

**25 July 2013**

**Submission to Queensland Parliamentary, Transport, Housing and Local Government  
Committee Inquiry 2013 - "Inquiry into Cycling Issues"**

Attn Committee Members

Please find herein my submission to the Committee Inquiry on the particular issues to improve the interaction of cyclists with other road users, specifically detailed as:

- short and long term trends in bicycle injuries and fatalities involving motor vehicles;
- 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;
- current penalties and sanctions, including where there are differential fine rates for cyclists compared to other road users; and
- the potential benefits and impacts of bicycle registration.

Short and Long Term Trends In Bicycle Injuries and Fatalities Involving Motor Vehicles

The Inquiry is encouraged to investigate any statistical trends as related to the type of cyclists involved and therefore to assist in identifying those at risk.

For example, if 50% of children ride a bicycle at least once a week, is their exposure to risk increased at road crossings, schools or local neighbourhood streets.

On the other hand, adult commuter or recreational cyclists are probably generally more at risk from on-road networks which do not provide adequate cycling accommodation, i.e. bicycle storage areas, or BSAs, at signalised crossings.

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

The lack of a well-publicised, defined and legislated safe passing distance coupled with a lack of understanding between all road users creates a situation whereby, vehicles are passing within an unsafe distance of cyclists. This elevates concern for potential new cyclists, existing cyclists get frustrated and the level of animosity between road users increases.

The Austroads sliding scale for safe passing of cyclists of one-metre clearance within a 60-kilometre-an-hour zone, 1.5-metre distance within an 80-kilometre-an-hour zone and a two-metre clearance within a 100-kilometre-an-hour zone, is worth investigation as a standard

However, the Austroads standard cannot be implemented without an adequate road share campaign to inform and educate.

A broad road share campaign based on a safe passing distance would assist further uptake of cycling on the basis that potential or casual cyclists would feel a sense of safety and confidence likewise motor vehicles driving could be confident in understanding the safety needs of cyclists – let's not forget the existing level of animosity is highly likely to the lack of understanding of each road user.

## Current Penalties and Sanctions, Including Where There Are Differential Fine Rates for Cyclists Compared To Other Road Users

All road users should obey the road rules and have the same penalties imposed for breaching them, including licence demerit points, if that is appropriate.

However, in most instances on the Sunshine Coast the road environment is intrinsically unsafe and that sometimes cyclists cannot avoid breaching the road rules in order to remain safe.

For example swerving to avoid car doors opening or proceeding beyond the white line at an intersection due to the lack of a bicycle storage areas

The Inquiry is encouraged to explore the need for a campaign of education and awareness regarding the rights of cyclists on the road and to increase the penalties for motor vehicle users who endanger the lives of cyclists, for example by undertaking unsafe passing whether in the same direction or oncoming.

## The Potential Benefits And Impacts Of Bicycle Registration

A current vehicle registration scheme exists for vehicles to assist road authorities to identify and manage operators of vehicles who use the network. It supports the safety, security and asset condition of a network. And revenue from a registration system can be reinvested into the system.

If this system was applied to cyclists, it would certainly assist us to understand statistical what percentage of cyclists are using our networks, however it would be required to categorise across a range of cycling modes (i.e. childrens, off road, recreational, etc).

Such a system cannot penalise a cyclist financially through a registration fee if this is the primary form of transport – bear in mind it is significantly cheaper than private car ownership and public transport.

If the Committee recommends a registration scheme, then we strongly advise them that such a scheme no incur a fee as this will not encourage a broad uptake of the scheme. Bear in mind, most adult cyclists own at least one motor vehicle and duly pay their registration and licence fees.

### **In summary**

The Inquiry is encouraged to explore the need for a campaign of education and awareness regarding the Road Sharing between all road users and the rights of cyclists on the road.

The Inquiry is requested to investigate a state wide campaign of education and awareness that recognises the bicycle as a legitimate form of transportation

The Inquiry is reminded that we are all human and that mistakes whilst on the road can sometimes have tragic consequences. However, in any incident between a motor vehicle and bicycle, the cyclist will almost always come worse.

The Inquiry is reminded that the lack of a defined safe passing distance coupled with a lack of understanding by other general road users creates a situation whereby vehicles pass within an unsafe distance.

The Inquiry is reminded that for some people a bicycle is the only choice for transportation, Such a system cannot penalise a cyclist financially through a registration fee if this is the primary form of transport – bear in mind it is significantly cheaper than private car ownership and public transport.

If the Committee recommends a registration scheme, then we strongly advise them that such a scheme no incur a fee as this will not encourage a broad uptake of the scheme.

The Inquiry is encouraged to explore the need for increased penalties for motor vehicle users who endanger the lives of cyclists, for example by undertaking unsafe passing whether in the same direction or oncoming.

It also be recognised that the bicycle can make significant contributions to congestion reduction and public health.