

**From:** [REDACTED] on behalf of Richard King [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, 1 April 2016 10:48 PM  
**To:** LCLC  
**Subject:** Submission in support of a minimum bicycle passing distance trial

The Secretary  
 Economy and Infrastructure Committee  
 Parliament House, Spring Street  
 EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

1st April 2016

### **Re Inquiry into the Road Safety Road Rules 2009 (Overtaking Bicycles) Bill 2015**

I have regularly ridden a bicycle since I was a teenager both to provide me with a means of transport and recreationally. In the last decade I have increased my riding to the point I no longer have a car of my own and instead commute daily to work and ride recreationally in the Dandenongs at the weekend.

#### Road cycling experience:

- . many years cycling to school in Cape Town, South Africa
- . daily commute across London from Paddington to Westminster
- . London to Amsterdam and Luxembourg return
- . Scotland to Athens via Wales, England, France and Italy (5000km in 2 months)
- . Gosford to Brisbane, Bairnsdale to Wangaratta, Warrnambool to Geelong, Devonport to Queenstown return
- . 12 Around the Bays in a Day
- . 9 Audax rides (Bright, VIC)
- . 4 Amy Gillett Gran Fondos (Lorne, VIC)
- . 1000s of km of cycling in total in Lyon, the Pyrenees, Provence and the French Alps
- . regular commuting from Glen Waverley to La Trobe Uni, Bayswater, Richmond and Camberwell over the last 20 years
- . over 13,000 km of recorded riding in each of the last 3 years

### **I strongly support the introduction of a minimum passing distance trial in Victoria**

We need to do all we can to change driving culture in Victoria (and Australia). As the state with the highest per capita cycling community, Victoria should be leading the adoption of safer passing practice's and not providing an example for naysayers.

We need to ask why it is that one **feels safer** riding a bicycle in Europe and even Cape Town than here in Melbourne. A minimum passing distance law has to be part of changing driving culture. I urge the committee to consider not only the minimum passing distance but also reducing the passing speed as in West Virginia's legislation:

*The driver of a vehicle overtaking a bicycle traveling in the same direction shall pass to the left of the bicycle at a distance of not less than three feet at a careful and reduced speed, and may not again drive to the right side of the roadway until safely clear of the overtaken bicycle.*

Bike lanes and simple signs with bicycles on them (no minimum distance indication, as in Tasmania) make cyclists feel safer as they can see drivers are being reminded that there may be bicycles on the road. This



feeling of increased safety is enhanced by hearing a vehicle slow behind you knowing it is waiting to pass at a safe distance or a friendly beep-beep advising you it is approaching and/or passing, a common experience any of us who have had the pleasure of cycling in Europe can attest to.

Some will focus on the distance the trial should mandate, whether it should be one metre or one and a half metres; whether a law can be enforced or not. These are not the most important matters. The most important benefit is that a trial (and, hopefully, eventually law) will encourage discussion and increased awareness of the vulnerability of cyclists on the road. If coupled with an education campaign, the trial will lead to an increased level of "sharing the road" whether the trial results in law or not.

By commencing a minimum bicycle passing distance trial we will have started to change the road sharing culture in Victoria.

Sincerely,

R J King

Richard King  
  


References

<http://www.ncsl.org/research/transportation/safely-passing-bicyclists.aspx>

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/282571517\\_Investigation\\_of\\_safe\\_passing\\_distances\\_in\\_Cape\\_Town](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/282571517_Investigation_of_safe_passing_distances_in_Cape_Town)