



# CYCLING LAW HERE TO STAY

WITH GENEVIEVE GRAVES

THE ONE-METRE PASSING RULE WILL HELP, BUT ROAD SAFETY IS ALSO UP TO DRIVERS AND BIKE RIDERS.

**T**HE MINIMUM ONE-metre rule for overtaking bicycles is now law and a win for road safety in Queensland.

Vehicles must give one-metre clearance when passing bicycles in a 60km/h or lower speed zone, and 1.5m where the speed limit is over 60km/h. Motorists can cross continuous centre lines to pass cyclists, provided it is safe to do so.

But this rule should not be the end of it, as a safe system requires much more.

RACQ canvassed member opinion on bike rider safety and found that about half of us would like to ride more for our health, and believe more people should ride bikes. Separate bike paths outside of traffic lanes was seen as important by almost 80 percent of Queenslanders, who believed that governments should be spending more on bike infrastructure.

Increased cycling has benefits for everyone. It reduces congestion, particularly if there are safe routes and good access to the places riders need to go. The health benefits include cleaner

air, and reduced risk of some cancers and obesity.

Governments at all levels have a role in bicycle policy and most encourage more people to ride bikes. The Queensland Government and councils across the state are close to finalising a principal cycle network, which maps the priority routes to be developed in all major towns and cities. The Department of Transport and Main Roads has a grants program that funds councils 50 percent of the cost of new bike infrastructure on the principal cycle network, to improve safety and connectivity for riders. We can encourage our local councils to apply for these funds.

Perhaps the highest level of responsibility is on us as road users. The evaluation of the one-metre road rule found that motorists are now more aware of bike riders. Knowing why and how bike riders behave can also help us accommodate cyclists more easily. Here are a couple of examples that come up

...WE ALL WANT TO ENJOY OUR JOURNEY AND ARRIVE HOME SAFELY.

regularly in letters from RACQ members:

- In Queensland bicycles are allowed to move from the footpath to the road, provided they give way to traffic already on the road. Riders do this for a range of reasons such as pedestrian safety, the footpath is uneven, or the rider wants to get through a set of traffic lights more quickly.
- Bike riders are required to keep as close to the left as practicable on a single lane road, but can take the whole lane if required. Riders need to avoid gutters, grates and poor road surfaces on the left shoulder, as hitting any of these can cause them to crash.

Safety is important to the RACQ and we will continue to advocate for separated bike infrastructure and road safety education. While all of us may become frustrated with other road users at times, ultimately we all want to enjoy our journey and arrive home safely. Car drivers and riders alike, it is up to us to make that happen. ■