re driving, please make the right choices – pay attention and don’t be distracted.”*

**Quotes attributable to Minister for Police Anthony Carbines**

*“Too many drivers continue to put lives at risk using mobile phones behind the wheel. We’re deterring this type of risky behaviour on our roads with these new road rules, as well as phone and seatbelt detection technology.”*

*“We need every motorist to make the right decisions when they’re behind the wheel. When they don’t, road safety cameras and Victoria Police are there to hold them accountable.”*