

**Submission
No 5**

DRIVERLESS VEHICLES AND ROAD SAFETY

Organisation: Bicycle NSW
Name: Mr Ray Rice
Position: CEO
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11 April, 2016

Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety
Parliament House
Macquarie St
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Mr Aplin,

RE: Inquiry into Driverless Vehicles and Road Safety

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Driverless Vehicle Technology and Road Safety in NSW. Bicycle NSW is the peak bicycle advocacy organisation with over 25,000 members and supports. We have been in operation in NSW since 1976. Over 30 local Bicycle User Groups are affiliated with Bicycle NSW.

In general, we see the introduction of advanced technology as potentially boosting bicycle rider safety. Many vehicles are already introducing proximity sensors for pedestrians and bicycles. Automatic braking to avoid vulnerable road users and other vehicles is available. We see this as an **aid** to drivers – but not the complete solution. When a vehicle is in possible close proximity to pedestrians and bicycles, then the driver must (at present and in the near future) retain the final responsibility for their vehicle.

As vehicles move from the present Level 1 and 2 automation to Level 3 and above, it will be absolutely critical that Australia is **prepared with national standards**. Note that we stress this must be a national approach, and prior to the introduction of such vehicles. While vehicle manufacturers will naturally play an important role, the process must be driven by Government. We cannot afford to have different standards State by State.

However, while automation will potentially increase rider safety, we must not become too mesmerised by this. In many situations where bicycles and cars are present in close proximity with differing speeds, then separation will remain the best solution for many years to come. The provision of cycling infrastructure will remain a critical requirement to improve rider safety. Indeed, vehicle automation may help this as it “frees up” road space due to greater efficiency of car movements. Likewise, driver education – both before and after initial licencing must remain a priority.

Yours faithfully,



C.P.Eng. F.I.E.Aust.
CEO, Bicycle NSW