

**Submission
No. 53**

DRIVER EDUCATION, TRAINING AND ROAD SAFETY

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The entire approach to road safety must be turned around to a strategy of Road Danger Reduction. The current small changes proposed will see our Community get more obese. The Gov's have an obligation to create a safe city for people not cars. We must plan for a "Safe Active Travel 30 for 30" concept. Safe Active Travel 30 for 30 means by 2030 we should have 30km/hr local speed limits and trips: 30% public transport, 30% active transport (walk, cycle) and 40% the rest.

We must aim for high targets and for the long term because we have lost so much ground in the last few decades of urban sprawling car culture. So the local speed limit needs to be 40km/hr across the whole NCC area NOW! Then lobby RTA for 30km/hr for world's best safe practice in Europe. At the moment 40 and 50 zones and school zones are quite confusing so to make it simpler and safer, a 40 limit is much better. We must match funding for the targets so 30% public transport, 30% active transport (walk, cycle) and 40% the rest means the money is split this way.

Even though NCC has little say in state public transport, they need to fund active transport modes of combining walk/cycle with public transport. Otherwise spending money on the way travel share is, means more roads and more cars. Need heaps more pedestrian crossings across all main roads so even cyclists can walk their bike across a road, also gives peds/cyclists priority. Block off more local roads to make cycling more convenient. Block off Hunter St to cars, let them go down King St. Every bike/pedestrian route must feel safe for 90% of 10 year olds to travel by themselves. Safe routes to schools must be a priority to get kids healthy and stop them costing our country \$billions of health costs later.

Need to stop driving most kids to school. Need to stop the car culture of mothers accidentally killing their own toddlers (like on 27th Sept 2011 in Australia) while backing their car out of their driveway. Wever Governments and authorities continue to bow to the car lobby and let car culture thrive, more road death will occur when they could help Newcastle to be the safest, nicest, friendliest (no road rage, etc) city in Australia.

Remove all pictures of bikes causing road rage, crashes confusion on the roads NOW! Stop the wasteful money on narrow bike lanes (These rely on cars being parked touching the gutter and people checking before opening their door. But too many bigger SUVs, trucks and people not checking before opening doors mean this is not a safe option to entice the 30% of people. Sure it may entice 5% but this target is laughable, we need proper sustainable 30% target). They are not a success if we double cycling because of them. We need to get all people walking/cycling, even the ones who are very scared to walk/cycle because of the cars. Bikes and pedestrians should be separated, because similar conflict arises when numbers are large. We don't want safe cycleways clogged with walkers, and people find it more convenient to drive a car. Must make walk/cycle/public transport more quicker than cars for all short trips.

Increasing walk/cycle/public transport means reducing car trip for the same amount of trips. This is a fact. Lets not try and keep motorists happy with how they are going. Many motorists must be kicked out of their cars for most of their trips and only then will they realise the light on the other side, and the Happy and Healthy Sustainable Lifestyle is now for them. The car culture and advertising is a hard thing to fight, but we must!

Cycle routes on their own don't create mode transfer from cars. All roads must be safe for walking and cycling and the use of private motor vehicles must be strongly discouraged. Planners must look to walking and cycling as the primary modes of transport for everyone. Public transport must be seen as the secondary modes, for longer distances. Cars must be seen as the last resort. All council policies must be audited for their transport implications. Everyone must have the choice not to own a motor vehicle.

With the increase in car dooring accidents as a result of cyclists riding too close to parked cars and in the drivers blind spot we should consider not supporting bicycle shoulder lane markings in parking lanes and rather place the bicycle symbols at the right of the edge line and encourage cyclists to utilise the parking shoulder lane when its safe to do so as a courtesy to other road users. There are a lot of crashes from motorists not seeing the cyclist until the last second and they clip the cyclist when passing them. This is due to motorists travelling too close to the car in front and the cyclist being squeezed out of sight. The 1st motorist sees the cyclist and squeezes past him without changing lanes. The motorist following the first car thinks all is OK (nothing is ahead to dodge) until a cyclist appears too close on the left. The engineering solution to the clipping a cyclist when squeezing past them is to either cause the 1st motorist to change lanes (which signals to the following car that something is ahead) or to have proper 1m clearance zones between cyclists and traffic lanes.

Dedicated Bicycle Lanes should be constructed in accordance with World's best standards (E.g. Dutch):

- clearance to pass the open door of a parked car in the adjacent parking lane without leaving the bicycle lane. A 1 metre separation is desirable.
- lane widths that are adequate to carry the anticipated bicycle traffic, that continue through intersections
- a safety separation strip between the cycle lanes and traffic lanes on any road with a posted speed limit above 70km/h to provide a buffer between moving traffic and the cycle lane.
- a safety separation strip between the cycle lanes and traffic lanes on any road to provide a buffer between moving traffic and the cycle lane. This should be at least 1 metre, because "1m matters" (Amy Gillett campaign)

(Unfortunately the relevant sections of the RTA/RMS NSW Bicycle Guidelines, the AustRoads guidelines of 2012 (<https://www.onlinepublications.austroads.com.au/items/AP-G88-11>) do not meet appropriate safety standards for 13 year old children to feel safe in "marked bike lanes" that put them in positions of hitting car doors, or cars passing them on their right too close)

Many motorists will believe wherever the bike symbol is placed, that is the place where cyclists MUST ride their bike over the symbol painted on the road. It is confused as a bike lane. So all the problems associated with "Road Shoulder Lanes" below exist, even without edge lines. The bike symbols are very confusing, most motorists don't think it's a bike route marking, they think it's a bike placement marking (where you should ride your bike). Bike route signs are not confusing. Bike symbols create confusion and road rage.

Bicycle symbols in shoulder lanes can even be counterproductive as they give cyclists the impression that it's a safe space to ride and motorists the impression that it's a bicycle lane and cyclists should not be in the traffic lane. And they can give an impression of safe passing distances (of motorists passing cyclists) well less than 1 metre.

Each and every day roughly 500,000 citizens choose the bicycle in Greater Copenhagen. www.copenhagenez.com highlights who they are, why they do and how it was made possible. Forty years ago Copenhagen was just as car-clogged as anywhere else but now 37% of commuters crossing the city boundary ride bicycles each day. That number rises to 55% in the city proper. Copenhagenizing is possible anywhere.

*** Stop cars annoying you with more cycling hints ***

Many people get scared off riding a bike on the road because cars are passing them too fast and too close. We are getting the same situation on shared walking/cycling paths as well (were people are getting scared by cyclists passing them too closely and too fast).

Q:What has caused this?

A: The council & RTA in Newcastle has put in the worst bike picture "lanes" on the roads that don't even meet the safety standards. This is only so they can claim they have cycling facilities and tick a box in a report (even though if they left the bike pictures off the roads the roads would be safer). Narrow bike picture "lanes" situated between parked cars & the left traffic lane is a recipe for disaster. If riding in them & a person opens their car door you will crash into them. And cars are passing you too close & too fast for comfort. Even though for adults cycling with safety skills is less crashes than driving in cars.

HOW DO WE SOLVE THIS?

Unfortunately a lot of research, different lane position riding and cycling experience is required to bust the myth that riding a bike as far left as possible is wrong. Please read the explanations below to expand your mind!

Please never ride in the car door lane....

Even when Bicycle Victoria continue to publish crap about riding slowly, or checking for rear brake lights etc. I only heard/saw my 1st one last month and it was sickening. And one of my friends just got doored, lucky to be alive. Many Councils are encouraging car door death riding by placing bike pictures in the car door zone. They look like bike lanes and motorists and cyclists think they should ride there.

Yes I admit motorists get angry when you take the lane, but they don't know the dangers of car-door-death riding. Why don't I just make motorists happy, and ride in car door lane? Answer is I don't want to die. I'd rather be safe and ride in the traffic lane, and then other cars travel at safe speeds behind me. Win - Win situation for everyone!

Well done Steve Fernie (Herald 10/3 Short Takes) for researching the RTA road users's handbook for bike lane clarification. Sorry that you wasted your time and didn't research the full "Road Rules", not the summarised handbook. As Steve wrote on page 125 of the handbook there is a picture of a bike on the road and it says "When a bicycle lane is marked on the road, cyclists must use it" Yes Steve you are correct, BUT only as you researched on page 123 "Signs at the start and end of these lanes indicate their purpose". Again I repeat that most in Newcastle DO NOT have these signposts, and are squeezed in dangerously with parked cars and they are not proper bike lanes. The Newcastle Bike Ecology Centre has been trying for over 7 years to get the RTA to simply insert the word signposted into their description: "When a *signposted* bicycle lane is marked on the road, cyclists must use it". But one word is too hard for the RTA and it seems they do not care if there is confusion on the roads and further road rage. Maybe a new candidate for the State seat of Newcastle will bring change for this?

The more easier explanation of the road rule is from RTA website :

"153 Bicycle lanes

A bicycle lane is a marked lane, or the part of a marked lane:

- (a) beginning at a bicycle lane sign applying to the lane

247 Riding in a bicycle lane on a road

- (1) The rider of a bicycle riding on a length of road with a bicycle lane designed for bicycles travelling in the same direction as the rider must ride in the bicycle lane unless it is impracticable to do so.

Note. Rule 153 defines a bicycle lane and deals with the use of bicycle lanes by other vehicles."

So the marked picture on the road means nothing without the SIGNPOST. Because it's not wide enough to be a safe bike lane without a signpost. Then I hear people say "It doesn't matter if your right, you can't argue when you are dead". This from non-cyclists saying the safest place to ride is in the gutter or the car door opening lane. I agree near the gutter is usually safest, but the car door opening lane is playing Russian Roulette with a car door crashing into you. Even if the motorist opening the door is at fault. It is much safer to ride 1.5m from parked cars to avoid car doors and the cars overtaking you can see you more clearly and it is much safer. more info in Autumn 2010 newsletter.....

Glass punctures are a thing of the past for me. Putting an old worn out tyre (with the metal beading cut from it) inside the back tyre of my bike means I get no more glass punctures, and can keep riding until the back tyre is very bald. The inner protection tyre works best if it is a smooth tyre, with no knobbles on it. I would recommend only putting on a rear wheel, as it is the most puncture prone wheel. The NBEC has some old tyres suitable. Many "racing" cyclists continually complain about glass where they ride, "causing" them to ride out in the traffic. But motorists get angry with the cyclists not using the road shoulder, and the cyclists get angry with the motorists being angry with them. This angry cycle of whingers continues until they find something else to whinge about. I plead for happy people to solve problems and stop whinging.

Never ride close to parked cars (even when bike pictures on roads confuse you). Unseen children can open car doors and push you into traffic. NSW Road Rules 153, 144 & 247 advise to ride the safe way (usually 1.5m away from parked cars).

All Cars tailgate other cars dangerously (about 1 second gap, not the safe 3 second gap to car in front). Discover greater safety with better cycling skills. Form good habits and don't create danger by driving cars.

Driving: Keep 3 second safety gap to the car in front (50 metres at 60km/hr) 99% of all motorists are tailgating all the time and it means heaps of rear end crashes. Slow down to turn those "blind corners and blind crests" into safe corners that you could stop if a child is crossing the road. You don't want to live with killing someone when all you had to do was stop driving with the bad habits of the 99% of drivers. And assume no motorist has seen you

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