

- **Stage 5: Evaluation requirements for transferring the Safe Cycle program to other schools.** Strategies will be developed to enable other schools to deliver the program.

Enhancing the safety of cyclists has always been a major priority for the Trust and it has provided in excess of \$533,000 since its creation in 1992. Cycling initiatives funded include the following:

- school educational programs delivered by Pedal Power and the Australian Federal Police to primary school children
- ‘Share the road’ campaigns utilizing television advertising and bus backs
- helmet wearing campaigns
- visibility campaigns utilizing lights and reflective clothing
- a study into cycle crashes that involves interviewing cyclists presenting at the emergency departments of Canberra’s two hospitals.

## Encouraging safer cycling through the *NSW BikePlan*

by Lyndall Johnson and Matt Faber, Roads and Traffic Authority of NSW

In response to the increasing pressures of climate change, traffic congestion and chronic ill-health associated with sedentary lifestyles, governments around the world are looking with increasing interest at active transport solutions. Significant investment is being directed towards cycling infrastructure and encouragement programs in many major western cities [1, 2].

New South Wales is no exception. In May 2010, the NSW Government released the *NSW BikePlan* ([http://www.pcal.nsw.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/90837/NSWBikePlan\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.pcal.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/90837/NSWBikePlan_WEB.pdf)), which outlines a comprehensive range of activities to be undertaken over the next 10 years to promote and enhance cycling across the state.

The *NSW BikePlan* focuses on how cycling can help make the towns and cities of NSW more sustainable, easier to get around, safer and better connected. Purpose-built infrastructure has been identified as a key component in encouraging more people to ride their bikes. Examples of work to be undertaken over the next 10 years under NSW Government leadership include:

- completing missing links in Sydney’s regional bike route network where strong growth in cycling is already being experienced, or where major construction works present an opportunity to improve cycling facilities
- completing bicycle networks in and around the ‘River Cities’ serving western Sydney’s areas of high population growth, namely Parramatta, Liverpool and Penrith
- helping councils to provide facilities that extend across local council boundaries and that improve accessibility for short cycling trips to town centres, educational facilities, shops and regional services
- connecting and upgrading off-road cycle links in identified Aboriginal communities
- providing cycle ways as part of all state road projects in country NSW
- progressively completing the NSW Coastline Cycleway
- developing and installing standard bicycle route signage that indicates distance and anticipated trip duration to key destinations

- promoting end-of-trip facilities such as showers and bicycle parking facilities at major trip destinations, including secure cages or bicycle lockers at key transport hubs to encourage integrated transport use.

While the provision of high quality infrastructure is important, infrastructure alone may not be enough to motivate people to ride their bike. Therefore, a range of encouragement programs will also be undertaken, including:

- supporting the roll-out of cycling skills and proficiency courses for adults who want to ride more for transport or recreation
- promoting and supporting local cycling events during NSW Bike Week
- supporting major recreational and touring cycling events
- encouraging and promoting the bicycle tourism industry
- developing best-practice guidelines for local bicycle hire or share schemes
- building and maintaining a comprehensive online source of bicycle information, including a bicycle route-finding facility, an online route sharing and feedback facility, and the ability to create personalised cycle network maps
- making bicycle information accessible to people from non-English speaking backgrounds and to people without internet access.

A key target of the *NSW BikePlan* is to achieve 5 per cent of travel by bike for all trips in Sydney of less than 10 kilometres by 2016. This target is ambitious given the current estimated mode share by bicycle is only around 1 per cent in the greater metropolitan area (i.e., the Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong conurbation) [3]. The NSW Government is determined to reach this target with the assistance of the *NSW BikePlan*’s proposed investment in cycling infrastructure and encouragement programs.

The NSW Government is equally committed to ensuring that the acknowledged social and health benefits of bicycle riding do not come at the cost of road safety. It will be important to take

action so that an increase in the numbers of bicycle riders is not followed by an increase in bicycle-related road fatalities and injuries. To some extent, road safety research – often referred to as ‘safety in numbers’ – does indicate that more bike crashes is not an automatic corollary of more cycling; in fact, where there is a substantial mode transfer from motor vehicle driving to active travel, the individual risk to each pedestrian and cyclist is reduced [4].

However, the safety of cyclists remains a key concern for the NSW Government, and many of the activities in the *NSW BikePlan* have been designed to increase bicycle safety and promote greater awareness of cyclists’ safety among other road users. These activities include the following:

- supporting cycling courses that enhance on-road riding confidence and courtesy
- promoting activities that motivate cyclists to comply with the road rules
- promoting safe riding practices by training and racing cyclists
- conducting research into key cycling-related issues from which road safety messages and information can be developed
- promoting mutual respect among all road users via advertising campaigns, appropriate enforcement initiatives, and ongoing liaison with key road user industry associations and advocacy groups
- promoting the use of high-visibility safety equipment and clothing by cyclists, including helmet-wearing
- working with local councils to introduce lower speed limits where appropriate

- providing school communities with road safety resources and guidance that will help to develop safe riding skills and habits among children and promote confidence in their carers.

The *NSW BikePlan* is a whole-of-government initiative led by the Roads and Traffic Authority with partners including NSW Health, Transport NSW, Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water, Department of Planning, Department of Education and Training, Communities NSW – Sport and Recreation, Department of Premier and Cabinet, and the Premier’s Council for Active Living. With such strong cross-agency commitment, the NSW Government is confident it can provide a safe, enjoyable and effective cycling environment for the people of NSW.

For more information about the *NSW BikePlan*, visit [http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/hubpages/hub\\_greentravel.html?hlid=greentravel](http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/hubpages/hub_greentravel.html?hlid=greentravel).

## References

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# Cycling safety in the Australian Capital Territory

by Peter Thompson, Project Manager at the ACT Department of Territory and Municipal Services

The ACT Government is keen to promote cycling because it improves accessibility, efficiency of the transport system, individual health and urban liveability, and it is important for tourism and the environment. While Canberra has some 2500 km of road, there are nearly 500 km of on-road cycle lanes and approximately 2000 km of off-road paths available for cyclists’ use.

Canberra is admired by communities around Australia as a city of off-road cycle paths, where tourists and visitors can ride in comfort and safety. In addition, Canberra now has an extensive on-road cycle network, which allows commuters to ride a more direct route to their destination.

The ACT Government’s support of cycling is based on the *ACT Sustainable Transport Plan*, which aims to increase the levels of cycling threefold throughout Canberra over the next 25 years. This is to be achieved by the provision of safe cycling routes for

all standards of cyclists, changing community attitudes, improving end-of-trip facilities, integrating transport modes and discouraging the use of private cars. The decision for a person to cycle to their destination is made easier if there is a safe route, travel time is shorter, and there is less of an impact on the hip pocket.

The safety of cyclists is a key issue in the provision of cycling programs and infrastructure. Often cyclists and road users become complaisant, and media safety campaigns are required to assist in the modification of community behaviour.

## Key cycling safety issues

It is recognised that not all cyclists want to ride on off-road paths, and the ACT Government has made a significant investment in the provision of on-road cycle lanes that separate