



Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group

CBD BUG

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The Honourable Mark Bailey MP
Minister for Transport and Main Roads
GPO Box 2644
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Via email to: transportandmainroads@ministerial.qld.gov.au

Dear Minister Bailey

I write to you on behalf of Brisbane CBD BUG members, following the tragic and avoidable death of Philip Pawsey, who was killed in a crash with a truck while riding his bicycle southbound along Nudge Road in Hendra on the morning of Tuesday 8 May 2023.

As you would be aware, many people cycle along Nudgee Road due to the lack of alternative routes to key destinations and this corridor's flat topography. However, because of Nudgee Road's cyclist-hostile conditions this route has an extensive history of serious crashes between bicycle riders and motorists. Brisbane City Council (BCC) has allowed this situation to continue despite many calls for safety improvements from individuals and bicycle rider advocacy groups, the most recent we are aware of being a petition to BCC that closed on Monday 24 January 2022.

<https://www.epetitions.brisbane.qld.gov.au/petition/view/pid/1100>

You can be assured we are also writing to the Lord Mayor to call for Council to address the previously raised Nudgee Road safety concerns that surely even BCC can now no longer ignore after this very sad event.

However, there are elements of this fatal crash that are road safety issues for the Queensland Government to address.

The first of these are the truck safety improvements long called for by the Brisbane CBD BUG to assist with the protection of vulnerable road users that have been in place overseas for many years e.g. blind spot elimination technologies, banning of conventional cab trucks in the urban environment and adoption of side underrun protection. Based on the details we know at this time of Phil Pawsey's crash we understand side underrun protection could have prevented his death.

In late 2022 there were media reports the Federal Government was considering "a package of reforms for safer freight vehicles"¹. We would appreciate your advice on the progress of this process and the likely safety changes and timeframe for its completion.

¹ https://bigrigs.com.au/2022/11/15/mandatory-blind-spot-sensors-for-all-new-trucks-from-2023/?fbclid=IwAR2UaPwY0_BE_XI9khop04PlacBsRVTc9-xNNuWucQhSoKIK1HSDHDeTrc4

Just to reach this point it has taken an unacceptably long seven years and more vulnerable road user deaths subsequent to the December 2015 Coroner's report into Rebekka Meyer's death, which recommended conventional shaped heavy vehicles should be prohibited unless they are fitted with appropriate technologies to warn the driver of any obstacles or other road users within the forward blind spot of the truck.

This glacier-like speed calls into question the governance system for heavy vehicle safety standards. We have previously noted with concern the preponderance of transport industry members on key committees/groups involved in these processes. It is not hard to characterise this as a "regulatory capture" situation, and we view the removal of this level of industry involvement as vital to the revitalisation of these processes so change processes are more responsive and serve the community's interests. Accordingly, we call on you to take this agenda forward at the national level in order to ensure Australia does not continue to lag many years behind other jurisdictions in implementing future heavy vehicle safety reforms.

As we understand it may still take up to another 15 years to retrofit all trucks with the new sensors and extra mirrors required by this change - we also hold grave concerns about the unsafe nature of the large trucks and trailers that can be expected to flood Brisbane's roads and streets for the Olympics infrastructure project works.

Our position is the Olympics project works need to only use safe trucks. Therefore, we call for all Queensland Government contracts for Olympics and related transport and other projects to be limited to cab-over trucks, to preclude use of the dangerous traditional cab trucks with their impeded forward vision. This approach would align perfectly with the intent articulated in the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator's *Heavy Vehicle Safety Strategy 2021–2025* to "Drive uptake of a modern, safer heavy vehicle fleet that reduces the likelihood and impact of crashes".

Another element of the dangers for bicycle riders travelling along Nudgee Road (and other locations) arises from the motor vehicles parked in the bike lane. The Brisbane Times image below published on 15 May 2023 in a story covering Phil Pawsey's death highlights this issue.



Source: <https://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/national/queensland/cyclists-call-for-action-after-26-incidents-on-nudgee-rd-before-hendra-fatality-20230515-p5d8gg.html>

This too has been a long-standing concern for Brisbane CBD BUG members and has been included in our submission shortly to be made to you calling for wider reforms of the host of cyclist-hostile provisions in the Queensland Road Rules (QRR).

We ask why the QRR still allow drivers to park in bike lanes, which effectively prioritises motorist parking convenience over the safety needs of bicycle (and scooter) riders?

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read 'Paul French', enclosed in a light grey rectangular box.

Paul French
Co-convenor
Brisbane CBD BUG
27 May 2023

Cc: Bicycle Queensland
Space4Cycling Brisbane
Queensland Walks
Amy Gillett Foundation
We Ride Australia
AusCycling