

The Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee
Parliament House
Brisbane
thlgc@parliament.qld.gov.au

08 July 2013

To the Committee Transport, Housing and Local Government:

Please accept my submission to be included in the committee's deliberations regarding the inquiry into cycling issues.

The inquiry includes the following particular concern to improve the interaction of cyclists with other road users:

"evaluation, considering factors such as effectiveness, enforceability and impacts on other road users of existing and any other alternative road rules, such as the 1m rule, which govern interaction between cyclists and other road users."

I wish to express my strongest desire for a minimum 1 metre rule to be implemented in legislation. This rule would improve the safety of bicycle users by reducing the likelihood of motor vehicles colliding with them as they pass. Additionally, it would increase motorists' awareness of their responsibilities to take care in the presence of cyclists.

I commute by bicycle to the Brisbane CBD from the northern suburbs several times per week. Despite an exceptional amount of infrastructure upgrade in recent years in this northern suburb area (Clem 7, Airport link, Gateway flyover, Inner Northern Busway), there remains almost no bicycle infrastructure to speak of.

Here I list all of the northern arterial roads which lead to the Brisbane CBD and their associated bicycle allowances:

Kingsford Smith Drive – No verge or bicycle lane.

Breakfast Creek Road – No verge or bicycle lane.

Sandgate Road inbound and outbound between Nundah and Bowen Hills – No verge or bicycle lane.

Gympie Road inbound between Carseldine and Kedron – No verge or bicycle lane.

Gympie Road inbound between Kedron and Bowen Hills – No verge or bicycle lane.

Gympie Road outbound between Bowen Hills and Kedron – No verge or bicycle lane.

Gympie Road outbound between Kedron and Carseldine – Minimal verge, no bicycle lane.

(Note: There is a small section of dedicated (green painted) bicycle lane associated with the airport link works at Kedron, however nothing before or after it, so it is rarely used)

Bowen Bridge Road – No verge or bicycle lane.

Enoggera Road, Kelvin Grove Road - Minimal verge, no bicycle lane.

Wardell Street inbound and outbound - No verge or bicycle lane, and narrow vehicular lanes.

Adequate space for cyclists is exceedingly rare on all of the above mentioned roads, ensuring that cycling upon them is *extremely* dangerous.

Where minimal or no verge and no bicycle lane is provided, drivers of motorised vehicles rarely provide more than 400mm clearance as they pass. In discussion with fellow motorists, I must conclude that this is likely due to:

- The driver feeling pressured to pass the cyclist by the vehicles banking up behind them;
- Heavy traffic in peak hour means there is little opportunity to change lanes in order to manoeuvre around the cyclist;

- A safe place to pass not being apparent within the immediate line of sight of the driver.

These factors result in the driver concluding that they are simply forced to attempt the pass, even if they do feel they are not providing adequate clear space for the cyclist.

My experience in cycling on these roads has included many near misses, where motorists have taken little care in passing me, or have deliberately and aggressively passed me too closely (so called "punishment passes"). For example, on one occasion whilst commuting on Wardell St in 2012 (outbound) I was passed by a tradesman's ute at an estimated 60kph or higher, where the aluminium tray came within a mere 3 inches of my handlebars.

As a single father of a 3 year old girl, I fear for my life each day as I attempt my commute to the city for work. I fear for her future emotional development and financial support if her father is struck by a vehicle and killed, or alternatively badly injured. Because of the unsafe passing behaviour of motorists, I avoid these arterial roads wherever possible – I use a convoluted array of backstreets, footpaths, laneways and crossings, even though I suffer an increased risk of being "doored" (car door being opened immediately in front of me) by using these alternate routes.

A minimum safe passing distance in legislation is paramount to the safety of people who choose to cycle each day, whether it is for commuting, environmental or financial purposes.

Despite the difficulty in enforcement of this rule (subjective measurement of distance), I feel the public message it will provide to motorists and the public in general, will be invaluable for the ongoing safety of cyclists using the congested roads of Brisbane, as well as in other cities around Queensland.

I have not commented on the other areas of the inquiry as my knowledge of such matters is limited.

Sincerely;



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