



**Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle Users Group –
CBD BUG**

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Assistant Commissioner Peter Barron
Metropolitan North Region
Queensland Police Service
GPO Box 1440
Brisbane QLD 4001

Dear Mr Barron

I am writing on behalf the Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group (CBD BUG) to raise issues arising from recent traffic enforcement undertaken at the intersection of the Western Freeway bikeway with Moggill Road, Indooroopilly, to request information on how competing demands for police resources are prioritised, and to open avenues with you by which traffic safety concerns of our members may be most effectively communicated and addressed.

The CBD BUG is an organisation of some 400 cyclists representing the interests of the thousands of Brisbane residents who ride bicycles to, from and within the Brisbane city centre. It pursues policy decisions at all levels of government relating to cycling, and in particular relating to improved cycling infrastructure, end-of-trip facilities and awareness of cycling as an important mode of transport.

A number of members have brought to our attention the action taken by police at the abovementioned intersection on several mornings in the week beginning 16 March 2009 (Bike Week), including Thursday, 19 March (Ride to Work Day). The officers were issuing warnings to cyclists who failed to dismount to cross the road on the marked crossings, in violation of section 248 of the road rules.

It is important to make it clear that we do not dispute that the cyclists who received warnings were violating the law, nor that it was reasonable to issue warnings in the circumstances. However, the operation has raised a number of related issues, as described below.

It appears that the officers were at the location with the intention of issuing the warnings that they did, and that they were not just there by chance. This assertion is based on reports that the officers had a stack of pre-written warnings for the specific offence. The officers were presumably acting on a concern about frequent cases of cycling across that intersection, but it is surprising to us that this was considered sufficiently important for committing police resources.

The regulation in question is designed to protect pedestrians from a perceived danger from bicycles in a limited space in a potentially dangerous environment. However, this particular crossing is a major cycling route (one of the two main cycling arterials in Brisbane) and has very little pedestrian traffic; cyclists comprise the overwhelming majority of crossing traffic.

Walking a bicycle dismounted with cleats on one's shoes is significantly more dangerous and less controlled than riding. Even the police bike squad routinely does not dismount for crossings. Consequently Queensland Transport and the State Cycle Committee (on which the Queensland Police Service is represented) has recently been reviewing the appropriateness of section 248 of the road rules. Further, the Department of Main Roads has designed this particular intersection for cyclists to ride across the crossings without dismounting. All three crossings at the intersection have holding rails, the sole purpose of which is to allow cyclists to stay mounted on their bicycles while waiting to cross. Prior to this incident the presence of the holding rails was taken by many cyclists as tacit approval to ride across these crossings.

In light of this police action the CBD BUG has requested the Department of Main Roads upgrade this intersection to allow cyclists to ride across legally.

We believe a much bigger concern at this particular intersection is that failure of a very high proportion of motorists to give way to pedestrians on either of the two pedestrian crossings, particularly on the slip lane from Moggill Road to the Western Freeway outbound. Anecdotal evidence suggests that at times as many as 80–90% of motorists fail to give way to pedestrians (including dismounted cyclists) at this crossing. This is a very dangerous situation and we request that police resources be committed to attempt to improve motorist behaviour at this location.

At a more general level the CBD BUG is interested in your advice on the decision making process and criteria used to determine where police resources are allocated when considering operations such as these. Our members frequently raise issues of safety that often relate to non-compliance of various groups of road users with the road rules, and understanding how to effectively communicate the nature and severity of these issues to Police would be appreciated.

We would also welcome an opportunity to meet with you and discuss these issues. We can be contacted via the postal address above, via email to convenors@cdbug.org.au, or I can be reached by phone on 0423 974 825.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Paul French
Co-convenor
Central Business District Bicycle Users Group

3 April 2009