

Media Release

The Hon Anthony Carbines MP

Minister for Police
Minister for Crime Prevention
Minister for Racing



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CAMERAS CATCHING TOO MANY DRIVERS BEHAVING BADLY

Drivers who use their mobile phone or don't wear a seatbelt are being held to account as staggering new data reveals that Victoria's mobile phone and seatbelt detection cameras have nabbed tens of thousands of people during their first six months of enforcement.

The Allan Labor Government has rolled out six distracted driver cameras as part of the *Victorian Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030* - which aims to save lives and reduce trauma on our roads.

Delivered as part of a \$33.7 million invested, the distracted driver cameras have been detecting offences across the road network since 1 July 2023, using AI-enabled cameras to capture high-resolution images of drivers with images then passed to a human verifier to further assess before an infringement notice is issued.

From 1 July to 30 December 2023 the cameras detected 53,105 offences, including 16,499 drivers and 6,375 passengers not wearing seatbelts, and 30,231 drivers using mobile phones.

Drivers face penalties of four demerit points and a \$577 fine when caught using a mobile phone while driving, and three demerit points and a \$385 fine for not wearing a seatbelt correctly.

The growing network of camera trailers regularly move around so drivers are unaware of where they will be at any given time - with the cameras monitoring motorists for around 8,000 hours each month and moving across 162 locations in rural and metropolitan areas.

Distracted driving is a major contributor to serious and fatal collisions with research showing that more than half of drivers have used a mobile phone while driving which can increase the risk of crashing up to ten times compared to an alert driver.

More than 140 drivers and passengers killed on Victorian roads in the last five years were not wearing a seatbelt – that's just over a quarter of all vehicle occupants where seatbelt status was known.

For more information about Victoria's road safety cameras visit vic.gov.au/cameras-save-lives.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Police Anthony Carbines

"Our message to drivers is clear – if you are using your phone while driving or not buckled up, these cameras will catch you."

"Too many lives have been lost because drivers have been distracted and these road safety cameras are proven to be one of the most effective ways to stop this dangerous behaviour and save lives."

Quote attributable to Minister for Roads and Road Safety Melissa Horne

"Last year was devastating on our roads and we're working with our road safety partners to do everything in our power to drive down road trauma."

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Quote attributable to TAC CEO Tracey Slatter

"Enforcement is the most effective tool we have when it comes to deterring and changing dangerous driver behaviour. If being caught just once by these new cameras means a person will avoid the temptation to use their phone next time, or buckle up, then it's effective in preventing road trauma."