

Issue 142, April–June 2001

BISA's mission: To promote cycling for transport and to represent all cyclists at the local, state, and national levels by working collaboratively with other interest groups and governments.

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Pedal Update

Peter Carter, Editor

If there were a theme for this issue it would be speed. Terry mentions the 40/50 km/h discussion in his annual report, Philip Hewitt argues for 40 km/h in residential streets and 50 km/h on arterial roads, and Sue Rudall and Rob Esvelt describe an incident of excessive speed. The momentum for lower limits is gathering pace, so there should be some changes for the better soon.

Thanks to OPEC, the petrol pricing arguments are with us again (still). A good argument for riding.

Meanwhile, as part of a 'green transport package', UK Chancellor Gordon Brown has announced that VAT (i.e. GST) will no longer apply to bicycle helmets from 1 April (the start of the UK financial year).

See you at the AGM.

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President's Report

Terry Leach

Our AGM will be held on 18 April at the Box Factory. Our guest speaker is Kym Dorrestyn, a long term BISA member and a consulting engineer active in designing good quality bicycle

facilities in Adelaide. He attends national and international conferences which helps keep him abreast of cycling transport issues. Kym is an enthusiastic, entertaining and educative speaker, with a wealth of knowledge about international cycling best practice, and a slide show that will make you drool (yes, we are passionate about our cycling).

Bicycle Express will be providing a display of elite bicycles of different persuasions and winter-oriented bicycle accessories.

Matters to be decided at the AGM include election of officers and management committee, and a change to our financial and membership years.

A foreshadowed motion

At the BISA committee meeting on 21 March 2001 Margaret Day foreshadowed a motion to me moved at our AGM to donate \$10 000 to the Bicycle Federation of Australia. This was after the same motion had lapsed in the committee for want of a seconder. A copy of the motion and a proxy form is included with this edition of Pedal Update. This amount represents about a third of our accumulated reserves. This motion appears to a result of the debate regarding the issue of amalgamation with Bicycle SA. The rationale appears to be that in the event of the merger proposal being adopted, the proponent would prefer that a substantial proportion of accumulated reserves be given to the BFA, rather than retained in the merged organisation.

Members should be aware that the BFA has accumulated reserves in the order of \$100 000, has not solicited such a donation, and has no specific strategy to utilise such money for any particular project.

The turnout at our AGM is relatively small, and the people who attend may not necessarily reflect the prevailing views of the membership. It is of course entirely appropriate for any BISA member to encourage attendance at the AGM, and to encourage support (or otherwise) for a motion. Indeed this article does exactly that.

On such an important decision, it is important that all members are aware of the proposal, and have the opportunity to be informed and participate in the vote. If you are unable to attend the AGM, then you may wish to return the completed proxy form. You are also encouraged to contact any member of the committee to obtain further information.

Physical activity to combat obesity in primary school children

There has been a reasonable amount of media attention in the past couple of months regarding the increased level of obesity in primary school children, and the push to include at least 100 minutes of physical activity each week in the school program. It is presumed that increased physical activity at that age will lead to increased physical activity later in life, when inactivity results in increased risk of disease. But I am doubtful of this presumption.

While I wouldn't want to discourage schools from including physical activity in the school program, my mathematical ability tells me that a 10 minute walk to and from school would also provide 100 minutes exercise. It is ironic that parents protecting their children from danger by driving their children to school make schools dangerous areas for pedestrians and cyclists, discouraging physical activity. Not having children myself, I am rarely near schools at peak periods, and find it an amazing and distressful experience.

I am cynical about the carryover effect of programmed physical activity because of my observations of the many retired sports people that I know. Once they no longer have the motivation of competition, many go to seed. Indeed, the inability to burn off the large amount of fuel that they are used to consuming makes obesity a very immediate threat. The link between competitive sports and health outcomes in later life would be a very interesting area of research for a health scientist.

I believe our public health and education professionals need to focus more on facilitating incidental exercise. Exhortation is not enough. Initiatives such as the safe routes to school project, walking buses and lower speed limits are all deserving of more support.

Grass roots activism pays off

A cyclist contacted the BISA e-mail list complaining about the state of a road in the Adelaide Park Lands. He was advised to contact the Adelaide City Council, and he was very pleased with the speed with which the bitumen was repaired. If only it was always that quick. Next time that you notice some maintenance requirement, don't just grumble. Contact your local council, or Transport SA regarding arterial roads. Remember that the works supervisor probably doesn't cycle that stretch of road, but is committed to serving the community.

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President's Report 2001

Terry Leach

AGM

Another year has passed, and it is nearly time for our next annual general meeting. At the time of writing, we do not yet have a nomination for treasurer. If you feel you have the time and energy to assist BISA in this important role, or any other, we'd be very happy to hear from you.

Amalgamation

At the last AGM the topic of amalgamation with Bicycle SA was discussed. Progress has been slow, and we are not yet ready to put a proposal to members. However, the discussions with Bicycle SA have provided a framework for a possible proposal. An outline was provided to the approximately one third of members for whom we have an e-mail address, as a quick and cheap way to get some feedback on the proposal. A summary of the arguments for and against the proposal was also provided. I was keen to know if we were on the right track, or if we should go back to the drawing board, or drop the issue altogether.

About 25% of people responded. The results indicated that members understood the proposal, and most seemed ready to make a decision. For a proposal to be accepted, it needs at least a 75% majority. The response indicated that it is worth investing the further energy in resolving this issue, but that the 15 – 20% who are still unsure will decide the issue. Of course, we need to bear in mind that we have heard from only about 8% of our total membership.

I expect that a Special General Meeting will be called to decide the issue in the next few

months. Whatever your view, I urge you to participate in the debate and vote. One individual vote might well decide the outcome.

Speed limits

In the previous edition of *Pedal Update*, my President's report evoked a response regarding BISA's position on 50 km/h versus 40 km/h. I want to make it very clear that BISA believes 40 km/h is the maximum appropriate speed in residential streets. However, we welcome any speed reduction, and support the immediate introduction of a 50 km/h default limit. I am working very hard with other community groups to have a 50 km/h default limit implemented, sooner rather than later.

You can help. Ring your local State Member for Parliament, and let them know that this is an important issue to you. An election year is a great year to get the ear of your local parliamentarian. It would only take five minutes out of your life, and will help save someone else's.

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New months for magazines

Margaret Day

As from this April issue, *Australian Cyclist* magazine and *Pedal Update* will be published one month later. This is to line up with the financial year.

It means the deliveries will now be July, September, November, January 2002, March, May and so on. All financial members will still receive six magazines every year. It will be a long wait for the next issue but the wait will be worth it.

If you want to know who your magazine deliverer is, we can tell you who to thank. If there are any questions about this, please contact Margaret Day, BFA Rep.

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Speed

Philip Hewitt

Submission to the State Road Safety Consultative Committee

Speed limits

BISA supports reductions in speed limits. BISA understands that on the evidence available, in order to reduce road deaths and injuries significantly, speed limits in residential streets across the state must be reduced to 40 km/h. In addition urban arterials must be limited to 50 km/h and country roads and freeways limited to 100 km/h.

Such reductions will reduce road injury and injury death very significantly. However, in addition more people will be encouraged to cycle due to the increased safety of the streets and as a result there will be fewer illnesses and deaths due to coronary heart disease, stroke, cancer, mental health issues, diabetes mellitus and injury due to sub-optimal bone mass (Commonwealth Department of Aged Care and Health 1998, Clark et al 1998).

In short, if road speeds are reduced by changed law and due to better enforcement, there will be less road trauma but also greater population health.

Enforcement

In the short run BISA supports enforcement of current speed limits, and in the longer run enforcement of lower speed limits. BISA accepts that the SA Government and SAPOL seek to enforce speed limits in order to create a safer society. BISA rejects the idea that the Government through SAPOL is primarily interested in revenue raising. The evidence about death and road speed is unequivocal.

Adelaide City Council Area

BISA supports 40 km/h throughout the Adelaide City Council Area. Given the crash statistics associated with movements within the Adelaide City Council area, and given the density and complexity of street activity within the ACC area (private cars, commercial vehicles, bicycles, buses, trams, pedestrians, scooters, roller skates, etc.) and given the dominance of the traffic light system which controls average speeds, BISA understands that limiting speeds to 40km/h in all streets (except Grote/Wakefield at 50 km/h as an arterial) will significantly reduce road injury and death in the ACC. BISA believes that lower city speed limits will have no impact on city movement times.

State wide changes

BISA argues for adoption of state wide changes in speed limits at one time. BISA argues that speed trials in particular areas are now counterproductive. Evidence from overseas and within Australia indicates that lower speed limits will save lives and prevent injury. What is required is a state-wide change to lower limits (40 km/h, 50 km/h and 100 km/h) so that the culture of road use is changed and uncertainty and ambiguity engendered through piecemeal change is lessened.

Advertising

BISA supports the banning of advertising speed in car sales advertising. Just as tobacco advertising has been banned in media in Australia, BISA believes that motor vehicle advertising which uses speed and power as messages by which to sell motor vehicles, must be banned. There appears to be an increasing tendency to foreground speed and power.

References

Clarke B, Gaum F, Rosenfeld E, and Dunn S, 1998, *Transport and Health: Assessing the Impact*, Flinders University and SACHRU, Adelaide

Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care, 1998, *Developing an active Australia: A framework for action for physical activity and health*, Active Australia, Canberra

[Road Accident Research Unit](#)

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The peace was shattered...

Sue Rudall and Rob Esvelt

On Sunday 11 February, we got an early start for a ride up the fantastic shared cycle and pedestrian path alongside the new Adelaide–Crafers Highway (the ‘Freeway’).

Around the old ‘Devil’s Elbow’, the path disappeared and we took to the Old Mt Barker Road (the old Freeway). Despite the lack of proper cyclist/pedestrian facilities here, we enjoyed a challenging and exhilarating ride to Mt Lofty!

We revelled in the quick trip down, stopping now and again to give greater attention to the singing birds and sweeping views. Then the peace was shattered as around 20 Porsches headed up the road. The half-dozen frontrunners were no doubt exceeding 150 km/h. I was distraught as we’d seen plenty of other cyclists heading up the road minutes before, separated from this danger by only a couple of bends in the road. By the screeches and squeals coming from the Porsches’ wheels, the drivers were only barely in control, showing arrogant disregard for the safety and amenity of residents and other road users alike. We have spoken to other cyclist colleagues and friends since, only to find that this Sunday morning ‘race’ is apparently a regular practice.

I understand that Transport SA has designed plans which will maintain vehicle access for local residents, allowing for physically separate cyclist and pedestrian facilities, with the added bonus of reducing the road’s appeal as a race-track for irresponsible drivers. The road could then be handed back from State to Local Government, a terrific resource for both locals and tourists. However, funding of these improvements has not yet been agreed to by the Federal Government. It is therefore important that concerned cyclists/cycling organisations:

- lobby Federal and/or State Governments to ensure funding;
- give this issue their support;
- request that the Porsche and other car enthusiast clubs promote responsible, safe behaviour amongst their members; and
- in the meantime inform SA Police of individual breaches in order that they may effectively enforce speed limits on the existing road.

We need to provide that essential combination of physical countermeasures and police enforcement as well as education/encouragement to address these issues properly.

Like most cyclists, we both have vehicles and pay taxes and registration. However we choose to reduce our contributions to petrol tax and also greenhouse gas emissions and thereby global warming by using bikes whenever possible as an environmentally friendly and usually healthy transport alternative (Porsche drivers notwithstanding!)

As keen cyclists, we would like to make your members aware of the safety concerns for riders using the Old Mt Barker Road, and urge you to join us in lobbying State and Federal Government for the proposed improvements, and contacting SA Police when illegal and unsafe behaviour is observed!

Similar correspondence also sent to:

Dr Andrew Southcott, Member for Boothby
The Hon Trish Worth, Member for Adelaide
The Hon Diana Laidlaw MLC, Minister for Transport, Urban Planning, Arts and
the Status of Women
The Hon Robert Brokenshire MP, JP, Minister for Police, Correctional Services
and Emergency Services
Bicycle SA Inc
Adelaide Cycling Club
South Australian Cycling Federation
WalkSafe
The Porsche Club of SA
The *Advertiser*

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Words from the Web

Andy Johnstone

Hi people. Since the last AGM, I've been looking after the BISA Web site. If you haven't had a look at what we have online, this may be a good time.

Primarily, our Web site is designed to be an information site, and as much as possible, I'm developing it with a diverse audience in mind. For example, all of the navigation is achieved with text-based links. This means that people with vision problems, can still navigate our site by using a 'reader' that speaks the pages to them. Anyone who has visited [Peter Carter's Web site](#) (with crosslinks to [Canoe SA](#)) will know that he prefers an information rich style, and I am in full agreement with him, that this is an appropriate design ethos.

The BISA Web site has seven main pages and a sitemap. The pages are: Home; News; Links; Reading Room; Contact BISA; Events; and History. Each of these pages contains links to each other and a variety of information sites. The pages are intended to be self-explanatory but there is a little overlap between them. (For example an item will often appear on News and Events).

Members who actively use the Internet may already be using list-servers to access information about cycling (Bike Oz for example). A list-server is a program that maintains a mailing list so that members can easily exchange e-mail messages with a group of like-minded people. To complement the BISA Web site, I have created a mailing list on the list-server LISTBOT. The list is intended primarily for discussion of BISA campaigns, announcements of events, reminders of meetings and urgent BISA business. However, discussion of other issues relating to cycling in Adelaide and South Australia is also welcome. The list is open to anyone with an interest in cycling in South Australia. I strongly suggest that BISA members join this mailing list by following the link on the bottom of the [Contact BISA page](#). Once you are on the list, you can send and receive e-mail from all of the list members. Please note that the process of signing on to the list includes a questionnaire. You are not required to fill in any of the details on the questionnaire. I have unfortunately refused access to one person because he filled in all of the blanks with nonsense. He had not realised

that the questionnaire information is purely voluntary. I was concerned that he was intending to use the list inappropriately and therefore declined to accept his request.

The information that you choose to provide in the questionnaire is only available to me. LISTBOT asserts that this information is private and will not be used by anyone other than the list owners (i.e. BISA). So far we have had no call to look at this demographic information, and it is reasonably likely that we will not need to do so in the future. LISTBOT does add small commercials (typically four lines) to e-mail messages, but so far, this has not proved to be a nuisance. If BISA members do find this to be a nuisance in future, BISA can pay for the LISTBOT service and receive all subsequent messages without adverts. If members themselves use the service to advertise commercial products I will remove them from the service after consultation with the BISA committee. BISAmail is not intended to be a source of junk mail.

My main purpose in introducing the Web site and BISAmail to you, is to seek your assistance in making these tools work for BISA members. I rely on members and interested parties to give me information to be posted to the Web site, and to use the list-server to our advantage. If you haven't had a look for a while, please drop by.

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Farewell the Links in the Chain riders

Margaret Day

Everybody is invited to join the official farewell to the Links in the Chain cyclists who plan to leave for ACT riding from the steps of Parliament House, North Tce, at 11 am on Sunday 22 April.

They will be farewelled by some politicians, mayors and others, taking messages with them from South Australia to hand over at Old Parliament House in Canberra, arriving with hundreds of others on 8 May.

It will be good for them to have some companions on wheels for the start of the journey.

Already some of the cyclists are on their way pedalling from Darwin and other far-away places.

Any questions,: call David or Kathy Zilm 8266 0160.

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