

31 July 2017

Attention: Kate Palmer, ASC Chief Executive Officer  
Australian Sports Commission  
National Sports Plan  
PO BOX 176  
Belconnen ACT 2616  
Submitted online via: [ausport.gov.au/nationalsportsplan](http://ausport.gov.au/nationalsportsplan)

Dear Kate,

## Response to National Sports Plan

The Amy Gillett Foundation welcomes the opportunity to contribute towards the development of the National Sports Plan. We are delighted that the Government recognises the health, cultural and economic contributions of sport and is taking steps to strengthen sporting participation, high performance sport, cultural and public health outcomes and levels of investment.

The Amy Gillett Foundation (AGF) is a national organisation with a mission to reduce the incidence of serious injury and death of cyclists in Australia. The AGF was founded in 2006 after the tragic death of Amy Gillett, who was hit by a driver while training with the Australian cycling team in Germany. Amy's parents, Denis and Mary Safe, and her husband, Simon Gillett, started the AGF to help create a safer cycling environment in Australia. Our goal is for safe cycling in Australia, and our vision is zero cyclist fatalities. We draw on evidence and international best practice, and collaborate with government, business and the community to create a safer environment for cyclists, while maintaining an efficient road network for all road users.

Reflecting Amy's passion, the AGF has considerable involvement with sport cycling:

- We annually award the Amy Gillett Cycling Scholarship to a promising young female cyclist following a selection process that considers cycling potential and success, academic pursuits, career aspirations and community participation. The scholarship provides the chosen athlete with the opportunity to live, train and compete in Europe with the Australian Women's Road Development Team, supported by Cycling Australia.
- We run mass participation cycling events for all levels, ages and abilities of sport and recreational cyclists. Our signature event is Amy's Gran Fondo which has attracted over 80,000 participants and spectators in the past six years. Amy's Gran Fondo also includes an elite component, incorporating both men's and women's National Road Series events.
- We run cycling training programs to support people to start to ride or to ride more often for sport, recreation and/or transport. Our programs specifically focus on increasing participation in under-represented groups such as young people and women.

Cycling yields significant health, cultural and economic benefits and it makes good policy sense to encourage cycling. Our submission on the National Sports Plan focuses on the questions regarding participation, but also includes consideration of major sporting events and sporting infrastructure.

## Response and recommendations

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Cycling is a unique activity as it is both a sport and a mode of transport. Already 15.5% of Australians (3.74 million people) ride a bike in a typical week, with 80.6% of those people riding for sport.<sup>1</sup> However, safety is a major barrier to cycling participation. We know that more people would ride more often if cycling was safer, with fear of sharing the roads with drivers and the lack of dedicated cycling infrastructure most often cited as the reasons for not riding.<sup>2</sup>

By making riding a bike easy and safe, cycling can help make physical activity and sport part of more people's daily routines. In order to increase cycling participation, **the AGF strongly recommends that governments at all levels support and invest in an environment that makes cycling safer.**

This includes:

- ***Investing in purpose-built cycling infrastructure and facilities***

Cycling is distinct in that participants use both the road network and dedicated sports cycling facilities such as velodromes, criterium circuits, mountain bike trails and BMX tracks to recreate, train and compete.

Governments at every level need to support, promote and invest in separated cycling infrastructure as part of the road network and the development of local, state, national and international level purpose-built sports cycling facilities. Collectively, these facilities should cater for every performance pathway for every sports cycling discipline (road, track, mountain bike, BMX) and be able to host local, state, national and international level events, as appropriate.

Locations for facilities and infrastructure should be identified through master planning and consultation with key stakeholders and communities.

- ***Implementing and enforcing cycling safety legislation such as minimum passing distance***

Driven by the AGF's 'a metre matters' campaign<sup>3</sup>, minimum passing distance legislation gives cyclists a virtual bike lane by requiring drivers to give at least a metre in speed zones up to and including 60km/h and at least 1.5m in speed zones above 60km/h when passing cyclists.

Minimum passing distance legislation is in place in Queensland, South Australia and Tasmania and on trial in New South Wales and Australian Capital Territory. A trial is also set to commence shortly in Western Australia. While there is no legislation or trial pledge in Victoria, the Victorian Government has committed to a year-long minimum passing distance education campaign, following which they will consider whether to move to legislation.

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<sup>1</sup> Australian Bicycle Council. (2017). National Cycling Participation Survey. Available at: <http://www.bicyclecouncil.com.au/publication/national-cycling-participation-survey-2017>

<sup>2</sup> RAC WA. (2015). Cycling Survey 2015. Available at: <https://rac.com.au/car-motoring/info/cycling-in-wa>

<sup>3</sup> Amy Gillett Foundation. a metre matters. Available at: <http://www.amygillett.org.au/programs-resources/a-metre-matters>

Implementing minimum passing distance legislation at a national level would ensure consistency across Australia, meaning that when we ride our bikes, every Australian would be safer on every street, regardless of postcode.

- ***Investing in and supporting cycling skills, education and behaviour change programs***

Cycling skills, cycling awareness training and behaviour change programs are essential to spread cycling safety messages and to support and help people to ride. Programs should include cycling safety awareness training for new and existing drivers and cycling skills sessions for new and existing riders.

Through some state and local government and other programmatic funding, the AGF is able to deliver cycling training programs to under-represented groups such as young people and women, however our reach is limited. In partnership with Cycling Australia we have also developed the AustCycle program, focused primarily on providing high quality education and training to accredit people as teachers and skills coaches, and encouraging these teachers and skills coaches go out and teach community members how to cycle.

**Opportunities to support the national expansion of cycling skills programs to enable more people to ride or to ride more often for sport, recreation and transport are strongly recommended.**

**The AGF also strongly recommends financially supporting major sporting events for elite athletes and mass participation events encouraging physical activity for all ages and abilities.**

In conclusion, the AGF makes these recommendations to capitalise on the unique role that cycling can play in getting more Australians active.

Please do not hesitate to contact me directly if you have any questions or require any additional information to assist with the development the National Sports Plan.

Yours sincerely



Phoebe Dunn  
**Chief Executive Officer**