

## The effect of sanctions on Victorian speeding drivers

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### Abstract

Speeding is a major contributor to deaths and serious injuries. To assist in speed countermeasure development, an examination of speeding offenders' characteristics, re-offence and casualty crashes during and after periods of licence sanctions was undertaken. These analyses aimed to determine the effects of the following sanctions: licence bans; the increase in speeding ban periods and demerit points for higher level speeding offences; additional demerit point bans for high-range offenders in addition to a 12-month speeding ban; and the good behaviour bond available as an alternative to licence suspension after reaching the demerit point threshold.

### Background

Speeding is a major contributor to deaths and serious injuries in Victoria. To assist in speed countermeasure development an examination of speeding offenders' licensing and offence history to understand their characteristics, re-offence rates and casualty crash rates during and after periods of licence sanctions was undertaken. The project analysed the effects of:

1. licence bans for speeding offences
2. the increase in speeding ban periods and demerit points on 15 December 2002 for higher level speeding offences
3. additional demerit point bans for high-range offenders in addition to a 12-month speeding ban
4. the good behaviour bond (GBB) available as an alternative to licence suspension after reaching the demerit point threshold.

### Method

Drivers convicted of a speeding offence committed between 1 January 1996 and 31 December 2014 were considered eligible persons for all analyses. The analyses involved calculating rates of speed offending and crashing per 1,000 licence person-years. Rates were calculated for each licensing period as per Figure 1. To test the statistical differences in rates across the different time periods, rate ratios were calculated, separately for casualty crash rates and speeding offence rates.

Figure 1 illustrates the licensing cycle after a speeding ban and is applicable to some of the analyses undertaken.

### Results

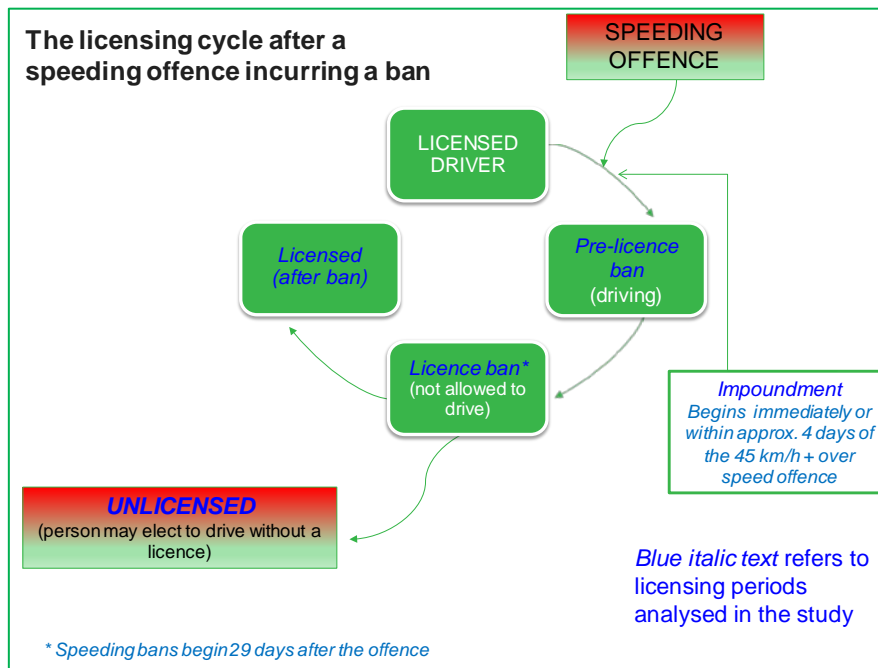
A selection of results for two of the four analyses are reported here, all analyses will be reported in the full paper.

#### *Effect of licence bans*

Speeding offenders had statistically significantly ( $p < .01$ ) lower rates of speeding offences and casualty crashes during the:

- ban compared with the:
  - pre-licence ban<sup>1</sup> (71% lower offences and 71% lower crashes)
  - licensed (ban finished) (48% lower offences and 16% lower crashes)

<sup>1</sup> The period between the offence and the start of the licence ban.



**Figure 1. The licensing cycle indicating the licence periods for drivers who have their licences banned (suspended) for a speeding offence**

- licensed (ban finished) period than the pre-licence ban by 45% and 66% respectively.

### **Effect of good behaviour bond (GBB)**

The following findings were obtained for GBBs<sup>2</sup>:

- There were statistically significantly ( $p < .01$ ) lower speeding offence rates (6%) and casualty crash rates (31%) following the successful completion of the GBB than in the period before it was served.
- One quarter (24.7%) of offenders who breached their GBB went on to re-offend during their breach suspension.

### **Conclusions**

The study findings indicate that licence bans from speeding offences reduce speeding re-offending and casualty crashes. The increase in speeding ban periods in December 2002 had a positive impact on speeding offences and casualty crashes and the increase in demerit points at this time was associated with a decrease in crashes.

A demerit point suspension imposed after a 12-month speeding ban was not effective in reducing subsequent speeding offending or casualty crashes compared with those who received a speeding ban (6 or 12 months) only.

There were positive outcomes for the GBB, with lower re-offence rates for those who elected to undertake this option when reaching the demerit point limit.

<sup>2</sup> There were 444,400 (12.9%) offenders, from a pool of 3,450,338 speed offenders, who reached the demerit point limit during the period 1 January 1996 to 31 December 2014. There were 329,531 (9.6%) speeding offenders who opted for a Good Behaviour Bond (GBB) of all speeders in the study period. Nearly 75% of offenders who reached the demerit point limit took the GBB.