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**Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group**

**CBD BUG**

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The Honourable Mark Bailey MP  
Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports  
and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply  
GPO Box 2644  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Minister

This letter concerns the serious traffic crash on Braun Street, Deagon, on 16 December 2015.<sup>1</sup>

A skip bin truck collided with a bike being ridden by a 42 year old female. The rider was taken to hospital in a critical condition. She could quite easily have been killed in the 60 km/h zone in this incident.

The crash occurred adjacent to works being undertaken for the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) – the Gateway Upgrade North project. PCBs (precast concrete barriers) had been placed in the shoulder to protect workers on the project, but these had the effect of forcing people riding bikes in the area out of the shoulder and into the main traffic lanes with little warning.

Although police in the media release stated the cause of the crash was unclear, given its location, the placement of the barriers was a clear contributory factor to the collision and was a recipe for disaster. The police investigation will also be focused on whether an infringement notice should be issued or charges should be made rather than advising TMR.

Despite the CBD BUG and Brisbane North BUG writing to the Gateway Upgrade North team the placement of the barriers has not changed after the incident. It seems that whatever kind of audits were performed did not take into account the risks faced by people riding bikes in this area.

We call for

- (a) policies or guidelines to be enacted so that this kind of incident does not recur
- (b) information sharing from Queensland Police concerning Queensland Road Rules s144A(1) reports so that proper risk assessments can be performed
- (c) improvements on Sandgate Road in this area – particularly the removal of on-street parking in the block north of Carlyle Rd / Roghan Rd (inbound), and remedial work on drains in the shoulder nearby. This may require co-ordination with Brisbane City Council.

The Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices<sup>2</sup> states:

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<sup>1</sup> <http://mypolice.qld.gov.au/blog/2015/12/16/serious-traffic-crash-deagon-2/>  
<http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/queensland/cyclist-truck-collide-in-deagon-20151215-glojvc.html>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.tmr.qld.gov.au/business-industry/Technical-standards-publications/Manual-of-uniform-traffic-control-devices.aspx>

### **2.3.7 Provision for pedestrians and bicycles**

*Where pedestrians, including people with disabilities or visual impairment, have to move through, past or around a work site or to cross the road within a work site, they shall be provided with and directed to suitably constructed and protected temporary footpaths and crossing points, or formal pedestrian crossings, or refuges if warranted. Such facilities shall meet the requirements of Clause 2.3.8.*

*Pedestrian and bicycle paths should be provided on the same scale and to the same width as any facilities for pedestrian or bicycle traffic that were existing prior to the works.*

### **4.14.4 Provision for pedestrians, bicycles, wheelchairs and public transport**

*Where there is a demand for use of the detour by pedestrians, cyclists or wheelchairs, facilities such as footpaths, cycle tracks and sealed shoulders as appropriate to the demand and the safety requirements should be provided. Use of the signs and devices specified in Clause 3.14 may be necessary to guide pedestrians and to ensure their safety.*

Although the shoulder was not an official bicycle path, on this section with 60 km/h traffic (70 km/h zone when roadwork not occurring) this is where most people, particular those riding alone, tend to ride.

The “alternative route” off the footpath is not direct, not signed, not suitable for faster cycle traffic, and not to the scale or width of the original. Even if it were signed, at the speed people riding bikes travel along here, it would not be perceived as a realistic alternative. The “alternative” may meet the legal “letter” of sections 2.3.7 and 4.14.4 as the shoulder is not an official “bicycle lane” but it failed to take into account the realities of the area.

TMR’s “Cycling Infrastructure Policy” also states that along principal cycle routes (as in this area) “the department will provide explicitly for cyclists in transport infrastructure projects”. Instead here the opposite seems to have occurred.

TMR has implemented some safety improvements for cyclists south of here on Sandgate Road but poorly placed drains remain in the shoulder south of this section (inbound).

The shoulder in this area connects directly to the Sandgate Road bike lanes pictured. This area has issues for people riding bikes in the block north of Carlyle St / Roghan Rd - poorly parked cars leave very little room in the shoulder or are parked half on the nature strip (see Appendix).

The book “Black Box Thinking” lauds the aviation industry where mistakes are learned from and conversely criticises the “blame culture” which often occurs in the medical profession where a system is not in place to learn from errors. We are concerned that nothing seems to have been learned from this incident.

The project manager in this instance should not face all the blame, but we don’t want to see this situation occur again - it is in complete contradiction to TMR’s other great pro-cycling policies.

The Appendix shows an example of a truly “world class” alternative from the Netherlands where work is occurring on a bike path.

No mitigations such as speed limit changes (apart from the covered “70” sign) or traffic controllers were in place. A similar situation with a disappearing shoulder occurs near the Gympie Rd / Anzac Ave intersection (Appendix), but with traffic lights and a crest rather than a suddenly disappearing shoulder. Here drivers may have been expecting to increase speed from 60 to 70 km/h with a straight road. Judging by the videos some drivers also experience “lane fixation” here, further increasing the risks.

We understand the barrier protects workers, but only at the cost of safety for vulnerable road users resulting in a “zero sum game” which should have been avoided. The road is used extensively by commuters and recreational cyclists as it is the most direct route from Sandgate Station to Brisbane City.

The area has many conflicts reported by users (see videos in Appendix) in the area. We note another crash occurred at Northgate Road crossing in September 2015<sup>3</sup> and that people riding bikes still often use the Virginia Station overpass as the most direct route.

There are a large number of incidents happening in the same section of Sandgate Road – they are effectively caused by poor infrastructure design placing cars and bicycles into conflict. The whole area is supposed to be a location for the current and existing routes of the Principal Cycling Network Plan. This defies TMR's long term goal of getting more people cycling.

Although we have previously raised the issue of lack of enforcement of the minimum passing distance law (s144A(1) of TORUM)<sup>4</sup> there is an opportunity here for information sharing between the police service, TMR and councils. Instead of officers looking at "Webcrash" data and "Strava" data, if there was information sharing with police on s144a submissions this could help prioritise infrastructure improvements and prevent further incidents like this. Indeed, the University of Queensland has a great system, calling for reports of all "near miss" incidents on campus in order to assist planning.<sup>5</sup>

The Brisbane City Council area fortuitously had zero deaths of people riding bikes in 2015 but this incident was very close to one. We note that despite trucks comprising less than 2% of all registered vehicles in Queensland during 2014<sup>6</sup> they were involved in at least four of Queensland's nine cyclist road fatalities during 2014 and pose a major threat to all cyclists regardless of location. For example, Franco Leo was killed by a garbage truck in 2012 in New Farm at a roundabout in a much lower speed limit area.

The placement of the PCBs in this area resulted in infrastructure unforgiving of mistakes. This is not in line with the Department's vision of reducing road deaths in Queensland to 200 by 2020 at all.

We appreciate the Gateway Upgrade North will provide a safe and direct route between Sandgate and the City and call for the safety of vulnerable road users in future work to be taken seriously.

Should you or your staff wish to discuss this matter directly I may be contacted on telephone 0431 893 907.

Yours faithfully

Dr Richard Bean  
Co-convenor  
Brisbane CBD BUG  
13 January 2016

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<sup>3</sup> <http://mypolice.qld.gov.au/blog/2015/09/15/appeal-for-witnesses-traffic-crash-nundah/>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.cbdbug.org.au/wp-content/uploads/1970/01/0/CBD-BUG-Letter-to-MR-minister-1m-Passing-20150518.pdf>

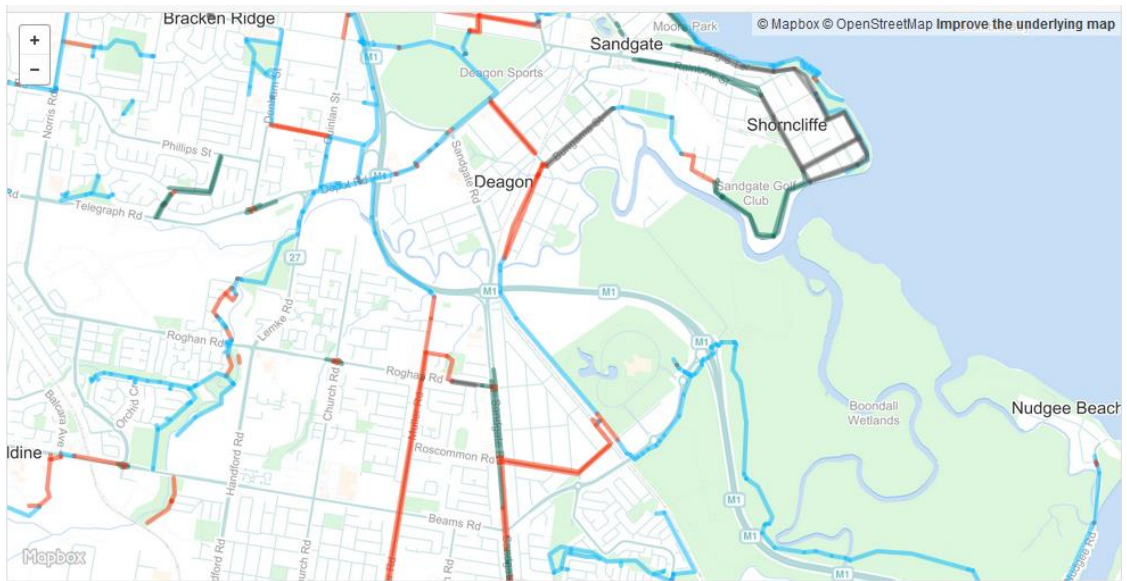
<sup>5</sup> <https://www.pf.uq.edu.au/%5C/cycling/cyclesmart-cyclesafe/index.html>

<sup>6</sup>

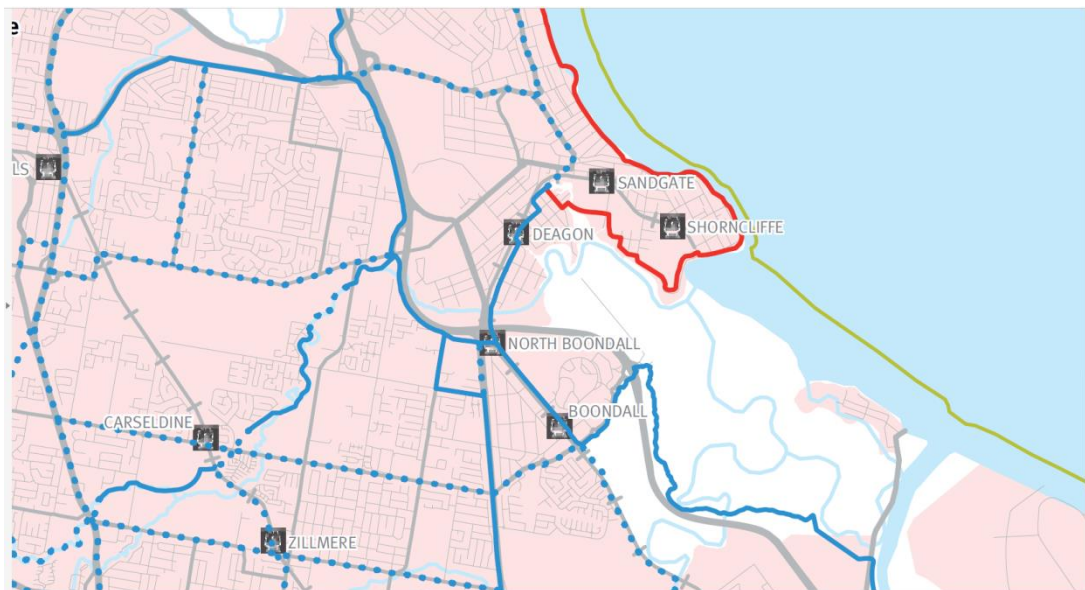
[http://www.tmr.qld.gov.au/~-/media/Safety/Transport%20and%20road%20statistics/Registration/stats\\_vehicles\\_on\\_register\\_queensland.pdf](http://www.tmr.qld.gov.au/~-/media/Safety/Transport%20and%20road%20statistics/Registration/stats_vehicles_on_register_queensland.pdf)

## Maps

Map 1: The BCC bikeways map is shown here.



Map 2: A section of the Principal Cycle Network Plan is shown here.



## Appendix

Figure 1: Photo from Brisbane Times illustrating location, “70” speed limit sign covered on right, “Changed Conditions, Drive Safely” sign partially obscured.



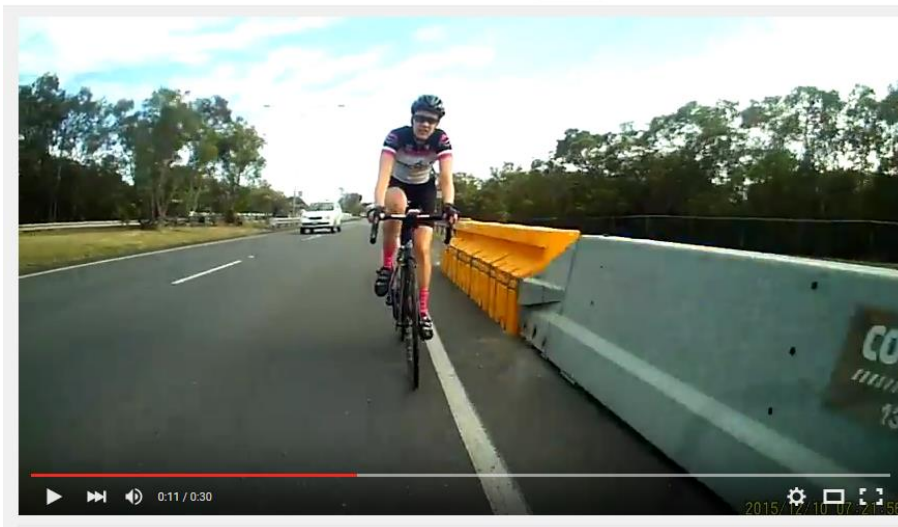
Figure 2 and 3: Examples of how bike path works are carried out in the Netherlands, with a facility of equal amenity and safety being provided.



## Videos of area

Video 1 and 2: 10 December 2015 rear view. This illustrates the forced change in lateral position before the incident with little warning available.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UaozqeCA69w>



Video 3, 4 and 5: 17 December 2015 front and rear views

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=USCMzt7sakl&feature=youtu.be>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dr2NKfi24K4&feature=youtu.be>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RTfU-Z7ukrw&feature=youtu.be>

Video 6: 20 December 2015 front view. This illustrates how the view of the barrier may be obscured in a group.

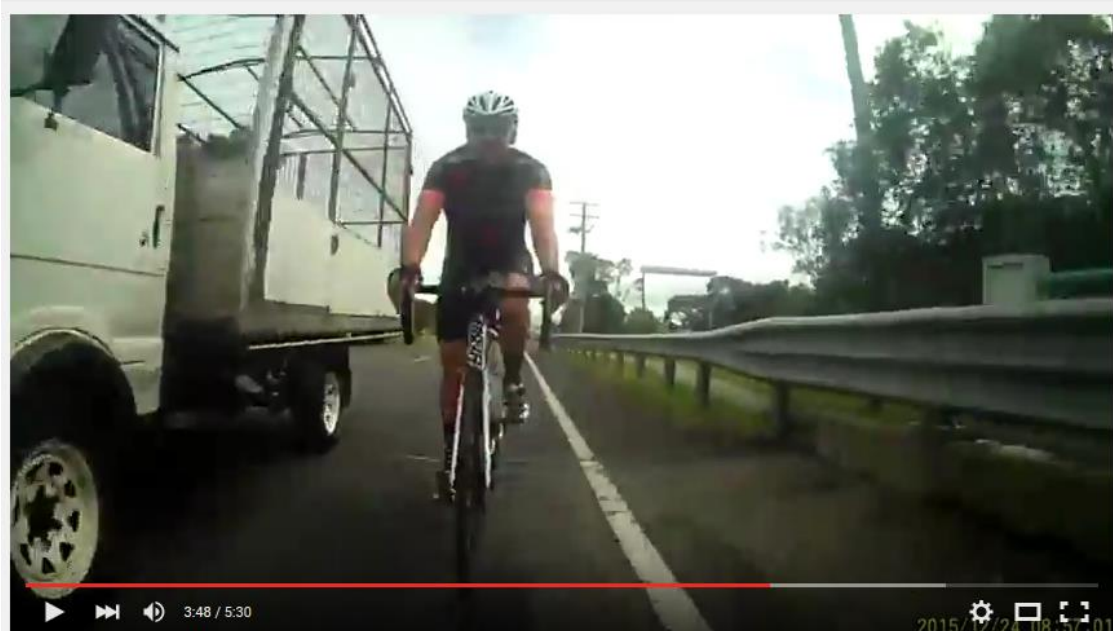
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RTfU-Z7ukrw&feature=youtu.be> - Sunday 20 December front view



Video 7: 24 December 2015 rear view

<https://youtu.be/1yU8nUIWVWs>

Note that a close pass occurs at 3:48 despite an attempt by the rider to ride out of the shoulder so as not to run into the PCBs – barrier footage at 3:45 to 4:10



Video 8: 7 January 2016 rear view

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZkP\\_ggjdXl](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZkP_ggjdXl)

Video 9: 7 January 2016 Gympie Road turning into Anzac Ave rear view

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FZg2F4ZHFB0>

### Videos of close passes in area

Video 10: 7 Jan 2016 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HOjZ1IZE-No&feature=youtu.be>



Video 11: 2 Oct 2015 <https://vimeo.com/141123219>

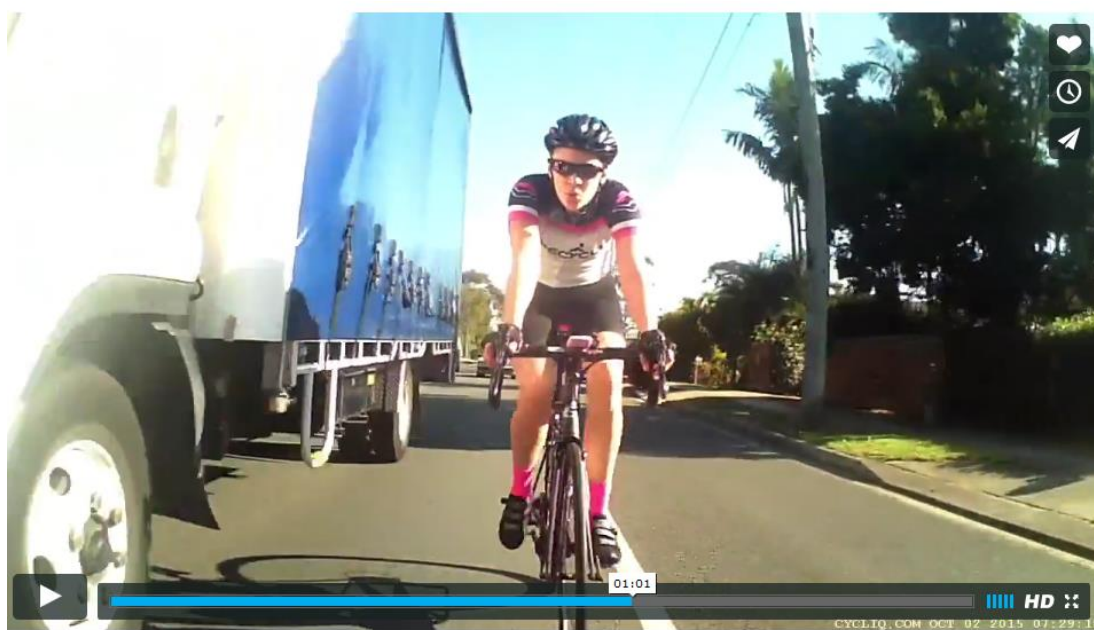


Figure 4: Parking issues north of Carlyle Rd – photos from complaint to BCC – 13 March 2015



