

Fines and Traffic Law Working Group Report to NLA

February 2018

The working group met on 14 February 2018. Below is a summary of the key issues discussed.

Guest Speaker – Dr Julia Quilter

Our guest speaker for this meeting was Dr Julia Quilter, Associate Professor of School of Law at the University of Wollongong. Dr Quilter in partnership with Adjunct Professor Russell Hogg from Queensland University of Technology are conducting research on Australia's fines system. Dr Quilter presented some of their preliminary data on fines for the offence of "riding a bicycle without an approved helmet" and their impact on children specifically. They shared some preliminary data on the disproportionate number of fines issued in several areas in NSW. Of these areas, they have chosen to focus their studies on Kempsey, Walgett and Blacktown. The Working Group looks forward to the opportunity to hear more about their findings later this year.

Bicycle Fines

The Working Group finalised a letter to The Hon. Melinda Pavey MP, Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, to raise concerns about bicycle fines. Currently, children and young people are being fined at the same rate as adults. This is contrary to the recommendations of the NSW Law Reform Commission, in its report on Penalty Notices (2012), which provides that offending by children and young people should attract a penalty at 25% of the adult rate. The NLA Chair has sent this letter to the Minister, and will forward a copy of the letter to the Commissioner of Fines Administration and the Commissioner of the NSW Police Force.

Planning for 2018

As the first meeting of the year, the Working Group discussed various issues relevant to fines, traffic law and Work Development Orders (WDOs). These include the possible impact of the *State Debt Recovery Bill 2017* on WDOs, the current *A Fairer Penalty Notice System* review chaired by the Commissioner of Fines Administration, and the implementation of the recent reforms on removing driver disqualifications.

The next Fines and Traffic Law Working Group meeting will be held on Wednesday 16 May 2018.

Nadine Miles

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