

## NSW speed cameras in doubt

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The NSW Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) concedes that a court's decision to throw out a traffic infringement case had created "some uncertainty" about speed camera detection.

But it did not mean there was a systemic problem with the images or speeds registered by the cameras, RTA spokesman Paul Willoughby said today.

Magistrate Lawrence Lawson, in Hornsby Local Court, yesterday dismissed a speeding case after the RTA could not provide an expert witness to prove a speed camera image had not been doctored.

RTA lawyers told the court they could not find an expert to prove the authenticity of mathematical algorithms published on each picture.

The algorithms known as MD5 are used as a security measure to prove the pictures have not been altered after they are taken.

"I accept that yesterday's judgment has raised a level of uncertainty - it's upon us to resolve that," Mr Willoughby said.

"(But) people shouldn't conclude because of that decision there is a wider problem with speed camera images, we don't believe there is.

"What I'm advised occurred was that a lawyer acting on our behalf indicated he'd only been briefed the day before and he wasn't in a position to proceed."

Lawyer Dennis Miralis said the decision cast doubt on all fines issued by speed cameras.

"The integrity of all speed-camera offences has been thrown into serious doubt and it appears that the RTA is unable to prove any contested speed camera matter because of a lack of admissible evidence," Mr Miralis told News Ltd newspapers.

But Mr Willoughby said the RTA would continue to defend such cases and was confident the algorithm system was tamper-proof.

Meanwhile, News Ltd reported that the RTA had admitted cameras monitoring toll booths in the Sydney Harbour Tunnel had been either switched off or broken, meaning toll cheats had not been penalised.

Mr Willoughby said he could not guarantee all the cameras were working at all times but was confident that any toll evaders would be dealt with appropriately.

"It is not the case that I can give a guarantee that those cameras are operating every single minute or every day all the time, but what I can say is that we do routinely enforce toll evasion," he said.

- AAP

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