Minimum Passing Distance Rules
NSW experience / Bernard Carlon / 30 May 2016
Context

- NSW Government supports growth in safe cycling
  - Increase in fatalities in 2013 from 7 to 14
  - Pedal cyclist serious injuries – average 1400 a year, 1800 in 2014
Minimum passing distances increase safety

- Bicycle riders at risk when being passed or overtaken
- Crashes may involve drivers not leaving sufficient distance when passing/overtaking
- Leaving a safe passing distance better protects riders, including in situations when they may not realise a vehicle is approaching them from behind.
- Crash risk for bicycle riders is reduced, as the increased clearance between the vehicle and the bicycle in passing/overtaking manoeuvres creates greater margin for error by either party.
It’s a Two-Way Street/Metre Matters

- Partnership with Amy Gillett Foundation commenced 2013
- It’s a Two-Way Street theme
- “Metre Matters” campaign
- Includes “driver rules” and “rider rules”
  - Behavioural messages to encourage sharing the road
- Animations, z-cards

amygillett.org.au/itsatwowaystreet
Cycling Safety Action Plan 2014-16

• Endorsed by Minister for Roads
• 37 actions against key Safe System pillars
  – People and behaviour
  – Roads and speeds
  – Vehicles and equipment
• Includes commitment to review options for increasing bicycle rider compliance with road rules to improve safety
Bicycle Rider Safety and Compliance Package

• As outlined in Action Plan, issues around road user interaction and compliance
• Investigation of options to address this
• Cycling Safety Roundtables - June & July 2015
  – Bicycle rider user groups and Amy Gillett Foundation
  – Pedestrian Council and NRMA
  – Police and Justice
• In December 2015, NSW Government announced “Go Together” campaign to support implementation of a package of measures
  – Minimum Passing Distance rule
  – Increased penalties for bicycle rider offences
  – Photo ID for adult bicycle riders
New Rule 144-1 and 144-2

- NSW informed by Queensland approach to drafting
- New rule builds on existing safer overtaking provisions, specifies minimum passing distances when passing a bicycle rider
  - At least 1m when speed limit is up to 60km/h
  - At least 1.5m when speed limit is greater than 60km/h
- Rule 144-2 exempts drivers from some other rules when necessary to comply with the minimum passing distance rule
  - Examples include crossing an unbroken line, or straddling a lane
- Exemptions only apply when safe to do so.
- Penalty for not leaving sufficient distance - $319 and 2 demerit points (same as existing penalty for Rule 144.)
Go Together Campaign

• Announcement in late 2015
• Package commenced 1 March 2016
• Radio ads targeting drivers
• Outdoor advertising on busy cycle routes
• Minimum passing distance animation
Campaign Activity

Digital

Print

Social
Road Network

- Approximately **100 Variable Messaging Sign (VMS) boards** have been supporting the campaign at the point of behaviour with MPD messaging.
- Messaging tailored to the speed limit where the VMS boards are situated (‘1 metre’ on roads 60km/h or less; ‘1.5 metres’ on roads above 60km/h).
- VMS messaging will continue to be utilised.
Evaluation

- Impact of new rule is being monitored
- 2-year evaluation by CARRS-Q is underway
- Extensive baseline captured in early 2016 before commencement of new rule
- Key evaluation issues:
  - Bicycle rider and vehicle driver behaviour, crashes and near-misses
  - Other risks created by drivers when leaving the minimum passing distance
  - Other impacts, such as urban congestion
  - Changes in road user attitudes, especially to other types of road users.
- After the two-year period, the Government will determine whether the rule should be continued, or any changes made to the way the rule operates.