



SCHOOLZONELIGHTS.COM.AU MEDIA RELEASE



14 April 2009

SCHOOL ZONE FLASHING LIGHTS COST APOLOGY

School zone lights campaigner Peter Olsen has issued an apology to the Minister for Roads and RTA over claims he made about the cost of the RTA's flashing lights.

"I have previously claimed that the RTA's flashing lights cost \$116,250 per school zone, based on the Premier's announcement to Parliament on 26 September 2007 that the Government was spending \$46.5M to install flashing lights at 400 school zones. See:

<http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/PARLMENT/hansArt.nsf/V3Key/LA20070926012>

"The Minister for Roads and RTA have both subsequently claimed that the cost is nowhere near that and that the actual cost is between \$20,000 and \$26,000 per school zone.

"I wish to apologise for my claim of \$116,000, which was not entirely correct. It was in fact grossly understated. The RTA has actually spent over \$180,000 per school zone on flashing lights at many locations, including the following, according to information available on its web site:

- Princes Hwy Blakehurst
- King Georges Rd Blakehurst
- Taren Pt Rd Caringbah
- Hume Highway Strathfield
- Kissing Point Rd Oatlands



\$180,000 School Zone on Princes Hwy Blakehurst

“At each of the above locations there are dual signs, one set costing \$147,500 from this contract:
<http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/doingbusinesswithus/tenderscontracts/contractsawarded/roadsafety/ess/200704211552032182.html>

plus a second set costing \$32,692 from this contract:

<http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/doingbusinesswithus/tenderscontracts/contractsawarded/roadsafety/ess/2007042116052817577.html>

“The total cost per zone comes to \$180,192.

“On 24 October 2006 the then Roads Minister Eric Roozendaal stated in Parliament that “*new flashing lights technology*” would be trialled at 100 school zones. See:

<http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/parliament/hansart.nsf/V3Key/LC20061024016>

“The RTA awarded the following contracts for a total of 130 sets of lights in December 2006, meaning up to 30 school zones received dual sets of lights.

Company	Sites	Total Value	Cost Per School Zone
Astucia	5	\$750,000	\$150,000
HVS	35	\$1,650,000	\$47,143
PNE	5	\$325,000	\$65,000
Serco	10	\$600,000	\$60,000
Streetscape Projects	10	\$1,475,000	\$147,500
Technisyst	39	\$900,000	\$23,077
United Group	26	\$850,000	\$32,692
Total	130		

“For full details of the above contracts see:

http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/newsevents/2006_11_schoolzones.html

and:

<http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/doingbusinesswithus/tenderscontracts/contractsawarded/roadsafety/index.html>

“The installation of multiple sets of lights at 30 school zones, costing over \$180,000 each, was a blatant waste of taxpayers’ money at the expense of child safety, given that more than 10,000 other school zones in NSW have no flashing lights at all.

“Furthermore the overhead style of light installed at those sites was not even trialled in the study that the RTA carried out from 2003 – 2006 to determine the most effective type of flashing light.

“For what the RTA spent on each of the above school zones they could have installed flashing lights at 50 school zones, using more cost effective technology.

“The RTA claims that the cheaper technology is unacceptable because it does not have back-to-base monitoring. The lights at the \$180,000 school zones at Blakehurst have back-to-base monitoring yet one was reported to have been out for a week in October 2008 and a second for a week in November 2008. Numerous other sets of lights with back-to-base monitoring have been out for days at a time. Naturally the RTA refuses to release details of the numerous failures of its lights to allow those reports to be verified.

“The 8 sets of lights at Peakhurst and Lugarno, that cost \$350 each, have been 100% reliable since the beginning of 2007, versus 98.2% for the RTA’s lights according to the Premier.

For more information contact Peter Olsen, 0414-538-404.