



FREESTYLECYCLISTS
E N J O Y T H E R I D E

MEDIA RELEASE

Freestyle Cyclists' Helmet Optional Ride

Stop Fining Healthy Transport

Saturday 16 March, Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth

Cyclists will go helmet free in rides across Australia on Saturday 16 March in support of helmet choice.

Organised by *Freestyle Cyclists*, the rides aim to highlight the importance of cycling as a healthy and sustainable form of transport but which is being held back in Australia because of helmet legislation.

Alan Todd, President Freestyle Cyclists said: "Everyone agrees that we have healthier people and more liveable cities if we leave the car at home and use a bike instead. But if you do this in Australia, and don't wear a crash helmet, you will be fined".

"In most countries people are free to attend to everyday activities by bike, dressed in everyday clothing. Freestyle Cyclists wants Australia to join the rest of the world, and move beyond helmet fines," Alan Todd said.

The Melbourne ride will start outside Park Street Dining, on the Capital City Trail, 815 Nicholson Street Carlton North at 11am (and end at Abbotsford Convent at about 12 noon). Supporting rides will take place in Perth, Brisbane, Sydney, and Adelaide.

"Internationally bike helmet laws have been almost universally rejected. These laws prevent the uptake of cycling while offering no significant safety benefit at a population level. The practice of fining people for this healthy and benign activity makes no sense," said Alan Todd.

"Since last year's ride, Bicycle Network, Australia's peak cycling body, has also joined us in calling for helmet law reform."

“It’s time to say enough. Stop fining healthy transport”, Mr Todd added.

Background points

Bikes account for 5% to 50% of trips in many European cities and towns. Australia is still stuck on the 1% it has been at for 25 years. Public bike share schemes flourish in Europe and the United States, while Australia plays host to the dud failures in Melbourne and Brisbane, thanks to our helmet laws.

Health and transport experts openly acknowledge that the Australian experiment in mandatory helmets has been a failure. A Queensland Parliamentary Enquiry recommended in 2014 that a two-year trial exemption be put in place for adult cyclists in low speed environments.

The Northern Territory has long since wound back helmet requirements, and allows adults choice, and in 2016 a Senate Enquiry found insufficient evidence to support claims that helmet laws had improved cycling safety.

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