

**BICYCLE
NETWORK®**

Building activity into our daily lives

**Bicycle Network pre-budget 2019-20
submission**

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About Bicycle Network

With nearly 50,000 members, Bicycle Network is one of the top five member-based bike riding organisations in the world. With a proud history reaching back more than 40 years in Victoria, we are committed to improving the health and wellbeing of all Australians by making it easier for people to ride a bike.

Operating nationally, we have a measurable, successful and large-scale impact in community participation and the promotion of healthy lifestyles through bike riding.

We achieve this through:

- Improving the bike riding environment by working with government at all levels to provide better infrastructure, legislation, data, policies and regulations
- Delivering successful, large-scale and measurable behaviour change programs such as [Ride2School](#) and [Ride2Work](#)
- Providing services that support bike riders through nationwide membership
- Running mass participation bike riding events such as the [Great Vic Bike Ride](#) and [Around the Bay](#)
- Being a key national spokesperson on issues related to cycling and physical activity

Bicycle Network welcomes the opportunity to make a pre-budget submission to Treasury as preparations are made for the 2019/20 Federal Budget.

If you need our help to turn build a nation of bike riders, please contact us.

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Executive summary: Building activity into our daily lives

Australia is undergoing rapid and complex changes. Population growth, urbanisation and technological advancements are causing profound changes to our everyday lives and the communities we live in.

At the same time, our sedentary lifestyles are killing us. Australians of all ages aren't getting enough exercise. We've reached a crisis point where we have a generation of young Australians that won't live as long as their parents.

Making it easier for more Australians to ride bikes and walk is key to the future success and sustainability of our cities and towns. By planning, investing and creating space for active transport, our governments can create smart, connected and productive communities, filled with happy and healthy Australians.

However, the Commonwealth Government continues to short change people who ride. Despite "*supporting measures to increase all aspects of active transport in Australian communities*" the government has failed to invest or work with State Governments to deliver bike infrastructure or programs that we desperately need.

Given the depth of our national health and congestion crisis, alongside the fact that there has been no measurable decline in bike riding fatalities for the past 20 years — this is astounding.

We need to get Australia moving. We don't need to find extra time in our hectic lives for more organised sport. We need to integrate affordable, easy and efficient physical activity into our daily lives through active transport.

This isn't simply about the bike versus the car, it's about building smarter cities with urban environments that encourage active lifestyles. An integrated, multi-modal transport system is Australia's greatest preventative health mechanism and congestion-busting tool.

The Commonwealth Government holds important influence on the provision of economic and social infrastructure that has a major bearing on the community's wellbeing. Australians want to ride bikes and get active, but we need transformative and accountable federal leadership.

A federal commitment to bike infrastructure funding which separates riders from vehicles is crucial. As is funding behaviour change programs, like [Ride2School](#), that make bike riding a social norm and build a lifetime of healthy habits for young people. Only when we make it easier for more people to ride can we truly reap the rewards of moving and connecting more happy and healthy people.

As one of the world's biggest bike riding organisations, [Bicycle Network](#) is calling on the Federal Government to:

1. Establish an annual cycling infrastructure fund
2. Fund a national Ride2School behaviour change program
3. Invest in a centralised crash data base
4. Cut back on financial incentives for single use vehicles
5. Establish national safety standards for heavy vehicles and fund an awareness campaign



1. Establish an annual cycling infrastructure fund

Cycling infrastructure is underfunded. For Australia to become a nation of happy and healthy people riding bikes, the Federal Government will need to show leadership instead of shunting the issue down to state governments who handball it to local governments.

The UN has called on countries to invest at least 20 per cent of their transport budget in walking and cycling infrastructure to save lives, reverse pollution and reduce carbon emissions [1]. On this basis, the Australian Federal Government should be committing well over one billion dollars to bikes each year.

Given that the Commonwealth Government only funds active travel as part of larger infrastructure projects, one billion dollars on active transport is a significant step forward. Therefore, Bicycle Network is asking the federal government for a commitment of \$492 million a year to an ongoing cycling infrastructure fund.

The \$492 million fund is based on \$20 per head for the Australian population. This level of funding broadly matches what is spent in Denmark, London and the Netherlands.

These funds must be available to state governments on an ongoing basis so that bicycle networks are upgraded strategically. The outcome will be a completed network of high quality bike routes that will greatly reduce use of single occupant vehicles and the demand for roads.

Budget impact:

Financial year	2019-20 \$m	2020-21 \$m	2021-22 \$m	2022-23 \$m	TOTAL \$m
Budget impact	492	500	508	516	2016

The Commonwealth Government has an obligation to ensure that the stock of infrastructure is adequate to deal with the demand of current and future users, and that the real investment is in activities that improve living standards and services. Investing in infrastructure to make it easier for more people to ride ticks all these boxes where the benefits to society are over and above those of the individual.

Given that The Commonwealth is also a major source of infrastructure funds for the states and territories, Bicycle Network is asking for national framework, regulation or policy that requires bike infrastructure to be part of all federally funded projects. This concept is known as mainstreaming or positive provisioning. This will ensure that bike projects are linked to the strategic success of any federally funded road or infrastructure project.

By developing stringent criteria on mainstreaming to inform decision-making in relation to cycling infrastructure investment (including bike storage and end-of-trip facilities), Australia would take an important step towards the integrated transport networks our cities desperately need if they are to be liveable spaces in the future.



1.1 Amend the Building Code of Australia to include the provision of end-of-trip facilities

Bicycle Network is asking the Federal Government to amend the Building Code of Australia to include the provision of end-of-trip facilities such as bike parking to make riding for transport an easy and accessible option.

1.2 Continue and expand the Building Better Regions Fund (BBRF)

Bicycle Network is asking the Federal Government to ensure that the criteria of the Building Better Regions Fund make explicit mention of rail trail proposals that will draw tourism dollars and provide benefits to local and regional communities from a transport, recreation and connectivity perspective.

1.3 Ensure national agendas and strategies consider bikes

To ensure long-term, sustainable and strategic growth of cycling infrastructure, it's essential that bike riding and active travel organisations have input into related national agenda and strategies including the Australian Government's Smart Cities Initiative.

1.4 Adopt the recommendations from the Australian House of Representatives Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport and Cities Building Up & Moving Out report.

In examining the Australian Government's role in the development of cities, the Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport and Cities came up with several recommendations regarding connectivity and active transport in their [Building Up & Moving Out](#) report [2].

Bicycle Network is asking for the rapid adoption of the following recommendations.

Recommendation 11:

6.117 The Committee recommends that the Australian Government, as part of the system of master planning under the national plan of settlement, ensure that governments at all levels:

- *Commit to a more sustainable model of urban transport connectivity than currently exists*
- *Actively promote investment in the development of a public transport network that is capable of meeting the goal of the 30-minute city.*
- *Actively plan for and promote the integration of active transport within the transport network.*
- *Embrace innovation.*
- *Ensure that transport infrastructure planning is consistent with planning for a more sustainable urban form and conforms to integrated planning at local, regional and city levels.*



2. Fund a national Ride2School program

Australian children are suffering a crisis of inactivity. Currently, 70 per cent of children and 91.5 per cent of young people don't get enough exercise [3]. This figure is even worse when we look at physical activity level of young girls. Without drastic action, they are headed for a life troubled by chronic, preventable diseases and an early death.

In the 1970s, eight of 10 children and teenagers walked, cycled or used public transport to get to school. Now two in every three are being driven. Australian children are among the most chauffeured young people in the developed world and it's causing a crisis; for the first time we will have a generation that will not live as long as their parents.

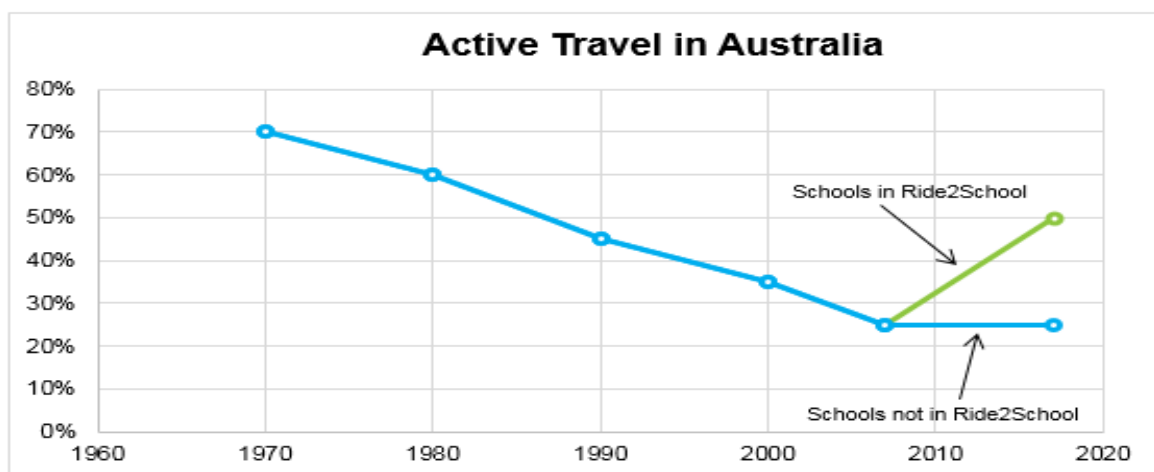
Despite one in four young Australians being classed as overweight or obese [3], most Australian states don't have the resources or inclination to fund a youth-focused behaviour change program.

This is why Bicycle Network is asking the Commonwealth Government to invest \$3.9 million per year in a nationally-coordinated Ride2School program.

Budget impact:

Financial year	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	TOTAL
	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m
Budget impact	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	15.6

For more than 10 years, Bicycle Network's Ride2School program has successfully increased active travel rates in participating schools across Victoria. The cost-effective and impactful program is a world leader, with schools who participate in the program recording active travel rates of 45 per cent, more than the national active travel average of 25 per cent [4] [5].



Using a proven model of behaviour change within a school community, Ride2School successfully implements holistic and proven interventions to increase and promote active travel. Each initiative is underpinned with research and needs assessments before being uniquely tailored to the specific barriers and motivators in each school community.



Investing in a national Ride2School program run by Bicycle Network is also consistent with the Federal Government's long-term national health plan, where mental and preventative health is prioritised and the benefits of healthy lifestyles are realised.

Children and young people can also serve as catalysts for behavioural change towards sustainable and smart cities. Childhood is the key stage to establish long-term travel habits, rather relying than interventions to change ingrained behaviour later in life.

See *Attachment 1* for Bicycle Network's proposed four-year national Ride2School program which mirrors and expands on the success of our state-based program.

It's time for Federal leadership to build bike riding into an everyday activity for Australia's young people and in the process, build healthy habits that ward off preventable disease.



3. Invest in a centralised crash data base

Authorities are currently limited by the lack of insight into bicycle crashes. While we know that the majority of bike rider casualties occur when a rider is hit by a vehicle driven by a person, there's no standardised, centralised or detailed data around the nature of why and how crashes occur nationally.

Data does exist in various sources such as police reports, hospitalisations, coroners' reports and Bicycle Network's membership crash data, but these sources are limited, disconnected and not thoroughly analysed.

A consistent approach to data collection is essential to ensuring that a true national approach is taken to reducing deaths and serious injury on our roads.

While the federal government's extended Black Spot Project invests more than \$684.5 million to help make roads safer for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians, it needs reliable crash data to make effective changes.

Bicycle Network is calling on the federal government to establish a national bicycle crash database that standardises and centralises data on the nature and causes of bicycle crashes.

The data will provide meaningful insight and influence bicycle infrastructure spending and prioritisation programs, along with improvements. Having accurate crash data about bike riders would be useful, especially since accurate motor vehicle crash data has produced better roadways and safer motor vehicles which, in turn, resulted in decreased crash-related morbidity and mortality.

This ask is also consistent with actions from the *National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020*:

- a. *Action 55. Work towards the adoption of a nationally consistent road crash classification definitions and the development of an improved national serious injury database*

Bicycle Network recently received a TAC Community Safety Grant to develop a rider crash survey that records bicycle-crash-scene data, information relevant to the bicycle environment (i.e. crash location in relation to bicycle infrastructure) as well as circumstances surrounding near misses. The survey will be distributed early 2019 and will serve as a good pilot program for national expansion.



4. Cut back on financial incentives for single use vehicles

4.1 Abolish the fringe benefit tax exemption for private vehicles and small business car parking

To motivate more people to swap their cars and prioritise bikes, walking or even public transport, we must remove incentives for single use vehicles and car parking.

Bicycle Network is calling on the Federal Government to abolish the fringe benefit tax exemption for private motor vehicle use and small business car parking.

4.2 Extend fringe benefit tax exemption to bikes

To fast-track the uptake and growth of cycling participation as a means of transport, Bicycle Network is calling on the Federal Government to extend the fringe benefit tax exemption to private bicycle or e-bike use.

The tax scheme for people who ride could mirror what's done in Belgium and the Netherlands. These European schemes provide tax-free bikes to employees. They also provide generous payments to employees for the amount of riding they do (up to a limit).





5. Establish national safety standards for heavy vehicles and fund an awareness campaign

Heavy vehicles pose a significant risk to vulnerable road users. In 2015, Bicycle Network made a submission to the *Inquiry into Aspects of Road Safety in Australia* calling for the Federal Government to:

- actively pursue technologies to improve the safety of heavy vehicles on our roads such as blind spot detection via mirrors, sensors and audible left turn warning systems.
- implement Electronic Work Diaries to ensure compliance with fatigue laws
- actively pursue Phase II of the National Heavy Braking Strategy with a view to adopt a new Australian Design Rule by 2017.

Sadly, none of these were adopted. While governments around the world have moved to rapidly mandate additional truck safety to protect bike riders, our national leaders have turned a blind eye.

The Australian Trucking Association (ATA) recommends that members fit side underrun protection to their vehicles. While many trucking companies are taking their own measures to reduce risks and improve fields of vision, the Commonwealth Government has the authority to ensure the measures are compulsory and mandated.

Bicycle Network strongly believes that we need to actively pursue technologies to improve the safety of heavy vehicles on our roads. Bicycle Network is calling on the Federal Government to require that all heavy vehicles be fitted with the following:

1. Class V mirrors, and reversing and blind spot cameras, giving the driver a better view of road users around their vehicles
2. Side underrun protection to protect bike riders from being dragged under the wheels in the event of a collision
3. Audible left turn warning and reverse squawker alert systems to communicate heavy vehicle movements to all road users
4. Hydraulic payload monitoring system to determine and notify drivers of real time truck weight

Rail Projects Victoria and TransUrban have driven industry change by setting minimum safety standards for all trucks entering their worksites (most of what are listed above). These standards are beyond what is required federally. It costs approximately \$10,000 per truck to meet these upgrade requirements.

An obstacle to implementing new national standards for heavy vehicles are small owner-operators who make up a significant portion of the industry. Sourcing additional funds to upgrade their heavy vehicle fleets poses a considerable barrier.

Bicycle Network is recommending that the Federal Government offer rebates to owner-operators of heavy vehicle to help subsidise the cost of safety upgrades that are necessary to significantly reduce the risk that trucks pose to vulnerable road users.



5.1 Fund a national campaign for vulnerable road user awareness and training

In addition to physical mitigation measures such as side under-run protection rails, blind-spot detection systems, truck driver training and road user awareness programs are integral to the prevention of crashes involving heavy vehicles.

To rapidly reduce the risk that heavy vehicles pose to people who drive and walk, we must build a shared understanding of the limitations each group faces when it comes to visibility, behaviours, perspective and vulnerability. Technological advancements or modifications to heavy vehicles in isolation cannot wholly minimise risks where decision making is ultimately controlled by the individual.

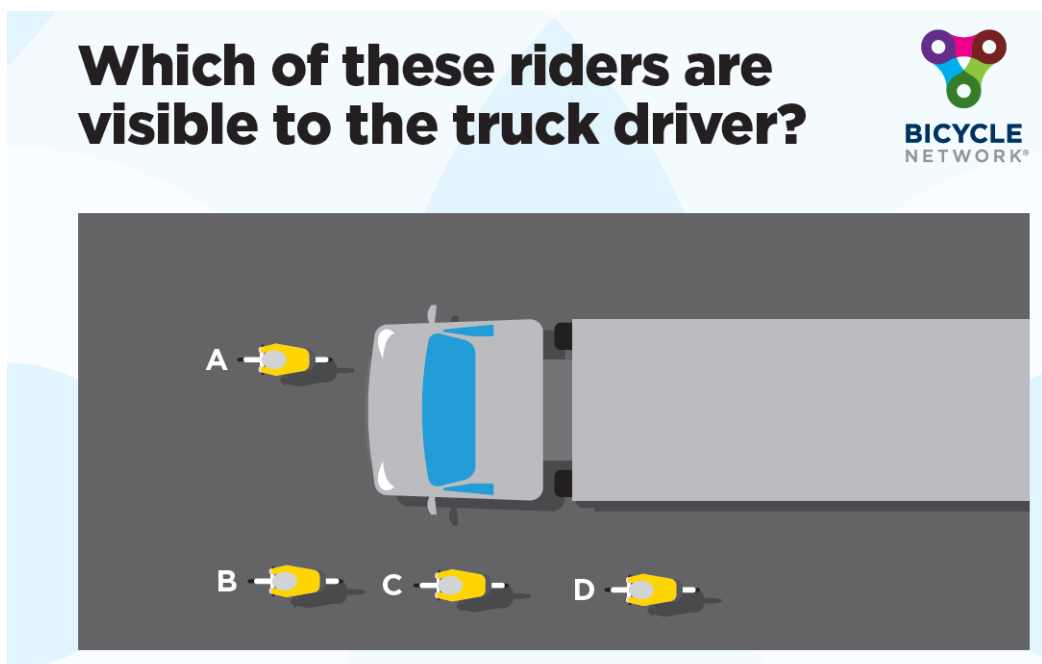
Funding a national awareness program like Bicycle Network’s [Swapping Seats](#) initiative would help to not only raise awareness but build a consistent and clear communication of behaviours for both drivers and bike riders.

In conjunction with Rail Projects Victoria, *Swapping Seats* sets out to build awareness and a positive, shared understanding between people who drive heavy vehicles and people who ride bikes by showing the blind spots around trucks. The pilot has shown immediate success and is ready to be expanded and rolled out nationally.

Additionally, Bicycle Network believes that vulnerable road user training should be introduced and mandated across all truck driver licensing curriculums.

Budget impact:

Financial year	2019-20 \$m	2020-21 \$m	2021-22 \$m	2022-23 \$m	TOTAL \$m
Budget impact	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	5.6



Caption: An example of an educational flyer used in the Swapping Seats campaign



Conclusion

The benefits of getting more people moving around our cities by bike is well established. Increasing bicycle mode share improves health outcomes, saves individuals and governments money, reduces congestion, improves connectivity and access to employment and positively impacts the sustainability and liveability of our communities.

To secure the future prosperity and global competitiveness of our communities and towns, the Commonwealth Government must set the agenda by investing in cycling infrastructure that benefits the entire community.

For too long, transport and infrastructure provision in Australia has failed to keep up with our future needs. The Australian Government has a key role to play in setting a national agenda for an overall shift in the structure of Australian cities toward active transport and mainstreaming the provision of cycling infrastructure into all aspects of city planning and development

Making it easier for more people of all ages and backgrounds to ride bikes is an essential long-term investment that meets our cities broader objectives of accessibility, sustainability, jobs and healthy environments.



References

- [1] UN Environment Program, "Global Outlook on Walking and Cycling - Policies and realities from around the world," United Nations, 2016.
- [2] House of Representatives Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport and Cities, "Building Up & Moving Out - Inquiry into the Australian Government's role in the development of cities," Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, 2018.
- [3] Australian Bureau of Statistics, "Australian Health Survey: Physical Activity, 2011-12," Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra, 2011-12.
- [4] Ride2School, *Internal program evaluation*, Bicycle Network, 2016.
- [5] Department of Infrastructure and Transport, "Walking, Riding and Access to Public Transport, Supporting Active Travel in Australian Communities," Australian Government, 2013.