



Protecting People and Assets
in the Mobile Workplace

Bull Bars on Passenger & Light Commercial Vehicles

THE SCIENCE SAYS NO!!!

No Direct Benefit to Vehicle Occupants

The Centre for Road Safety, Transport for NSW, published a research report and presented the findings at the proceedings of the Australian Road Safety Conference October 2017.

Determining the Efficacy of Different Types of Bull Bars Fitted to Different Types of Light Vehicles

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Conclusions:

- **Bull bars provide no direct benefit to vehicle occupants in a high-speed crash with a kangaroo.**
- A 4WD with any bull bar fitted and a sedan with an urban bull bar are more likely to remain drivable after such a crash.
- Rural bull bars are unsuitable for sedans.
- There may be some cost benefits in fitting an appropriate bull bar to a vehicle.
- Rural bull bars do not affect the crashworthiness of a 4WD.

So, whilst having a bull-bar may in some circumstances allow you to drive to the repair shop, there is no safety benefit.

Negative Impact on Occupant Safety

Furthermore, bull-bars may have a negative impact on safety because:

- **Airbags may not work properly**
Vehicle manufacturers conduct considerable research to ensure airbags will inflate properly to protect the vehicle's occupants. If the bull-bar is fitted to the vehicle, the secondary restraint system, such as an airbag, may not inflate correctly in a crash, and cause additional injuries to its occupants.
- **Reduces crumple zone protection**
The front structure and panels of a vehicle are intended to crumple in a collision to minimise the likelihood of injury to its occupants. However, a bull-bar may reduce the effectiveness of crumple zones and collapsible steering columns.
- **Can make side impact crashes are more serious**
Occupants of a vehicle hit, in a side impact collision, by a vehicle fitted with a bull-bar, are more likely to be seriously injured. Also the forces exerted by the vehicle with a bull-bar, particularly a 4WD, will impact higher up the other vehicle, and closer to the chests and heads of its occupants.

If you're concerned about animal strikes and your personal safety then fitting a bull-bar is NOT what is going to save you.

What will help protect you is:

1. *Moderating your speed*
2. *Being extra vigilant at dawn, dusk and at night-time.*

More Dangerous for Other Road Users

Rigid bull bars, such as those made from steel or aluminium, stiffen the front end of vehicles and interfere with the vital shock absorption systems designed in vehicle fronts. These devices therefore significantly alter the collision dynamics of vehicles, resulting in an increased risk of pedestrian injury and mortality in crashes.

Bull Bars and Vulnerable Road Users

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Being Phased Out Anyway!

"We will be nearing the end of bull-bars in the very near future in the mid-size SUV segment as the advancement in accident avoidance technology is making the requirement for bull-bars less and less as well as making them harder and harder to install. As the demand decreases this has the flow on effect that more and more models are not having bull-bars produced for them and in turn if they are being produced the costs are increasing."

Tim Kendall
Principal, Strategic Fleet Solutions