

Our ref: MC144573

29 April 2024

Mr Paul French
Co-convenor
Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group
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Dear Mr French

I refer to your letter of 12 April 2024 to the Honourable Bart Mellish MP, Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services, about the importance of educating drivers on the road rules for giving way to pedestrians, bicycle, and personal mobility device riders. The Minister has asked that I respond on his behalf.

I agree, it is vital that motorists give way to vulnerable road users and that motorists treat them with courtesy, patience, and respect. I take road safety very seriously and I welcome and value all voices in the community to help improve education on sharing Queensland's roads.

StreetSmarts is the Queensland Government's road safety education program to help reduce lives lost and serious injuries on our roads and encourage positive behaviour change. Giving way to riders and pedestrians is an issue regularly addressed through StreetSmarts social media channels, and the StreetSmarts website <https://streetsmarts.initiatives.qld.gov.au/>.

StreetSmarts advertises on Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, Reddit, Twitch, programmatic audio (Spotify) and Google search, reaching between one and 1.5 million road users each month. Since 2019, StreetSmarts has run more than 17 pieces of social media communicating the give way rules to drivers. These posts have reached over 4.1 million individuals and encouraged drivers to look out for pedestrians and riders.

Since 2019, StreetSmarts has reached over 1.5 million individuals with minimum passing distance rule messages on social media. StreetSmarts plans to run 'Stay Wider of the Rider' advertisements in May 2024 on social media and Department of Transport and Main Roads' (TMR) billboards. Bus-back advertising was not chosen as a media channel as this medium is usually reserved for major campaigns with larger budgets. StreetSmarts also runs in-car audio advertisements on Spotify all year round, including an advertisement on the minimum passing distance rule which has accrued over 66,000 listens since it went to air in November 2023.

Every year, StreetSmarts dedicates a month of content themed around active transport. This year, StreetSmart's active transport month is scheduled for May 2024 and will feature several posts targeted towards drivers on topics such as giving way to pedestrians and riders on driveways, when turning left, and the issue of dooring.

Even though zebra striped pedestrian crossings are less common today, the aim of the post was to raise awareness about the dangers of queuing across pedestrian thoroughfares. TMR also recognise that obstructing intersections controlled by traffic lights may be a more prevalent issue. We have previously published quizzes about the rules for giving way to pedestrians and riders at traffic lights and slip lanes and will continue to include this topic in future posts. Clear intersections benefit all road users, including riders and pedestrians.

When publishing its weekly road rules quizzes, TMR covers both common and lesser known issues concerning all road users. The post from 18 March 2024 about taking dogs for a run while riding a bicycle falls into the lesser known category. Tethering your dog to a bike while riding might seem like a convenient way to combine exercise for both, however, it is essential riders are aware of the road rules. Dogs can behave unpredictably and if they were to cross the path of a pedestrian or another rider, it could lead to a collision, potentially causing injuries.

In addition to using road crash data, TMR welcomes customer suggestions for quiz topics and your suggestion to focus on more common situations has been noted. All suggestions are carefully considered for potential inclusion in our future posts.

StreetSmarts utilises data and research to identify and address road safety issues. TMR receives daily road crash data reports from the Queensland Police Service including e-scooter, pedestrian, and bicycle hospitalisations and fatal crashes. TMR's Community Road Safety team regularly monitors this data and identifies road safety trends to address on social media.

TMR is aware that trolling and hateful comments towards riders are unfortunately common on social media, and our TMR and StreetSmarts platforms are no exception. TMR social media channels have moderation processes in place to remove any comments with explicit language and hate speech, including towards riders. I am deeply sorry if any hateful comments were missed, and we will widen our scope of what qualifies as an inappropriate comment to better protect riders.

As one of the identified next steps from the Queensland Road Safety Roundtable held in 2023, TMR is in the process of exploring new opportunities to ensure all drivers are up-to-date on road rules by developing and trialling engaging content on road rule changes and emerging road safety issues.

Thank you again for your interest in the safety of bike riders and feedback on our public education efforts around giving way to riders. TMR will continue to encourage drivers to share the road with riders through the StreetSmarts program and TMR's Facebook page.

Yours sincerely



Sally Stannard
Director-General
Department of Transport and Main Roads