

30 June 2017

Attention: Manager of the Road Safety Unit
Level 1, Energy House
18-20 Cavenagh Street
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Lodged via email: roadsafety@nt.gov.au

Amy Gillett Foundation Response to Towards Zero Road Safety Action Plan Discussion Paper

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input into the development of a new Road Safety Action Plan for the Northern Territory.

The Amy Gillett Foundation has a direct interest in contributing to the planning of road safety in the Territory, and we welcome the focus on the reduction of death and serious injury on Northern Territory roads. Specifically, we wish to highlight the importance of including the safety of cyclists, a particularly vulnerable subset of road users, during the development of this new Road Safety Action Plan.

We wish to make several recommendations regarding options proposed in the discussion paper. First, we recommend that cyclists be considered a key priority group of vulnerable road users. The Northern Territory has the highest number of cyclists per capita of any Australian state or territory, and cyclist safety must be a priority for this Road Safety Action Plan.

With regard to the options proposed for improving cyclist safety, we strongly recommend investigating the option for, and implementing, mandatory minimum passing distances for vehicles overtaking cyclists (6.13). This measure would bring road safety in the Northern Territory into line with road laws implemented in the majority of Australian States and Territories. We also encourage and support a vulnerable road user awareness campaign (6.14). The Amy Gillett Foundation has extensive experience developing road safety campaigns and is well positioned to support future campaigns in the Territory. We also have experience with delivering cycling safety education and awareness programs to heavy vehicle operators and are well positioned to support the proposed bus/heavy vehicle and cyclist workshops to raise awareness of the interaction between road users referenced in 6.15.

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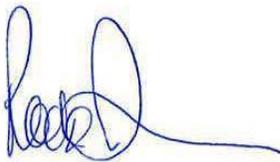
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The Amy Gillett Foundation also recommends the inclusion of cyclist related content in all driver, motorcyclist and heavy vehicle operator training, testing and licensing. This measure is essential to facilitate generational change which will result in safer roads for all road users. We recommend following the ACT precedent of incorporating a competency in the driver licensing regime that specifically addresses vulnerable road users. We have had a direct role in the development of this approach and would be pleased to assist the Northern Territory in reviewing its driver training, testing and licensing arrangements.

We look forward to the next steps in the development of this plan. Please do not hesitate to contact me directly if you have any questions or require any additional information.

Yours sincerely



Phoebe Dunn
Chief Executive Officer
Amy Gillett Foundation

Amy Gillett Foundation

The Amy Gillett Foundation (AGF) is a national organisation with a mission to reduce the incidence of serious injury and death of bicycle riders in Australia. We draw on evidence and international best practice, and collaborate with governments, business and the community to create a safer environment for cyclists, while maintaining an efficient road network for all road users.

AGF Response to Towards Zero Discussion Paper

General Recommendation

Recommendation 1: Cyclists must be clearly identified as a priority group of vulnerable road users

In this discussion paper, indigenous road users, young drivers and motorcyclists are clearly identified as distinct subgroups of vulnerable road users. While the reasoning behind this is clear, cyclists must be similarly identified as a priority group of vulnerable road users rather than as a part of 'other key actions'.

As the Summary Paper highlights, more people cycle in the NT (per capita) than any other state or territory. It is clear that cyclist safety must be a priority for any road safety plan implemented in the Territory.

Regarding Cycling Safety

Recommendation 2: Investigate and introduce mandatory minimum passing distances for vehicles overtaking cyclists (6.13)

We recommend the Northern Territory's road rules be amended to mandate minimum overtaking distances when drivers overtake bike riders.

- 1 metre in speed zones up to and including 60 km/h

- 1.5 metres in speed zones over 60 km/h

This measure would bring the Northern Territory into line with the rest of the states and the Australian Capital Territory. As of April 2017, the majority Australian States and Territories have mandatory minimum passing distances in place (SA, TAS, QLD) or in trial (NSW & WA). Victoria is developing an education campaign in advance of considering legislation.

A detailed timeline of the progression of this crucial road safety policy can be found [here](#).

Over two years, minimum passing distance legislation has quickly become an essential part of modern road safety policy. This legislation creates a safer road environment for all road users and actively helps to protect vulnerable cyclists from fatality and serious injury. Hit from behind crashes are a common fatal crash type for cyclists. In crashes where cyclists are hit from behind, they are most at risk of fatality.

This legislation, therefore, provides a direct path towards the reduction of death and serious injury of vulnerable road users. It also clearly identifies an objective standard for safe passing and sharing of road infrastructure between cyclists and other road users.

Recommendation 3: Implement a vulnerable road user awareness campaign (6.14)

Awareness campaigns are an important accompanying part of a comprehensive road safety plan. Campaigns regarding cyclist safety are especially essential as participation increases in the Territory. Gaps in driver licensing education which do not adequately teach drivers how to share the road safely with cyclists further reinforce the need for awareness campaigns.

Specifically, any awareness campaigns considered by the Northern Territory should include education on minimum passing distances and the need to share roads safely. The Amy Gillett Foundation has extensive experience in delivering robust, engaging and evidence-based campaigns and would be delighted to assist in the development of education campaigns for the NT.

While awareness campaigns are an important part of strategically improving road safety, they are most effective when delivered alongside clear policy directives, legislation that sets out clear road rules to all road users, and appropriate enforcement of those road rules. Therefore, it is our recommendation that future awareness campaigns regarding cycling safety are developed and delivered alongside legislative

change to mandate minimum passing distances, and coupled with appropriate enforcement of the laws. Put simply, an awareness campaign that can educate based on a specific ask (leaving a specific distance) will be more effective than a campaign that calls for general behaviour change.

Recommendation 4: Undertake bus/heavy vehicle and cyclist workshops to raise awareness of the interaction between road users (6.15)

The Amy Gillett Foundation is a strong supporter and facilitator of collaboration between road safety organisations and road user community groups. This work is essential to raising awareness of common goals, shared issues and potential for developing innovative and mutually beneficial outcomes for all road users. Indeed, the necessity and mutual benefits of minimum passing distances emerged from this kind of engagement and interaction between road safety organisations and user groups.

The Amy Gillett Foundation has a long standing road safety partnership with the Toll Group. As part of that partnership, the Amy Gillett Foundation delivers a cycling safety awareness training program to heavy vehicle operators across Australia. We have also developed an on-line road safety training program for Toll, which is currently in the process of being rolled out. Toll vehicles have been co-branded with the Amy Gillett Foundation **a metre matters** and 'share the road' messaging, acting as a mobile bill-board across Australia. We have also developed cycle aware and cycle skills road safety training for other corporates, including Australia Post, Deliveroo and Transurban, and are well placed to assist with the development and delivery of such training in the Northern Territory.

The Amy Gillett Foundation supports workshops to raise awareness of the interaction between road users and sees this activity as an important part of road safety policy and planning. Similar to awareness campaigns, it is our view that workshops are most effective when delivered in combination with road laws which clearly outline priorities for safe interaction on roads.

The Amy Gillett Foundation is focused on reducing serious injury and fatality of cyclists and creating a safer road environment for cyclists, which will have a clear benefit for all road users.

Regarding Licensing

Recommendation 5: Review driver / motorcyclist and heavy vehicle licensing content and revise to include content regarding sharing roads safely with cyclists

This discussion paper proposes several changes to licensing requirements and conditions with regard to young drivers, motorcyclists and heavy vehicle operators. We note there is not a clear description of current licence testing content but suggest that any amendments to current licensing requirements also provide an opportunity to ensure content regarding cyclist safety is included in future training and testing for licensing.

An important and overarching concern related to driver and motorcyclist education and training is the lack of cyclist-related content. Drivers are not taught how to safely interact with cyclists on the road, and this can lead to frustration and discomfort for drivers unfamiliar with cycling and an unsafe road environment for cyclists.

Cycle Aware is an Australian Research Council Linkage Project research study currently underway that is investigating cyclist-related content in the driver licensing process, including all driver licensing documents and tests (written and on-road skills test). This study is a collaboration between the leading road safety universities (University of Adelaide, Monash University, Queensland University of Technology), state governments, local governments and the AGF.

This project builds on a research study that was conducted in the Australian Capital Territory by Dr Marilyn Johnson, Research and Policy Manager at the AGF and Senior Research Fellow, Monash University. Findings from that study changed the way new drivers in the ACT are trained about sharing the road with vulnerable road users, including cyclists. Specifically, the findings from the research project informed the development of a new learner driver competency module focused on vulnerable road users. Implemented in the ACT on 29 August 2016, all learner drivers are now required to successfully complete this competency module (along with 22 other modules) before they are issued with a probationary driver licence.

The AGF would be pleased to assist the NT Government in designing and implementing revised driver licensing arrangements that improve the situation for vulnerable road users.