

**Submission  
No. 37**

## **DRIVER EDUCATION, TRAINING AND ROAD SAFETY**

**Name:** Dr John-Paul Bossi  
**Date Received:** 20/02/2017

I have been a road user in NSW for over 35 years. I drive (2 cars and a van), I ride motorbikes and scooters, I cycle many times a week and I run on shared pathways. I also occasionally commute using public transport. This gives me a fair opportunity to experience road travel and transport in all its iterations.

After having driven/ridden all across the world, I can honestly say that road travel in this state, and Sydney in particular, is abysmal. Whilst most drivers attempt safety, I witness - daily - incomprehensible levels of discourtesy, inattention, and outright aggression. This is no more apparent than when I am on two wheels, and cycling especially places me in greater risk than any other modern city I have cycled in the world.

Driver attitude to cyclists is particularly appalling: education of safe passing distances is seriously lacking (few people I speak to even know about the metre rule), and drivers' claim to some sort of 'ownership' of the road is simply delusional and places cyclist in frequent danger.

Enforcement of laws does not help: Hundreds of cyclist in Sydney have been fined since new punitive laws have been enacted in the last year, many for as little as not having some tiny "ting-ting" bell, yet fewer than half-a-dozen motorists have been caught for near-misses and driving too close to cyclists.....?????

Many drivers appear far more adept at phone-texting when behind the wheel than actually paying attention to driving. This endangers me as a cyclist.

Notwithstanding the dangers drivers in NSW pose to cyclists, the laws make little sense either:  
Eg -

- I can filter through stopped traffic on my motorbike, but not on the kerbside lane (since this is where people can open doors to exit a car, placing both rider and occupant at risk). Yet the only place i can filter on a bicycle is in the kerbside gutter, right where it is least safe to do so...??!!!
- Mandatory bells are useless in traffic, cannot be heard by drivers, or above the cacophony of road noise. They are also not heard by walkers/runners on shared paths, most of whom wear earphones. A bell is never as loud as my voice, yet we are penalised for not carrying one...???!!!
- Cycle lanes are invariably designated in the small space between parked cars and traffic (the so-called 'door-zone of death')...who thought that would be a good idea when drivers are not even taught the "Dutch-reach" (the scandinavian education initiative to reduce door-opening injuries to cyclists).

Great inroads were made in rider-training for motorcyclists: Emergency braking, spatial awareness and attentive/defensive riding are all requisites. Why is driver training still stuck in testing whether someone can do a reverse park, a 3-point turn and mum-and-dad's fudged 120-hr log book?