



## Minister for Transport and Main Roads

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Dear Dr ~~Bean~~ *Richard,*

Thank you for your letter of 10 December 2018 about side underrun protection on heavy vehicles with respect to the safety of people riding bicycles.

The Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) recognises the safety risks of heavy vehicles interacting with vulnerable road users, including bicycle riders, motorcyclists, persons of reduced mobility and general pedestrians. As advised in my letter to you of 29 January 2017, I continue to work with industry and stakeholder groups through the Queensland Ministerial Freight Council (QMFC) and the Heavy Vehicle Safety Working Group (HVSWG) to improve heavy vehicle safety and driver behaviour, particularly around vulnerable road users.

As heavy vehicle operations cross jurisdictional borders, the effectiveness of vehicle safety measures to reduce the risk associated with sharing the road with other vehicles and vulnerable road users is dependent on a consistent national approach to setting standards. As the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) is responsible for setting in-service heavy vehicle safety standards, I have forwarded your letter recommending a new study on side underrun protection to Mr Sal Petrocchio, Chief Executive Officer, NHVR, for consideration and direct response.

In March 2017, TMR sought support for mandatory side underrun protection and blind spot technology for new heavy vehicles through the Strategic Vehicle Safety and Environment Group (SVSEG). This group is an inter-jurisdictional group chaired by the Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities, and is responsible for vehicle standards and safety policy, as well as amendments to *Australian Design Rules* (ADR). SVSEG did not support mandating side underrun protection or blind spot technology for new heavy vehicles and preferred to remain reliant on ADR based on international standards formulated by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, to which Australia is a signatory.

In April 2017, TMR established the Heavy Vehicle and Vulnerable Road Users Working Group (HVVRUWG) in response to the growth in the number of major infrastructure developments in urban areas, and the increased instances of heavy vehicles interacting with vulnerable road users, including cyclists. HVVRUWG was formed to review overseas and interstate experience, determine what initiatives could be adopted locally in Queensland, develop delivery methods and promote opportunities to improve vulnerable road user safety within TMR. These and other activities of HVVRUWG will help deliver on three actions in the *Queensland Cycling Strategy 2017–2027*.

In line with the *National Road Safety Action Plan 2018–2020*, TMR is investigating the inclusion of contractual requirements on government funded construction projects that improve the safety of vulnerable road users around heavy vehicles. A world leading approach in this area is the UK-based Construction Logistics and Community Safety program (CLOCS). The Cross River Rail Development Authority consulted with HVVRUWG alongside representatives from New South Wales and Victoria. The result of the consultation was the release of tender documents that require contractors to specify how they would manage interactions between vulnerable road users and heavy vehicles supplying services, as well as training of drivers supplying those services.

In addition, HVVRUWG has also consulted with and obtained support from TMR's Infrastructure and Management Division to explore options under government construction contracts that would promote safety features on heavy vehicles, and driver training that would ultimately improve vulnerable road user safety. There is clear support from TMR and other jurisdictions for a nationally consistent approach to such CLOCS type models, however, TMR will continue to promote state-based solutions in the meantime on the basis that a national approach may not eventuate in the near term.

HVSWG provides leadership within the transport industry by promoting and identifying heavy vehicle safety initiatives and delivering high-level advice to QMFC on strategies to improve heavy vehicle safety. HVSWG continues to facilitate discussion about the visibility limitations of heavy freight vehicles and how other road users can better share the road safely, and recently completed drafting of the Heavy Vehicle Safety Action Plan 2019–21. The action plan includes 31 evidence-based safety interventions that systematically target safe roads, vehicles, speeds and people. The safer vehicles action area includes advocating for fast-tracking mandatory safety technologies for new heavy vehicles.

HVSWG also informs industry about changes to ADRs, industry innovations, technological advances and research findings that promote heavy vehicle safety and continues to promote the voluntary uptake of safety features such as side underrun protection and blind spot technology within the heavy vehicle industry.

In November 2018, the Australian Trucking Association (ATA) established an industry working group to review ATA's *Side Underrun Protection Technical Advisory Procedure*. This will include a review of the European Regulation R73 (uniform provisions concerning the approval of goods vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers with regard to their lateral protection) in order to develop specific recommendations for improved safety for all road users. The process will involve adapting the European side underrun regulation into a workable document that meets Australian operations and conditions. Recommendations will require approval and authorisation from the ATA Council before distribution to industry. Although not mandatory, the requirements will be considered best practice and may be included in an industry code of practice.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely



**MARK BAILEY MP**  
**Minister for Transport and Main Roads**