

COVID19: An opportunity to support active transport and improve the safety of vulnerable road users

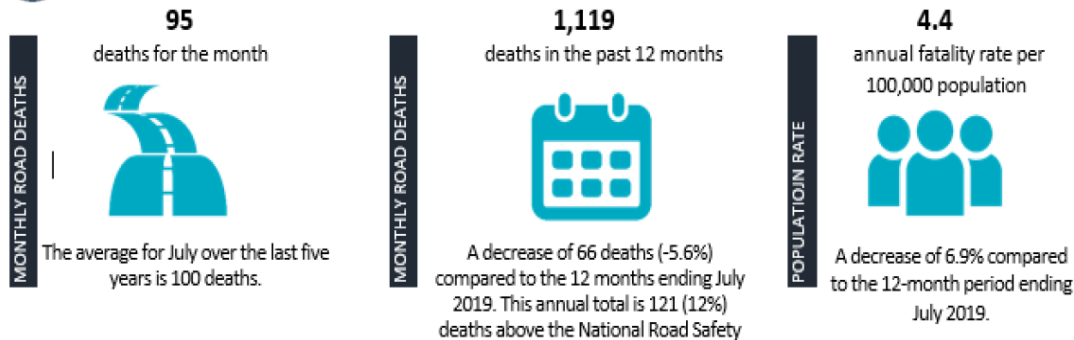


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Road Toll During COVID- BITRE



CURRENT MONTH AND LAST 12 MONTHS



ROAD USER	DEATHS April-July 2020*	DEATHS Average for April-July –previous 5 years	% change
Driver	161	186.2	-14%
Passenger	59	74.2	-20%
Pedestrian	47	61.6	-24%
Motorcyclist	58	61.6	-6%
Pedal cyclist	18	10.6	+70%
Total	344	395.8	-13.1%

Cycling during the COVID Pandemic

- As with many countries around the world, Australians have taken up bike riding during lockdown in unprecedented numbers.
- Bicycle Network's counts have shown increases of up to 270% on key bike paths nationally.
- In Brisbane, cycle traffic has almost doubled on the Kangaroo Point and Kedron Brook bikeways and increased by 50 per cent on the Bicentennial Bikeway.
- Sydney City Council is reporting increased cycle traffic of between 25 and 50 per cent despite a drop in overall people movement.
- In Sydney's west, Parramatta council has seen an increase of between 50 and 60 per cent on bikeways.
- Australia's paths and cycleways have proved inadequate to handle the physical activity requirement during the crisis.

Support for Active Transport During COVID

- Cities around the world have acted quickly to support walking and cycling through *Tactical urbanism*.
- Tactical urbanism involves interim improvements to public space: expanding shared footpaths, narrowing roads, closing lanes, as well as rolling out temporary cycleways.
- Legislative and regulatory changes to support the process: NZ introduced a centralised 'permission slip' system to simplify and speed up urban improvements applications for local councils.
- These measures, have been put in place in response to COVID-19 and physical distancing regulations but also to promote cycling, mental/physical health and improve safety of cycling.



Support for Active Transport During COVID

- Generally, Australia lagged behind.
- Limited tactical urbanism activities across the country with no real supportive legislative and regulatory changes.
- In most cases councils don't have the authority to take road space without the approval of the state or territory.
- There is an increasing recognition by states for the need to hand more power to Local government to plan local cycling infrastructure and better neighbourhoods.
- There is a steady increase in the planning and building of new pop-up cycleways but coverage is still limited compared to global efforts.

Seizing the Moment

- Where possible, transform temporary cycling infrastructure into permanent facilities.
- Construct separated bike lanes and connect existing bike networks with legislative changes to empower local councils in this process. Future state plans need to be fast-tracked.
- Incentivise cycling: particularly commuting (i.e. Cycle-to-Work in the UK and BiketoWork in Ireland).
- Road safety Legislations that support cycling and protect cyclists.
- Education to improve attitudes towards cycling in the community and promote cycling as a legitimate mean of transport.