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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, 20 June 2019 2:02 PM  
**To:** NI Legislation  
**Subject:** Traffic Laws consultation paper

To whom it may concern,

Please accept this submission as part of the public "consultation" process for the proposed Traffic Law changes to be applied to Norfolk Island. I give my consent to all or part of this submission being published, BUT, do not consent to my name or any other personal details being published with it.

Firstly let it be noted that I do NOT support the current governance arrangements on Norfolk Island. I believe the removal of our democratically elected Norfolk Island government by the Australian Federal government, against the wishes of the clear majority of Norfolk Island voters (as expressed through official referendum), was not only morally wrong but also in breach of international human rights and decolonisation laws.

That aside, for the purpose of this submission, my main concern is with the proposal to "prohibit the riding in the back of open utes". There are two aspects that need to be considered when discussing this point, one of safety and the other respect of cultural practices. Because that's what riding in the back of open utes on Norfolk Island is, it is a LONG standing cultural practice.

But firstly, safety. I believe this proposed change is a knee jerk reaction to one fatality, which involved an intoxicated individual jumping (NOT falling) from the tray of ute. As such I believe the cry of "safety" will ring out as the catch phrase to force yet another change on Norfolk Island. But the outlawing of riding in the back of open utes will NOT solve the problem of fatalities, in the same way that making wearing a seatbelt compulsory has NOT solved the problem of deaths in motor vehicle accidents all over Australia and the world. Sure it has helped REDUCE them, but it has not solved the problem completely. It is not possible to legislate out ALL possible causes of a motor vehicle accident or fatality.

It is my belief that the former Norfolk Island government has acted in the best way possible to REDUCE accidents or deaths from riding in the back of open utes by making amendments to the Act to make it what we have today. Sure it will not solve this issue completely, but it does go along way to REDUCE accidents, while at the same time remaining sensitive to the culture & way of life of the Norfolk Island people.

This leads me to the second point of cultural sensitivity. As mentioned above, riding in the back of open utes on Norfolk Island is a long standing tradition/cultural practice that has been born out of practicality. The Norfolk Island people (particularly those of Pitcairn descent) are both extremely practical and family oriented. In most places around the world 40-50 years ago home life was predominantly a woman's role. On Norfolk however, in most families, parental duties were and still are shared very equally. Things such as school drop off and pick up, weekend sporting activities etc were carried out by fathers and grandfathers dropping off/picking up multiple children/grandchildren on the back of the "work truck" (which in some families was the only vehicle). This family dynamic continues to this day, and while the practicalities of its origins may have changed very slightly, the practice of riding on the back of open utes is an engrained island practice that when (like all road rules) it is carried out correctly and to the letter of the law, is perfectly safe. Especially in a place where the absolute top speed limit is a mere 50km/hr.

Through all the animosity and division that has been caused by the recent forced governmental changes on Norfolk, the Australian government is always paying lip service to the fact that they are "respectful of Norfolk Islands unique culture & heritage". Yet other than allowing us to keep a couple of culturally significant public holidays, what are they actually doing to follow through on this promise?? Because the view on the ground is that anything from Norfolk Island legislation that isn't the same as Australian legislation then it is simply changed. Regardless of the view or outcomes of community "consultations". The majority of Norfolk Island legislation was created by Norfolk

Islanders (the real "experts") to suit Norfolk's unique & isolated situation. They were not just thought up on a whim, and the Australian government & its agencies would do well to remember this.

I say NO to outlawing the riding in the back of open utes on Norfolk Island!!!!

Kind regards,



Sent from my iPhone