

# CORRECTED VERSION

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING

### REFERENCES COMMITTEE

#### **Inquiry into environmental design and public health**

Melbourne — 4 August 2011

#### Members

Mr A. Elsbury

Mrs J. Kronberg

Mr C. Ondarchie

Mr S. Pennicuik

Mrs I. Peulich

Mr J. Scheffer

Mr B. Tee

Ms G. Tierney

Chair: Ms G. Tierney

Deputy Chair: Mrs I. Peulich

#### Staff

Secretary: Mr K. Delaney

#### Witness

Mr B. Sbeghen, manager, healthy suburbs, and

Mr G. Brennan, public affairs, Bicycle Victoria.

**The CHAIR** — There are a couple of formalities I need to go through concerning parliamentary privilege. Basically I need to advise you that you are covered by parliamentary privilege, and that is provided under the Constitution Act 1975 and subsequent provisions under the Legislative Council standing orders. Essentially that means that whatever you say here is protected, but things you might say outside of here may not be protected. This is just to bring it to your attention.

As you know, all evidence is recorded by Hansard. The transcript will be forwarded to you for checking and correction but not for you to change the actual evidence that you provide us. You will be allowed approximately 5 to 10 minutes to give a presentation. We would like you to focus on the issues on and around which you believe the committee really needs to focus and deliberate. We would like a fair bit of time for questions so that we can tease out a number of propositions. Could you formally introduce yourself for Hansard, as well as give your title, organisation and address so that the transcript can be sent to you.

**Mrs PEULICH** — Your birth date is not required!

**Mr SBEGHEN** — Bart Sbeghen from Bicycle Victoria. I am the manager of the Healthy New Suburbs project. My address is Bicycle Victoria, level 10, 446 Collins Street, Melbourne, 3000.

**Mr BRENNAN** — I am Garry Brennan from Bicycle Victoria. I am looking after public affairs, and I am also at level 10, 446 Collins Street, Melbourne.

**Mr SBEGHEN** — In public health the design of the public realm is quite important for us as people who want to encourage more cycling. Our goal is more people cycling more often. We think a key thing about getting people cycling is providing the right environment for it to happen; that is the precondition for it. In my submission I have said if you do not provide the infrastructure for people to cycle on, it is like providing swimming lessons without a swimming pool. Everyone might know how to swim, but unless you provide somewhere for them to swim they cannot do it. It is the same for the bikes. We tend to have this marketing exercise, but we do not provide places for everyday cycling. This is quite an important aspect of our work. I have some pictures just to prompt discussion.

#### **Overheads shown.**

**Mr SBEGHEN** — This is from the AIHW. I suppose other people have talked about this report, the review of evidence, earlier. It gives a context for thinking about it. You can see there are bits that we can affect and there are bits that we cannot affect. Roads and public space in the built environment is what we are after at home and at school. There is also the physical activity that ties in, which is about people getting out and walking and cycling.

TravelSmart did a literature review back in 2009 of all the evidence. You can see that from reviewing what other people have done and what was effective, for cycling the infrastructure presence is quite important, as is community design, but community design is more important for walking. There are combined strategies. Once you get these things you then do your programming, which is behaviour change, price and convenience, and that is important as well. They are trying to sum up what can encourage cycling and walking, the strategies that would work.

Some of the stuff I have talked about in here is the cycling development towns in the UK. They spent £12 million in six smaller towns. They did a whole range of things to encourage cycling. The important thing about this diagram is that not only did they encourage cycling but they encouraged physical activities. They monitored the whole population, and they found that physical activity overall in the population went up. And most importantly, the biggest effect was getting inactive people to be moderately active, which is what the health professionals will tell you is where you see the most health benefit. That is that picture up here. So if you go from there to there, that is where the mortality rate drops. From there on in there is not much advantage from being moderately active to active.

**Ms PENNICUIK** — Then it goes up on the other end, does it?

**Mr SBEGHEN** — This is Gary and me, and if you put us in lycra, you are not going to do as much good. I would probably be here, and if you move us to there and put us in lycra, it is not going to do us much good, but

if you put people just on their bike, you get the big health effect. That research is available. Unfortunately as soon as they started getting good results the funding was completely cut because of the global financial crisis.

**Mrs PEULICH** — Sorry, what was that last point?

**Mr SBEGHEN** — The global financial crisis in England — they got these cycling demonstration towns, and they were going to expand them to 12 and to some cities, and then the global financial crisis came along and so the whole of Cycling England was abolished, all the funding; it was just the wrong time. But they had monitoring results that have just come out.

What can you do and where? I suppose that is what you guys want to know. In the inner suburbs and the middle suburbs your basic public realm and the structure is already there, so your focus is on retrofitting: how do you change it to encourage cycling and walking? In the outer suburbs you are building new stuff as we speak, and you have seen maps of the outer suburbs. That is when you plan and build the stuff, and the cost is built into the planning and delivery. You do not see the bike bits being spent. What we hope to see is the inner suburbs spending more on providing cycling infrastructure and retrofitting it and the other suburbs just incorporating it in what they do. In 2010 we reviewed how much spending was done on cycling.

**Mr BRENNAN** — Per head.

**Mr SBEGHEN** — It is per head, so we are breaking it up per head so we can compare like with like. The inner cities are over here; you can see Yarra nearly always wins, and then there is Port Phillip and Melbourne. In the inner ones, you can see some of them are popping up. In the outer ones, Mornington Peninsula committed a lot of money a while back; and then there are the rural ones, but this is for one year so it is not such a great comparison. The average over four years is probably a better comparison; so you can see Melbourne and Yarra. It is important to know that you would hope that this is where you would have your biggest bang for your buck in retrofitting, because people are closer to destinations.

**Mr SCHEFFER** — What are those suburbs there that you are circling around?

**Mr SBEGHEN** — This is Yarra, Melbourne.

**Mr SCHEFFER** — No; the next lot where it drops.

**Mr SBEGHEN** — The inner suburbs of Melbourne.

**Mr SCHEFFER** — Yes, so which ones are we talking about?

**Mr SBEGHEN** — Do you want the names?

**Mr SCHEFFER** — No, just roughly.

**Mr SBEGHEN** — Manningham, Boroondara, Hobsons Bay, Moonee Valley; so just outside, and then the outer one.

**Mrs PEULICH** — Do we have that PowerPoint?

**Mr SBEGHEN** — You do not have that diagram; it is available on our website. So if you put in 'BiXE' on the Bicycle Victoria website, that will pop up.

**Mr BRENNAN** — We can get it for you.

**Mr SBEGHEN** — We can make it easy for you. It is on your computer here.

**The CHAIR** — How are the regional centres faring in all of this?

**Mr SBEGHEN** — They have lower population, so it is easy to spend more per person out there, but you are spreading your money a bit more widely in regional areas. They are getting up. You can see these guys are beating these guys in spend per head. East Gippsland, Wangaratta, Bass Coast and Loddon are spending it on trails. Your bang for buck is better in regional areas if you put it in the right spots. The construction costs tend to be a bit less out there.

Over four years, as you can see, if we said \$5 per person was about right as a standard — it depends how you spend it — you can see some people are getting above it and some people are getting below it. But the thing I want to say is that you want the inner people to be spending on retrofitting and the outer people should be doing it as a matter of course.

The last thing we talk about is planning. I have made a submission in here. The wording is from our submission to the committee inquiry into livability in outer suburbs. How do you plan these things? That is a bit of my work. This is the Epping Views Primary School up in the Whittlesea shire. The school is here, and you can see people are starting to get the idea. They have put in shared paths that kids can ride on surrounding the school, and we have the path network over here through the green corridor. But then this has on-road lanes, which are not suitable for children, so there is something going wrong in the planning system. People kind of know what they want to do, but it is not happening properly, so your child will be able to ride to here, but they cannot get to there and then home. They have a cycle facility, but the wrong type. There are other examples, but this is probably the best one to look at. These are all the paths you would want the children to be riding on. The local roads are fine if the volumes are down and there are not many cars on them, but this is a collector road, and you really want something off road on collector roads. That is Epping Views Primary School.

**Mr ONDARCHIE** — A great part of the world.

**Mr SBEGHEN** — It is a great part of the world. That is the sort of stuff we are looking at, the conversation and the things we are talking about. I am not sure if Gareth wants to add anything.

**Mr BRENNAN** — I guess the interesting thing about this picture is this concept of 8 to 80. If you really want to do cycling properly, you have got to have it rideable from 8 years old to 80 years old. What we have in Melbourne is we are very strong in men of 30 to 50.

**Mrs PEULICH** — Which obviously applies to the two of you.

**Mr SBEGHEN** — Almost.

**Mr BRENNAN** — We are pretty weak in 8 to 80, and that is how we will know. We will know we have got where we want to be when we have got a good rideable network with kids and grandparents riding, and riding in a lot of places. We are extremely happy with the lanes we have got and all the commuters that come in on St Kilda Road and down Rathdowne Street. That is all great for the brave and the committed, but you will not get grandparents and eight-year-olds riding down Rathdowne Street in the morning, so that is the big step we need to take to be complete.

**Mr SBEGHEN** — That comes from having the appropriate place for cycling that suits a lot of people. I often ask would my mum ride there and would my daughter ride there, and if the answer is no, we have not quite got to the place where we want to be. We want more separation from moving traffic. In the inner city we are just trying to jam it in wherever we can and get some sort of space. We have had success with a certain audience, but it is always limited to the 10 per cent of people who are confident people; we are not capturing enough of the other people. As we provide more separation, like on Albert Street and other places, we find more women cycling and more different age groups, but on St Kilda Road, if you count the people, there is an overrepresentation of type A personalities.

**The CHAIR** — What do you do in terms of the example of Rathdowne Street, given that you have limited space and cars will be going down those routes? What do you do to try to make it more across age and across gender?

**Mr SBEGHEN** — We have almost considered that we cannot move parked cars or travel lanes. Given that constriction it is hard to take those things away in one fell swoop, so we are building incrementally to create more space and more separation. The engineers have a suite of tools for providing that, and you can see the colour is one thing. You can start putting audible lines so when you run over it, it goes ‘Drrrrr’ — an audible tactile line. You can start putting traffic poles to separate them from the moving traffic. That is an enhanced bike lane. You start to build up the space that is already there without really increasing the amount of space, and then you can do more radical things like switch the parking so it is against the moving traffic and then have the bikes on the inside, separated from the traffic — and that is Albert Street. If you have got enough room, you can do Swanston Street, which is the Copenhagen style where there is enough room and you can put even more of a

separator. In Swanston Street they put it against the kerb and they have got some space for the car doors to open.

In most places you can optimise the road space, as we call it, so you can usually narrow the traffic lanes. They are still safe; you have narrowed them down to create some sort of space. You build up and build up, so once you start getting the numbers you prove success and you build on that.

**Mr ELSBURY** — In your submission you say there is a lack of infrastructure and planning across jurisdictions, which mean that it is hard to remove a barrier for the provision of cycle routes. I do know that there are some councils out there at the moment that are talking collectively about how we are going to improve upon that. Are you finding much resistance from any councils on that, because I think they have pretty much converted to the way of thinking that cycle lanes and walking tracks definitely need to be incorporated into any development, whether it be new developments or even the established developments?

**Mr BRENNAN** — Bart showed that slide about the level of expenditure per head for councils, so one of the things is that some of those councils that have very low amounts of expenditure per head have extremely explicit, detailed and confident plans. They have bike strategies or bike plans that by all measure are extremely competent and give those particular municipalities a very good blueprint to move forward, but their expenditure is still very low per head. So you have a situation wherein — and I suppose it is a cultural thing to some extent — we might go to a council and suggest they should be doing more, and the answer we get is, ‘Well, we have applied to the government and they haven’t given us any money’.

One of the issues historically has been that bike infrastructure was optional spending, particularly if you could get the money from another source. It was not considered to be a core responsibility of the local community. Bike infrastructure was an add-on; it was an option. The money usually came from somewhere else. The City of Melbourne and the City of Yarra have turned that on its head and said, ‘It is our responsibility. We can make a big difference with local expenditure’.

This is one of the explanations, I think, for the huge variance in those councils. Some of those councils that you saw with the low expenditure levels are right within the 10-kilometre CBD catchment loop area. If we like to think of it like a supermarket might think of where their customers will live, the Melbourne CBD has a catchment of potential cyclists, and you draw that 10-kilometre or 15-kilometre perimeter and you know that you should have a large number of cyclists from those areas, but from some areas we do not.

Out in maybe Stonnington or Glen Eira when we measure we find low numbers of cyclists from those areas. When we go to the chart we find low expenditure in exactly the same areas. We can actually map bike rider numbers to expenditure levels in districts and municipalities. There is a story to be told; it is about infrastructure. Infrastructure gets you riders, but where does the infrastructure come from? It comes from commitment and the investment.

**Mrs PEULICH** — That is a rudimentary correlation, surely? In Caulfield you would have 20 per cent, a lot of whom would be Orthodox Jewish members of the community who would not, culturally, be using their bikes on a regular basis. Surely that would be factored into those types of figures?

**Mr BRENNAN** — I am sure that if we drilled down into the fine detail, we could find anomalous situations, but when you look at the big picture all over the world, we can take Park Slope in Brooklyn which has some of the most Jewish suburbs in the world, and when they put the infrastructure in, then there are bikes everywhere. I do not think we can generalise too much.

**Ms PENNICUIK** — I am interested in the map, but I will start by saying that I, personally, have a long history of cycling to school, university and work et cetera, but 20 years ago I was hit by a car when I was cycling. That really, as well as physically and what it took to get over, knocked the wind out of me in terms of getting on a busy road, because it happened on a busy road. My cycling since then has been about finding the best way to get to places around by local area which means that I do not have to go on a busy road, except perhaps to go across it. I spend a lot of time working out how to go from A to B on quiet streets.

I know some councils have had a look at bike plans which utilise that and have very small signs saying, ‘Here is the bike route’. I wonder how much Bicycle Victoria is involved in encouraging that, because the major problem is arterial roads and busy roads. There are problems with other roads but they can be overcome by

traffic calming et cetera and maybe prioritising some streets as bike streets so that people can get around without necessarily having to have a bike path.

When I look at that map, where you are pointing out that purple bit as being the issue, I can see that if you just went up the next street and along across that park, you would get rid of that problem. Can you comment on that?

**Mr SBEGHEN** — There are people who are fans of using quiet streets away from traffic. The thing is that if you want to use your bike for transport, the arterial roads and the connector roads — which is that one — are the direct ones. The trip effort for a bike rider is quite important. For walking, you say if it is more than 400 metres, people just give up. It is a similar sort of equation for bike riding. If you make it longer, people will say, ‘I have got my car here, I will just jump into that’, so it is important to reduce the trip effort. Part of that is your perceptions of safety and comfort, and the other thing is the distance. The best solution here is to have a safe path on the connector road so that it is direct and separated instead of saying, ‘We have given up on that, I will just have to go 2 kilometres the back way around’ and you are disincentivised.

**Ms PENNICUIK** — You are assuming it is going to be a lot longer, whereas in many cases I have found it is shorter.

**Mr SBEGHEN** — In some cases it can be, but the reason we call them arterial roads is because they connect from place to place. The other thing about local roads is that they tend to stop at every major street and you have to cross it. There is a delay of 2 minutes for a signal phase at every major street. If you are on the major road, then you get all the signals across the major road. It is not going to suit everyone, but for those more direct trips if people want to go places, that suits it.

But when we talk about the infrastructure that is required, it is not just one type. We talk about the principal bicycle network, we never talk about the municipal bicycle network which connects to local destinations. It is like the road network where you have freeways, arterials, connectors and locals; we talk the same way when we talk about cycling networks. We have the arterial network, the connector network and then the local network. They are all important. Some people say, ‘We want more local roads’ or that is a ‘yes’; or ‘No, I want to be on the arterials’ and to get the audience we are after, the population to shift in physical activity, we need all those things so that they connect to the places you want.

What happens is that we tend to have gaps in a lot of places. We will give it a little bit of the way and then we will say, ‘That is it, you are on your own for another kilometre’ like here. People who are riding find this stops, and then you have to continue further along.

**Mrs PEULICH** — Do the networks to which you were referring come signed with the different classes of users? I think there is confusion about the classes of users and where they should be encouraged and so forth. I am thinking about commuters, some are serious, often economically driven because car parking is expensive, young people who are working long hours and can commute to keep fit and save money, and that makes sense. Obviously where we can with new roads we can build the bike path. That is all hunky-dory and a great opportunity there, but retrofitting is a much bigger problem.

You have got your mums-and-dads paths. I am thinking about the bay trail which was intended for mums and dads, but the more serious bike users want to use it as their alternative to the Tour de France. And then you have got the guys who ride with clubs in packs and can be pretty intimidating. Often there are examples where they do not observe the rules that you encourage: they ride several abreast, are rude and aggressive. Does the current Victorian bike path strategy coincide and reflect those different categories of users? Does it need to be reviewed? Do those categories of bike paths to which you were referring somehow correlate with different classes of users?

**Mr SBEGHEN** — In Bicycle Victoria we try not to use the word ‘cyclists’ anymore. We refer to people as ‘bike riders’. When we say ‘cyclists’ some people conjure up lycra. People do not call themselves ‘cyclists’. They say, ‘Are you a cyclist?’, and then they say, ‘No, I am someone who rides a bike’. We are trying to avoid that because people are picturing this as the lycra-clad person. The public perception is that that person is on the road flinging along breaking the road rules. He is male; he might look a bit like me; he might be a bit aggressive. We do not see that as a cyclist. We see them as the general community. I am looking across the road and saying, ‘You are a potential bike rider’.

**Mr ONDARCHIE** — No, I am not.

**Mrs PEULICH** — The ones that ride along Beach Road.

**Mr SBEGHEN** — Yes, and they say, ‘Why do you not use the path, because it is not —

**Mrs PEULICH** — There is conflict between users.

**Mr SBEGHEN** — Yes.

**Mrs PEULICH** — The difficulty is there is conflict between users, particularly around beaches where people need to go to the beach.

**Mr SBEGHEN** — We do not want to say, ‘You are a male so you should be on the road’ and ‘You are a female’. We want a system that allows everyone to use this. We do not want to be person specific. We talk about the type of trip you want to do. If you want to do a fitness trip and go 35 kilometres an hour, the bike paths are not going to be for you; you should be on the road. If you want to go fast, you go on the road and you can share it with a little bit of traffic as well. But if you want to do a trip to work, school, friends or shops, then we are going to get more people cycling if we provide more separation from the traffic.

**Mrs PEULICH** — The Beach Road is the bay trail. Who is it intended for?

**Mr SBEGHEN** — The bay trail has a wide audience. It can be used for lots of different sorts of trip types. You could go out and do some fitness riding if you wanted to, but mum and dad could also use it to go to the shops, could they not? It is more suited to a wider range of trips.

**Mrs PEULICH** — Because a few weeks ago the department basically said it was only ever intended as a mum-and-dad-type of track.

**Mr SBEGHEN** — It has gotten more and more popular. And the other one is the main Yarra trail.

**Mrs PEULICH** — It is problematic, because there are people visiting the beaches. There are parking implications. I guess what I am trying to allude to is: does the bicycle strategy, or whatever you call it — and I do not want to be politically insensitive — need review or more drilling down in order to be able to resolve or perhaps find strategies for resolving conflicts between different types of road users? I think by doing that we can actually increase overall bicycling and cycling. The other thing is — you obviously do a lot of good work, and Sue mentioned this; she has got some information — how widely it gets out to the bike users is unknown. I am going to be a devil’s advocate — I am not advocating it; I am just asking it, because it was something that was suggested to me — but is there a need for a flat rate, nominal, cheap and viable \$10 registration for those who are riding bicycles as a way of capturing the database and being able to communicate, whether it is safety measures, information about what cycle paths are available or whatever? It was advocated to me at a recent meeting of users, so I am just putting that to you for a response.

**Mr SBEGHEN** — The basic concepts of the cycle strategy are there. What we are saying is lacking is the commitment of funding of stuff to happen. What we find is we are taking what we can get at the moment. There is no funding to allow us to properly do the bicycle networking so we have these conflicts. They say, ‘What are you doing here?’ We say, ‘Where else would I ride?’. The main Yarra trail is an example.

We know that cycling rates into the city from Boroondara and Stonnington are quite low — they are 5 per cent of trips to work from there. Whereas the same distance to the north is 20 per cent of trips. The infrastructure from the north is much better. We have multiple routes you can take in from the north. One in five trips to work are by bike. From Boroondara and Stonnington there is only 1 in 20. In terms of the main Yarra trail, that is the only way you can get in from there. What you find is that every single sort of bike trip is on the main Yarra trail when it is supposed to be a shared path. People have stopped walking on it. How did that happen? We should be allowing people to walk and then cycle. The answer appears to be there is no alternative. There is nothing on Swan Street. All the east–west routes are chock-a-block with other things. That is why Albert Street is quite important. It is giving an alternative so bike riders are not haranguing or stopping people from walking. That comes from an increase in expenditure to allow that thing to happen so we can have transport cycling routes that people can do a little bit quicker and they are not knocking over people, including mum and dad with their prams or people walking their prams, dogs or whatever.

The other thing about the registration fee is that would be fine if you wanted to discourage cycling and raise taxes at the same time. It has been shown it would be counter-productive.

**Mrs PEULICH** — We do not want to do that.

**Mr SBEGHEN** — What we would say is this: ‘Before you take your child out for a ride, you are going to have to pay \$5 to register them’. By the way, all of the \$5 you raised is not going to pay for the registration scheme in the first place because the administration costs are so high. We are going to pay \$5 for everyone to be registered and we are going to raise taxes for the administration.

**Mrs PEULICH** — How about over 16?

**Mr SBEGHEN** — The same thing would happen. Less costs, but everyone would pay it. It would be something that would go down, and you would have to charge everyone else taxes to pay for the administration scheme. That is a bit backwards looking, I think. We have shown that money spent on encouraging physical activity, including cycling and walking, pays for itself within three or four years in any case. If you spent \$300 million and finished the bicycle network in Melbourne, you probably would not have to build a new hospital in 10 years time. It is an investment in our public health. You should think of it that way instead of saying —

We have got about a twentieth of the way there, and it does not seem to be working. I think you should just dial it up. We know it when we put it in. Do you know Kevin Costner’s *Field of Dreams*? Built it and they will come. It has been shown world over that if you build it, they will come. The better you provide, the more they do it.

There are bikes sitting in people’s garages all around Melbourne that are not being used. There are more bikes being sold than cars every year. People did not buy them thinking, ‘I am going to put them in the garage’. They bought them thinking, ‘I want to go out and go for a bike ride’. They are there. The potential is sitting out there waiting for the infrastructure to happen.

**The CHAIR** — We are over time. Can I have a quick one from Brian and then Craig.

**Mr TEE** — I think we all agree on the importance and, I suspect, the challenges that individual members have identified. I suspect we all understand and accept those. As a committee we have got an opportunity to put recommendations to government to say, ‘This is how you kick it along and how you overcome either the limitations that have been identified so you can meet the opportunities that you get’.

I want to just drill down on some of those recommendations. if you think about the two aspects that have come through, there is ‘build it as a matter of course’. One of the options would be for government to say to the Growth Areas Authority, ‘When you build your new suburbs, you put your bike paths in’, and to say to the Urban Renewal Authority, ‘When you redevelop Fishermans Bend, make sure you put the bike paths in’. That is a recommendation that you can consider.

I am struggling a bit more with the 8 to 80 and those sorts of issues in terms of what role the government can play and the recommendations that we make. If you said to government, ‘Put more money in’, they would say, ‘Yes, we are happy to do that, subject to the budget constraints’.

**Mr SBEGHEN** — Which are always there.

**Mr TEE** — They are always there. What sort of recommendations do you think the committee should be considering putting to government either to try to overcome those sorts of bottlenecks or — the government is a long way removed from the school; the government is a long way removed from the busy road where committee members have been knocked over. I am just trying to think through in a tangible way what we should be recommending to government along the 8 to 80 scale.

**Mr SBEGHEN** — We think a lot about how we strategise the spend and get the most, because we have been used to having a very limited amount of funds: \$14 million a year is a very small amount to spend on retrofitting cycling infrastructure for the whole of the state. For years and years now we have been thinking about how do you best spend it, so you look for the sweet spot in cycling, which tends to be trips to work within the inner 10. We think, ‘All right, which route shall we do first?’ Up to the north is pretty well done; but into the inner east we know is low and has potential. What is the one you can build on? You start to build a route, plan it

and do it bit by bit. Then our planning says we are going to have activity areas out from the CBD, so you can start building routes into Dandenong, Frankston and Epping, north — —

**Mr TEE** — Does that mean that government ought to have a blueprint for the road network for the next 50 years and then start building on that budget by budget? Is that the recommendation?

**Mr SBEGHEN** — Yes. You need to plan specifically for which bicycle routes you are going to achieve and commit to them. It gets quite difficult when you have to shift other users or space. It can get quite expensive. You can spend up to \$1 million for only 100 metres, like a bridge or a short section of road where it takes major infrastructure.

**Mr TEE** — So that sounds like a reason not to do it.

**Mr SBEGHEN** — Yes, but for the rest of it, it can be quite easy. Mount Alexander Road comes down to Moonee Ponds Junction, and it all gets a bit hard and we have thrown our hands up in the air instead of saying, 'We've committed to building this route, and we are going to work through this difficult patch'. The CBD in Melbourne is another bit; we are all competing for space

**Mr TEE** — What does that say to government, though; 'It's going to be too difficult. Don't bother doing it'?

**Mr SBEGHEN** — No, we are saying that you commit. You triage; you say which are the most important bits. We know that work trips into the CBD or activities areas are quite important, so you need to build those and commit to them.

**Mr TEE** — Would you like government then to have a 5 or 10-year vision done in consultation with the community about where Melbourne should be in 10 years so that at least you have got a focus on it? Is that the thing that you work towards?

**Mr SBEGHEN** — There already is a map of where the priority routes, the principal bicycle network — —

**Mr TEE** — I am just saying put your head in the government's shoes. What should they be doing, apart from putting more money in — which is an easy one for them to flick back?

**Mr BRENNAN** — One thing might be to think about some targets — for example, I do not know whether anyone else has mentioned the new health act that came in for local government last year or the year before — —

**The CHAIR** — The health and wellbeing plans?

**Ms PENNICUIK** — Yes.

**Mr BRENNAN** — You know that councils now have to have an annual or whatever it is — —

**Mrs PEULICH** — Yes, health and wellbeing plans.

**Mr BRENNAN** — To get back to the activity, one of the things we are big on at Bicycle Victoria is measuring, and one of the things you can measure is activity levels. Like they did in those towns in the UK, we can measure activity levels at the local government level.

**Mr TEE** — Do we not measure activity levels? Do we not know how many people keep coming into the city on bikes and that it keeps doubling? I am just trying to — —

**Mr BRENNAN** — Yes. If you can set targets, if you can find a whole way of — we have got a whole suite of ways of measuring physical activity, health and expenditure. We have got a lot of measurement tools, but what the government needs to do is to be able to map progress. What have we set out to do — —

**Mr TEE** — If we aspire to have a certain amount of trips to the city by bike, and then you have got the bureaucracy focused on delivering that outcome, is that a way of prioritising?

**Mrs PEULICH** — That is commuters, though; how about mums and dads?

**Mr TEE** — Yes, that is right.

**Mr BRENNAN** — Outcomes work well for governments of all political persuasions.

**Mr SBEGHEN** — That might be one of yours, but we know that in the outer suburbs trips to friends and schools are more important — and trips to public transport. You cannot ride from Whittlesea down to here, but you can ride to the train station and leave your bike there securely and take the rest of the trip — —

**Mr TEE** — That is why I am confused about what it is that you think government should do to deliver the sorts of outcomes that we all agree ought to be delivered.

**Mr SBEGHEN** — We know that in the inner city you can ride directly to work, because it is within the 10 K — I am not saying everyone is going to do it. You may not want to, but a lot of people do want to.

**Mrs PEULICH** — But a lot of people living in the outer suburbs say they have already got all the infrastructure, so they want more: Crannie, Narre Warren South, Narre Warren North; they have got bugger all. So here we are; we are going to pump more into areas that already have infrastructure.

**Mr SBEGHEN** — Yes, but for the outer suburbs, we can focus on the trips we know will work, and this is my project, healthy new suburbs. In the outer urban growth zones we know that trips to school are very doable. They are because people live within 2 to 6 kilometres. So we can focus on trips to school and make them easier. In this one here, they have been let down there.

**Mr TEE** — But is that the recommendation you would like us to see, in the sense that government ought to focus on making schools more accessible? Again, if you made that recommendation to government, they would go, ‘Yeah, we’ll do that’.

**Mr SBEGHEN** — You would say cycling integration into public transport in outer suburbs so you can get to work on your bike and you can go to the public — then trips to school in the outer suburbs and then trips to work in the inner suburbs and activities centres. There are three major foci to work on. If you did that and then monitored it so you know where you were going, you could say, ‘This one is going to work better than that one’, then — —

**Mr TEE** — So you have got the three areas; you monitor what happens today and you monitor it in two years time to see if it is increasing.

**Mr SBEGHEN** — And we have got good monitoring mechanisms. We have a cycling participation survey. In the past we have measured adults’ and kids’ recreation; now we can measure all types of cycling.

**Mr TEE** — If we are already monitoring it, we do not need to recommend it be monitored.

**Mr SBEGHEN** — We need to track it. This is the thing; we do it one year, then we forget about it for five years and then we come back. For different areas you focus on different sorts of trips. If I am living in Frankston, the trip to work is going to be a bit longer if I am coming into the CBD, so let us make it easier to get to public transport and complete our trip, but we know trips to school are always going to be two to five, so let us focus on that in the outer suburbs. In the inner suburbs, trips to friends and to work are quite doable on your bike.

Even in Copenhagen or other cities it is not as though 90 per cent of trips are by bike — 20 and 30 per cent. If we aspire in 10 years to get up to 10 per cent or 15 per cent, it does not mean I am going to force you to ride your bike. I am just saying that if you want to, you can. At the moment I may want to, but I cannot. That is what we should aspire to: if you want to, you should be able to. It would benefit public health and congestion and the greenhouse effect — all those sorts of things — if people were able to. They are unable to because they are scared.

**Ms PENNICUIK** — I think it is a huge issue. That is why people do not do it.

**Mr SBEGHEN** — Yes, it has been proven again and again. We have mentioned the surveys.

**The CHAIR** — After that last quick question, we are well and truly over schedule now. Craig, the last question.

**Mr ONDARCHIE** — Thank you. It will be probably just one question too. What a great week to be talking about bicycles after Cadel's fantastic win in the Tour de France and his imminent arrival here in Victoria. That win was the cause of a lot of sleep deprivation for lots of Australians, I think. Also, I think Kevin Costner will be interested to know he has been mentioned in a parliamentary inquiry in Victoria.

Nonetheless, I was interested in your answer about registration fees. The previous government had a bit of a view about user pays for road users, an example of which is tolls on EastLink. I think you are suggesting that user pays is the plight of cyclists in this case, and I think you have answered that through your answer. I am interested in your stated aim to get more people cycling in Victoria and more often. We had an issue, I guess, raised over the last two weeks about the wearing of helmets being an impediment to getting people cycling more. What is your view about it?

**Mr SBEGHEN** — You asked two questions there.

**Mr ONDARCHIE** — Not really. I just made a statement about registration fees.

**Mrs PEULICH** — You want to rebut it anyway, do you?

**Ms PENNICUIK** — We will take that one as a comment!

**Mr SBEGHEN** — Helmets are a factor in the amount of bike riding — —

**Mrs PEULICH** — Really?

**Mr SBEGHEN** — They are, but they are not the big one. The physical infrastructure, time and again — it is, 'Do you have a place to ride?'

**Mr ONDARCHIE** — I understand that, but one of the arguments that has been run over the last fortnight or so is about the compulsory wearing of helmets being an impediment to people getting on a bicycle.

**Mr SBEGHEN** — It is, but it is not the major one.

**Mr ONDARCHIE** — Do you think it is? Do you think having compulsory helmets stops people riding bikes?

**Mr SBEGHEN** — It does for a certain percentage, but it is not the major impediment. I am saying the physical infrastructure is the major impediment.

**Mr ONDARCHIE** — Okay, that is fine. Are you looking for that law to be repealed so that you do not have to wear a helmet? Is that what you are saying?

**Mr BRENNAN** — No. It would be lost in the noise. All of the other factors are so big and so influential that helmets are just a tiny one in comparison to the other factors. We used to think that once — it was well established that helmets were restricting people from riding bikes — but we no longer think that. We have seen the history in Melbourne. In the last 10 years it has gone up and up. It is not a major factor; it is a tiny factor. There are so many other things you could do that would get a better result.

**Mr SBEGHEN** — Cycling is high where infrastructure is good. Helmets are a side factor, and if we get caught up in that, we could spend three or four years arguing about helmets and not doing the thing we should be doing, which is improving infrastructure.

**Mrs PEULICH** — Yes; a bit like seatbelts in cars.

**Mr SBEGHEN** — Yes.

**The CHAIR** — Great. Thank you very much, Bart and Garry.

**Mr SBEGHEN** — Thanks so much.

**Mrs PEULICH** — Well done. Thank you.

**The CHAIR** — That was great, and good luck with all of your future work.

**Mr SBEGHEN** — Yes, we have caught up on our sleep now.

**Witnesses withdrew.**