

Fremantle Bicycle User Group

Contact Point:

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Progress in Rail Reform Inquiry
Productivity Commission
Locked Bag 2
Collins Street PO
Melbourne
Vic 8003

Dear Sir/Madam

Registration of Interest and Submission

Your inquiry has recently been brought to my group's attention and I would like to respond for the Fremantle Bicycle User Group and also on behalf of the Bicycle Transportation Alliance in WA. I note that the deadline for submissions has passed, nevertheless given the long timescale over which this inquiry is planned I hope there will still be an opportunity for our input.

The Bicycle Transportation Alliance are the umbrella organisation out of which local Bicycle User Groups such as ours were formed. The Bicycle Transportation Alliance was set up to:

- Advance the cause of cycling
- Lobby for better facilities for cyclists
- Encourage people to use bicycles more for transport and recreation
- Help make our cities and towns more bicycle-friendly
- Lobby for improved standards of education and behaviour for all road users
- Promote the environmental benefits of cycling.

We note from the discussion document that the Commission is charged with taking regard not only of economic performance but also social and environmental objectives. Our concern is that the discussion paper as it stands lacks balance in that it does not fully take account of the social and environmental objectives. We suggest the paper has seriously overlooked the needs of cyclists within the context of rail travel. There is a need for an integrated transport strategy that seeks to provide for a choice of modes and move us away from Australia's car dependent focus. Rail transport provides an important element of any integrated transport strategy.

It is important that proper provision is made for bicycles on trains, and this should be one of the important social and environmental objectives adopted in reforming rail. In doing this there are obvious economic benefits too. The extract from the AustRoads guide to traffic engineering (enclosed) highlights the benefits of such an approach, the figure demonstrates the accessibility afforded to cyclists by enabling and encouraging bikes on trains (suburban and country trains)— note that almost all of Melbourne becomes accessible. We therefore suggest that all new rolling stock be specifically designed to accommodate bicycles (with separate and secure storage areas) and existing stock be modified to achieve the same effect.

This carriage of bicycles should be free in order to stimulate the demand for rail travel. At present it is easier to travel to Europe by air with a bicycle (and free) than it is to travel even very local distances by rail.

In addition all rail stations should provide for secure bicycle parking and this should be given priority over car parking in terms of space and location within the station precinct.

The rail reform should also give high priority to the promotion of freight by rail, and significant steps made to capture back this market from road. In doing so this will free valuable road space for cyclists, and provide us with a cleaner environment in which to travel.

I trust it will be possible to take these comments into account.

Yours sincerely,

Carey Curtis

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