



Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group

CBD BUG

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Office of the Information Commissioner
PO Box 10143
Adelaide Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Sir or Madam

Non-profit organisation application for financial hardship under the Right to Information Act 2009 (Qld)

This is an application by the Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group (CBD BUG) for financial hardship under the Right to Information Act (RTI Act). The following details are provided to support this application.

CBD BUG background information

The CBD BUG is a non-profit organisation of city cyclists, formed to represent and articulate the interests of the very large number of Brisbane residents who commute or ride bicycles to, from and within Brisbane's city centre. The group has almost 600 members, and potentially advocates on behalf of the several thousand people who regularly cycle to, through and in Brisbane's CBD each day.

The CBD BUG was established in early 2005 to:

- monitor and identify CBD cycling facilities (and deficiencies)
- act as a resource for CBD commuter cyclists
- lobby for improvements, and
- act as a network of cycle commuters and other bike users in the CBD.

Members meet monthly in the free-of-charge community meeting room in the Brisbane City Council's Brisbane Square Library to discuss policy issues, formulate strategies to achieve the organisation's objectives and listen to invited guest speakers.

After initially operating under a very informal governance arrangement it was decided in late 2008 to adopt a constitution to formalise some of its operating arrangements. A copy of the CBD BUG's current constitution is attached.

Financial situation of the CBD BUG

The CBD BUG's finances are strictly limited because it does not:

- collect fees or subscriptions from members
- sell / trade/ promote any products or services
- raise funds from external private sources, or
- seek any form of government funding.

The CBD BUG is wholly focused on advocating on behalf of cyclists. Its advocacy activities include letter writing, making submissions to council and governments, issuing media statements, meeting with politicians and public servants as issues and opportunities arise, and holding monthly general meetings with members. With the organisation's activities being limited to advocacy and no physical assets it has not taken out public liability or any other form of insurance cover.

The decision to eschew revenue raising has been a deliberate strategy to ensure CBD BUG members are not distracted from this organisation's primary mission of advocating for improved conditions for cyclists.

Accordingly, the CBD BUG's assets are limited to:

- a bank account - opened to hold a \$100 donation from one member (copies of two most recent bank statements attached), and
- a website, Twitter account and blog.

Other than the abovementioned \$100 donation, since its inception the only other revenue of any note derived by the CBD BUG has been an amount of \$250 received from Bicycle Victoria in May 2010 for the participation of five CBD BUG members in the 2010 Super Tuesday cyclist counting exercise.

The expenses of the CBD BUG are primarily comprised of postage, printing and the previously mentioned web presence. These expenses are met from the personal resources of the CBD BUG's executive committee (three Co-convenors) and general members, all of whom are volunteers.

The CBD BUG is not incorporated, nor does it have a Tax File Number or Australian Business Number. With its very limited financial activities the organisation does not compile financial statements, engage the services of an auditor or file a tax return or Business Activity Statements.

This information clearly demonstrates the non-profit nature of the Brisbane CBD BUG and its strictly limited finances.

Providing a service in the public interest

Prior to the CBD BUG's formation Brisbane cyclists were without adequate representation in the public debate about reforming Brisbane's gross over-dependence on motor vehicle for personal transport, and turning around the decades of neglect and even hostility by successive governments and council towards cycling as a sustainable form of active transport. The rapid growth of the CBD BUG's membership is testimony to the organisation's ability to provide a coherent and authoritative voice for a formerly disparate collection of individuals.

In addition to these advocacy activities the CBD BUG also provides advice and information to assist people who are looking to start cycle commuting, on issues such as what kit to purchase, finding safe routes, adopting defensive riding techniques and accessing end-of-trip facilities.

Apart from the numerous direct benefits accruing to individual cyclists from the CBD BUG's activities, the wider community benefits from the CBD BUG's efforts to increase cycling levels across Brisbane and South East Queensland include:

- easing traffic congestion
- addressing the incidence and prevalence of obesity and Type 2 Diabetes
- alleviating demand for publicly funded health services
- reducing dependency on non-renewable fossil fuels
- increasing Australia's energy security, and
- decreasing the growth in carbon dioxide emissions and other pollutants.

I look forward to your response on this application.

If clarification on any issue is required please do not hesitate to contact me directly by calling 0423 974 825 or via email to convenors@cdbdbug.org.au.

Yours faithfully



Paul French
Co-convenor
Central Business District Bicycle Users Group

19 October 2010