



Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group

CBD BUG

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My dear Lord Mayor

Truck Side Guards

CBD BUG draws your attention to the attached report supporting San Francisco's efforts to improve pedestrian and cyclist safety through the use of side guards on trucks. ¹

As you are probably aware, our roads are becoming safer. However, nationally fatal and serious injury crashes involving cyclists are not improving. Pedestrians and cyclists are disproportionately represented in road fatalities. Heavy vehicle crashes are not declining at rates comparable to others.²

One relatively inexpensive way to improve the outcomes for vulnerable road users involved in a crash with a heavy vehicle is if the vehicle is fitted with side guards. These guards have been in operation in the UK since 1983. Quoting from the attached report: "The safety effectiveness of side guards on large trucks was demonstrated by a UK study, which showed significant reductions in the rate of bicyclist fatalities for the relevant crash types prior to and after the enactment of a national side guard requirement. The injury severity distribution for bicyclists and pedestrians colliding with the side of a truck changed substantially, with 61% and 20% reductions in fatalities, This conclusion was reported in a 2005 UK Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) analysis and cited by the National Research Council Canada in a 2010 report." ... "Whereas only one in four bicyclists was killed or seriously injured in crashes when the truck was equipped with a side guard, two out of three bicyclists were killed or seriously injured when the truck was exempt and not equipped with a side guard."

We note that Council has had a zero harm policy since 2004, and that you recognise you have a duty of care to members of the public. This involves identifying hazards and managing risks, as well as taking corrective actions to 'make safe' and implementing improvements. Given this we call upon Brisbane City Council to show leadership in road safety by installing side guards where possible on its fleet of heavy vehicles. Further, we call upon Council to mandate the use of side guards on trucks used for any Council contracts.

We look forward to your positive response and a rapid introduction of this safety measure.

Inquest Recommendations

¹ "Vision Zero San Francisco Truck Side Guard Initiative: Technical Assessment and Recommendations" <http://ntl.bts.gov/lib/59000/59900/59997/DOT-VNTSC-SFMTA-16-01.pdf>

² http://roadsafety.gov.au/performance/files/NRSS_Implementation_report_Nov2015.pdf
http://bitre.gov.au/publications/2015/files/is_070.pdf
http://bitre.gov.au/publications/2015/files/is_071_fp.pdf

As a participant in the inquest into the death of Rebekka Meyer, the CBD BUG would like to be updated about how Council is implementing the Coroner's recommendations.

What specific actions has Council taken since December 2015 to implement Inquest Recommendations 5, 7 and 8 (attached)?

Is Council implementing or phasing in any of these world's best policies?³

- (a) Cross over mirrors
- (b) Banning trucks with poor visibility
- (c) Safe trucks for contractors
- (d) Restricting freight to specific streets
- (e) Improved truck driver training

Yours faithfully

Dr Richard Bean
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³ For instance see <http://usa.streetsblog.org/2016/10/25/how-american-cities-can-protect-cyclists-from-deadly-trucks/> and Vision Zero Network's "How can cities increase the safety of large vehicles in urban areas?"

Recommendation five

Balancing the huge potential for harm to any other small vehicle, including motorcycles and cyclists, against the inconvenience to a truck driver required to maintain visual observation of all traffic ahead of the truck driver, focuses attention on physical safety versus optimal traffic flow. Physical safety must prevail.

It is recommended

- i. The Queensland Government should amend the Transport Operations (Road User Management - Road Rules) Regulation 2009, to require motor vehicles (including heavy vehicles) who stop as the first vehicle behind a bike box, to stop in a position which enables the driver to see the entire bike box.
- ii. Coupled with this recommendation it is essential to release a targeted and frequent education program aimed to alert motorists, and other road users of the risk of placing themselves immediately in front of a heavy vehicle with impeded forward vision.
- iii. Consideration could also be given to making such action by a driver/rider, an offence.

Recommendation seven

- i. Conventional shaped heavy vehicles should be prohibited unless they are fitted with appropriate technologies to warn the driver of any obstacles or other road users within the forward blind spot of the truck.
- ii. Publically disseminated information for car drivers, motorcyclists and cyclists should aim to educate them about the extent of the blind spot in front of conventional shaped heavy vehicles. Eye level signage at the back of vehicles (similar to Keep Clear of Turning Vehicle) could assist in alerting other road users to the danger of positioning themselves directly in front of conventional shaped heavy vehicles.

Recommendation eight

It is recommended that Brisbane City Council engage with bicycle representative groups to investigate, plan and develop more dedicated exclusive bikeways in Brisbane. Resources and planning should be prioritised to extend Council's excellent existing dedicated bicycle only bikeways that provide physically exclusive bicycle paths.