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## Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group

### CBD BUG

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The Honourable Mark Bailey MP  
Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports  
GPO Box 2644  
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Dear Minister

I write to you on behalf of the members of the Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group (CBD BUG) seeking your action to make bicycle riding safer and thereby increase the proportion of Queenslanders riding bicycles for transport.

The Brisbane CBD BUG is an organisation that represents and articulates the interests of the large number of Brisbane residents who ride bicycles to, from and within inner Brisbane and surrounding areas. Formed in 2005 the CBD BUG now has more than 700 members, and advocates on behalf of the several thousand regular bicycle riders in Brisbane. CBD BUG members meet monthly to discuss issues and events of concern and interest to people riding ride bicycles in the CBD.

A number of CBD BUG members were present at the 30 April 2015 Bike Week Q&A with the subject of "Is Cycling Important?". We were very impressed to hear you talk about cycling being a fundamental part of Queensland's transport system.

With this as background we would to draw to your attention to the previous Queensland Government's response to Report No. 39 – *Inquiry into Cycling Issues: A New Direction for Cycling in Queensland* by the former Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee.

The Committee made 68 recommendations in its milestone report that were overwhelmingly well considered. While not every recommendation was exactly to the CBD BUG's liking we recognised that they formed an integrated package and so called for their implementation "lock, stock and barrel" - to avoid the cherry picking that we later saw in the response by the previous Queensland Government.

Just one example was the response to Recommendation 18 – that the "Minister for Transport and Main Roads amend the relevant Queensland road rules to allow for a 'rolling stop' rule which permits cyclists to treat stop signs as give way signs where it is safe to do so". The rejection of this recommendation, in the face of its success overseas and without even conducting a local trial, highlights the lack of flexibility on the part of key road rule decision makers in this state when it comes to enabling cycling to become a viable transport alternative to the private motor vehicle.

Another example of this inflexibility comes from the previous Queensland Government's rejection of the report's Recommendation 19 – "that the Minister for Transport and Main Roads amend the relevant Queensland road rules to allow a 'left turn on red permitted after stopping' rule for cyclists at red lights". On this issue the Queensland road rules are becoming increasingly redundant in light of Brisbane City Council's rollout of its Left Turn on Red program.

The previous Queensland Government also mis-applied Recommendation 31 – "that the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, in consultation with the Attorney General and Minister for Justice, review the penalties set out in Schedule 3 of the State Penalties Enforcement Regulation 2000 with a view to increasing infringement penalty units for cyclists to equal those for motorists where the potential to endanger other road users is greatest" (emphasis added).

Instead of only increasing fines for cyclists "where the potential to endanger other road users is greatest" the previous Queensland Government increased fines for cyclists to the same level as motorists for all infringements. As a result, cyclists are regularly being fined \$341 for not observing stop signs at locations along popular cyclist corridors e.g. Ivory Lane, in the Brisbane CBD. The disproportionality of this penalty is highlighted by the fact that cyclists are the dominant traffic through this intersection, yet the road signage is set to hinder their ease of travel. The level of the fine commonly exceeds the value of the bikes people are riding.

On this basis we request you re-visit the previous Queensland Government's response to the recommendations in the report *Inquiry into Cycling Issues: A New Direction for Cycling in Queensland*. We suggest a steering committee is established to oversee this process that includes representatives from other departments and agencies with an interest in increasing the number of people riding bicycles for transport e.g. Queensland Health, Tourism Queensland, along with independent experts from relevant academic fields, and cycling advocacy groups.

Numerous surveys have shown there is a significant part of the community who want to use active transport modes like cycling, but who will only do so when they feel it is safe and convenient. Data for a range of sources clearly indicates women are underrepresented among current cyclist numbers and this is attributable to safety concerns. However, Queensland's road rules continue to be overwhelmingly car-centric with their host of cyclist-hostile provisions, and the risk and inconvenience these rules create for cyclists ensures Queenslanders have little choice other than to drive their cars. This car-dependency occurs despite almost 40% of Queenslanders' usual trips to work or study destinations being so short that bicycle riding and/or walking would be viable.

We look forward to your response on this issue.

Yours faithfully



Paul French  
Co-convenor  
Brisbane CBD BUG  
26 June 2015