

I'm a commuting cyclist. I commute in all weather. I'm lucky enough to live in the centenary suburbs of Brisbane and commute to Herston. That means I get to use the Western Fwy bikeway, the Bicentennial bikeway and the bike-track from the Roma St Parklands to Herston. These are all great facilities. Unfortunately, the interconnects are just not there.

Sylvan Rd, Toowong

Problem: The poorly defined bike lane along Sylvan Rd is possibly the biggest danger I face to and from work on a daily basis. As vehicles park along Sylvan Rd, the width for cyclists is similar in width to a vehicle door. For this reason, most cyclists ride on or around the white line.

Solution: There are two options:

- a. Remove all vehicle parking (at least from 6am to 6pm). This would then provide a suitable lane for cyclists to ride in
- b. Remove the poor excuse for a bike lane. As drivers will no longer expect cyclists to ride in the door zone, more room would be provided, reducing the risk of an incident. Bike Lanes (not Bike Only lanes) force cyclists too close to the door zone. This leads to angst from drivers as cyclist ride on or close to the external line of the "Bike Lane".

Training and attitude.

Driver training in Australia is inadequate. Learner drivers are trained to pass the test, not drive to the conditions. Improving driver training and licensing in Queensland will result a safer experience on Queensland roads for all.

Too often a drivers license is seen as a right rather than a privilege. The attitude of road users in Queensland is often that bicycle riders should get out of their way "because we don't pay rego" or "we don't have insurance". As the Queensland road rules allow cyclists to ride on the road, this is none of their concern. The problem is that the above attitudes and thoughts lead to close shaves, verbal and sometimes physical abuse.

Solution to the above again comes back to driver training and enforcement of the road rules. Additional rules protecting vulnerable road users should also be considered. Such as when there is a collision between a motor vehicle and a bicycle (or between a bicycle and a pedestrian), then initially, the heavier vehicle shall be considered at fault until shown otherwise. This would promote a road environment where more care would be taken around cyclists and other road users.

Enforcement.

It appears to me that the only rules enforced on Queensland roads are those that involve speeding or drink driving. Enforcing rules such as signalling when merging/changing lanes/ entering a roadway, giving way to vehicles already on roundabouts, signalling around roundabouts, need to be enforced. This can be improved by road rules stating that to overtake a bicycle, a vehicle shall change lanes (on a multi-lane road) and pass with no less than 1-1.5m on a single lane road. The reason it's more of an issue when a vehicle overtakes a car versus the other way around is the speed differential. Being overtaken by a car/truck/bus with

a 30+km/h speed differential, affects the line a cyclist can maintain. i.e. you can get sucked into the draft of the vehicle. When riding, you have to continually pay attention to what is on the road. You have to watch out for broken glass, pot holes, man-hole covers, line markings (slippery in the wet). The last thing you need when avoiding these obstacles is to have a vehicle pass within a hair-width of you. Enforcing the 1-1.5m rule for single lane roads, and not allowing sharing of the lane on a multi-lane road, will provide a safety buffer for the cyclists in situations when a last minute change in direction is required.

More and more cyclists now ride with cameras. Unfortunately they have been provided the nickname of “coroner cams”. This is because they can be used by coroners to see what happened in the last moments before a crash. They obviously also record unsafe acts by road users on a regular basis. When these incidents are reported, they need to be investigated by Queensland Police. They are being reported because the cyclist felt that their safety was put at risk. We want them to be taken seriously. It’s our safety at risk. Being passed at 60km/h (or even more) with a 1mm gap is not what I would call safe.

Summary:

To make cycling an accepted form of transport for all, the following needs to occur:

- 1-1.5m passing rule for single lane roads
- Enforce changing lanes when a multi-lane road (i.e. vehicles shall change lanes to overtake cyclist on a multi-lane road)
- Enforcement of the existing and the above road rules (Queensland Police follow up on reported incidents)
- Improved driver training
- Create bike-only lanes (out of the door zone, away from grates and man hole covers) or get rid of them.

Thank you

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