

The Hon. Paul Toole MP
52 Martin Place,
Sydney NSW 2000

24th March, 2020

Dear Minister Toole

Re: Improving the safety of Transport for NSW Projects for Bike riders

Bicycle NSW has long worked with the NSW government providing advice and advocacy to make NSW a better place for all bicycle riders.

We have a 43-year history of preparing submissions, attending meetings, providing advice, and of specific advocacy where safety issues occur on state significant construction projects.

Unfortunately, major infrastructure projects are failing to share safety audit reports with us, the advice we provide in meetings is often ignored if it involves cost or inconvenience, we are never provided with opportunities for a 'ride through' before detours or projects are opened to the public to test that they are safe, and when we report hazards or dangerous practices they are not rectified in a timely manner.

This fails to conform with the Austroads Guidelines that Transport for NSW is a key contributor to. It does not protect people and it undermines the active transport goals of the NSW Government. It also falls well short of the expectations expressed by Minister Constance last year in budget estimates.

This video analysis [<https://youtu.be/nK6Q3shTHsw>] was produced by a keen cyclist with relevant experience, but independently of Bicycle NSW. Its focus is the Rozelle Interchange project, which I understand you are responsible for. We have struggled to get the contractor to adopt safe practices and reduce the danger to people riding bikes and there has already been one injury reported to us. We are asking for your help before more people are hurt.

This project is no different to many others, and it's time for change. We are confident that if Transport for NSW and the NSW Government were to change the way project managers and contractors work with Bicycle NSW to better conform with the Austroads guidelines and the Transport for NSW training delivered for construction managers on bike related road projects:

- injuries could be prevented, during and post construction
- the government could save money on rectification and injury claims
- litigation could be avoided
- the NSW Government's active transport targets in Future Transport 2056 could be met more rapidly
- health, road congestion and carbon pollution targets could be met as more people feel safe to ride bikes

Covid-19 social distancing requirements are likely to see greater need for bike riding as a form of transport and to deliver goods and food. Hospitals will face enormous pressure and we need to do all we can to improve the safety of active transport, reducing the burden injuries place on strained health services.

We have asked Minister Constance for the opportunity to work with him to develop process improvements that would apply to all NSW Government projects to better enable Bicycle NSW to help improve the safety, amenity and effective delivery for bike riding and the community. We ask for your help on this specific project and would also value your support to move to a more strategic approach for the benefit of the community.

Yours faithfully,

Bastien Wallace
General Manager of Public Affairs
Bicycle NSW