

BFA Policy

An election year – Ei Ei O!! No not part of a nursery rhyme but the basis for a policy framework. EIEIO stands for Education, Investment, Examples, Inspiration, and Organisation.

The BFA has adopted this approach in developing a policy framework for Development of Ecologically Sustainable Transport Networks (ESTNs) in Australia and Ian Lowe's EIEIO principles are embodied in an integrated ten point policy platform.

The policies developed in this document have been collated by **Nic Gellie** and **Alan Parker** from a range of previous BFA submissions, ideas, and suggestions from cycling advocates and ordinary cyclists and integrated into a ten point policy plan. Any further input or comments would be most welcome and should be directed to Nic Gellie: nicgel@spirit.com.au

Executive Summary

The Bicycle Federation of Australia Inc. (BFA) is a non-profit organisation devoted to promoting bicycling as a life enhancing, sociable, enjoyable, convenient and ecologically sustainable means of transport for all Australians. The Bicycle Federation of Australia is made up of a confederation of State Bicycling Groups and Supporting Organisations that represent over 50,000 cyclists in Australia.

The BFA calls on the Federal and State Governments to define, establish, and monitor ecologically sustainable transport networks, based on the ten policy principles outlined below. These principles are based on the European Charter for ecologically sustainable transport.

Where possible, these programmes should be tailored to the specific needs of communities in each city and town in each State. Promoting cycling as a sustainable and healthy mode of transport and implementing the ten points requires incentives, recognition, dissemination and rewards for best practice. Professor Ian Lowe recommends EIEIO to get sustainable transport systems to happen here in Australia (Lowe 1999). Here EIEIO

stands for Education, Investment, Examples, Inspiration, and Organisation. The BFA has adopted this approach in developing this policy framework and Ian Lowe's principles are embodied in an integrated ten point policy platform.

The BFA's policy platform is about implementing a set of inter-related goals that together will attain better on-ground outcomes for cyclists. Overall success will be measured in the combined attainment of these goals within a short term to medium term timeframe of 3-5 years from now.

The policy statement recognises four main thrusts to move to an ecologically sustainable transportation network, which:

Encourages a switch from the car to the bicycle;

Encourages a switch from the car to the combined use of public transport, bicycling, and walking;

Encourages improved cyclist safety on roads and bicycle paths; and

Encourages provision of secure bicycle parking and associated support facilities.

The ten point policy platform is made up of the following integrated principles and recommendations:

1. Co-ordinate and plan for inter-

connected and integrated transport networks in all States and the capital cities of Australia that facilitate bicycle access and encourage bicycle use.

2. Establish and then maintain equity in funding for non-motorised forms of transport after an appropriate catch-up period of high funding.

3. Promote Cycling as an energy efficient and healthy form of transport by the provision of personal and organisational taxation and funding incentives for non-motorised forms of transport.

4. Establish and/or reinforce links between the different agencies involved in planning and implementation.

5. Identify and implement world best practice infrastructure for safer and more convenient cycling in transport networks.

6. Establish and strengthen laws relating to vulnerability of cyclists and pedestrians.

7. Create strategic partnerships in both the public and private sectors to promote cycling and walking.

8. Establish model examples of ecologically sustainable transport networks and bicycle/public transport dual mode systems in the capital cities.

9. Provide a national data base of

bicycle travel which includes general travelling statistics, exposure to road risk, bicycle theft and the use of bicycle facilities.

10. Establish short, medium and long distance regional cycling tourism networks as part of ecologically sustainable tourism programs.

Background

The policies developed in this document have been collated from a range of previous BFA submissions, ideas, and suggestions from cycling advocates and ordinary cyclists and integrated into a ten point policy plan.

1. Cyclists and walkers have equal rights to better and safer facilities:

Federal and State Government development and transport policies have actively discouraged cycling and denied cyclists their rights to safer cycling on roads. Instead undue emphasis has been placed on motorised transport for people to undertake their personal, family, and work business. Australia is lagging well behind world best practice in encouraging bicycle use for work,

family, and leisure. The BFA refers to current government policies and obligations, international, and "moral/ethical" issues, such as equal access to mobility, safety and health of all members of the population.

2. Cycling has the potential to improve health:

Healthy active transport, using cycling or walking, has tremendous potential to greatly improve the quality of life at a much lower cost to individual Australians and their communities. More and more Australians are becoming obese or overweight. Australia closely rivals the United States in having the reputation of being the fattest nation on earth. Nearly 65 per cent of men and 49 per cent of women are overweight. Despite Australia's magnificent performance at the Olympics, Australia's population is exercising less and eating more. Australia's sedentary related diseases, such as cardiovascular and secondary diabetes diseases, could reach epidemic levels within ten years. Government policy must explicitly encourage physically active transport to reverse sedentary disease amongst Australians.

3. Cycling needs better on-road facilities and recognition as a legitimate, economical, and viable road use:

Presently our cities' roads are a hostile and unsafe road environment for cyclists. The present road system caters mainly for motorised transport at vehicle speeds that can kill, maim, or injure cyclists. A frequently cited deterrent to people using their bicycles is that they feel unsafe on roads. Establishing a safer and more convenient urban road network is a critical step in getting more people to cycle for their daily activities and active gentle exercise.

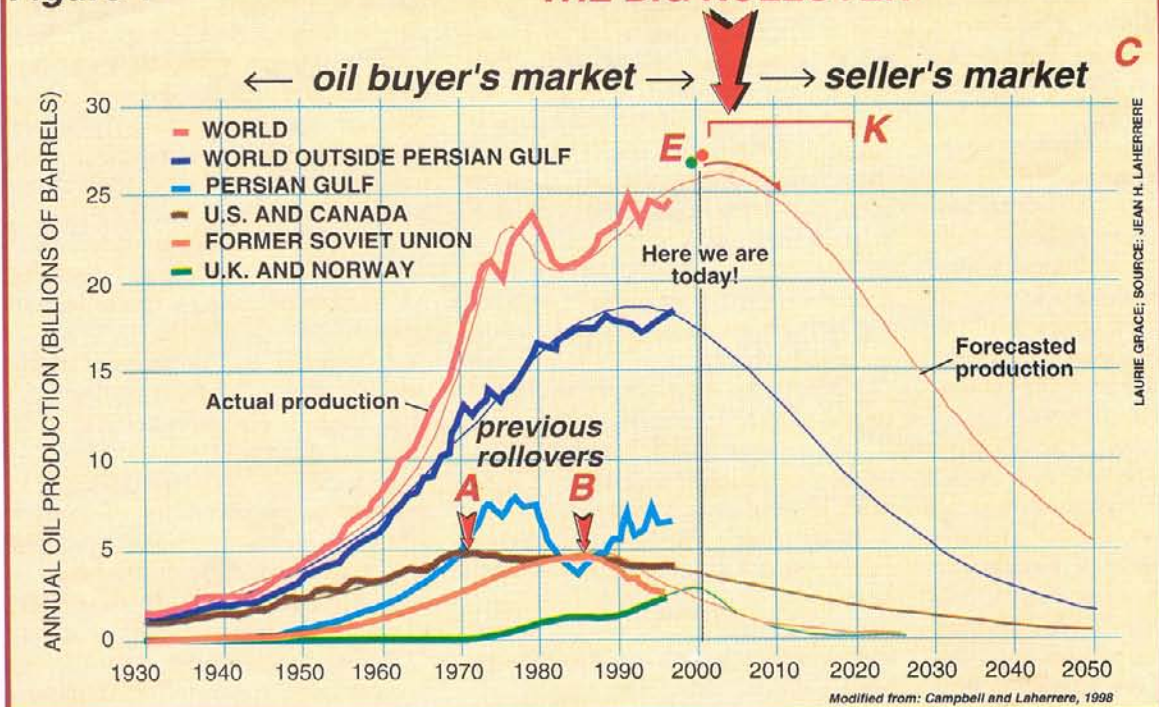
4. Cycling can help reduce our reliance on oil:

Rising oil prices may produce economic instability and reversal of world economic growth. Leading world oil experts are warning of a roll-over in production of oil within the next 5-10 years. A likely scenario is summarised in Figure 1, illustrating the likely roll-over effect of decreasing oil production and rising oil demand, leading to an inevitable rise in oil prices and possible increasing political instability.

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Figure 1

THE BIG ROLLOVER



Likely Roll-Over Effect in World Oil Production. Courtesy: Magoon JL. USGS (United States Geological Survey). Les Magoon is coming to Australia in October and November for a lecture tour of all mainland capitals organised by the Petroleum Exploration Society of Australia. He is the main author of a definitive monograph on "petroleum systems", for petroleum exploration.

Two major public and private policy initiatives are needed to implement the BFA's policy platform.

Firstly, we need cycling to be part of the agendas and activities of a whole range of public and private organisations. What is required transcends election cycles and the present bipolar political system. It also needs a multi-partisan approach to effect a rapid transformation of ecologically unsustainable transport networks to more sustainable energy efficient ones (BFA 1999).

Secondly, we need equitable funding for non-motorised forms of transport, such as cycling, within Federal and State road to match world best practice. At both the Federal and State levels of government, **major reform of transport agencies** is needed to create a single Land Transport Authority with a **broad charter of planning and implementing ecologically sustainable forms of transport**. This charter would include planning, funding and integration of non-motorised forms of transport, walk-

implementation approach when it comes to development of cycling infrastructure, which transcends traditional government breakdown of ministerial responsibilities. We argue the case here for integrated planning and transport departments within State and Federal Governments with a major emphasis on non-motorised transport in development of new support infrastructure.

The Way Forward

The BFA views cycling, together with other forms of non-motorised transport, as a major contributor to relieving the economic and social impacts of higher energy prices, sedentary lifestyle diseases, the costs of environmental pollution, and the excessive traffic congestion in our cities. Cycling and other forms of non-motorised transport, including walking, are presently the only ecologically sustainable forms of transport that can significantly reduce individual and collective energy consumption and greenhouse emissions. Cars and public transport still require huge amounts

equitable personal and organisational taxation arrangements, as well as funding mechanisms to fund equitably non-motorised transport. Presently huge government subsidies are propping up ecologically unsustainable forms of transport, including motorised transport and aviation. These subsidies are reducing opportunities to move to more sustainable transport blending alternatives, which incorporate public transport and private non-motorised transport, such as bicycling and walking.

To achieve an increase in cycling in Australia for access to work and leisure, the BFA considers that the current and any future government policies incorporate ecologically sustainable policies and measures relating to ecological sustainability, greenhouse gas emissions, and energy efficiency. To achieve an effective increase in cycling and non-motorised transport within our cities and towns, will require a focussed and integrated planning approach. Innovative and daring policies will need to promote active healthy transport modes as part of living more sustainably, by creating exciting and innovative opportunities and incentives for cycling and walking.

Travel blending programs, involving cycling, walking, public transport and the wise use of our existing car fleet will also need to be promoted. Travel blending programs can show people how to reduce their living costs and increase daily exercise that will benefit the health, social and economic wellbeing of Australians. Western Australia and South Australia have introduced some model success stories with TravelSmart and Travel blending programs with significant shifts towards less use of the private car, and greater use of public transport, cycling, and walking.

Australians have become a car-loving culture because of the long distances they travel to and from work and during holidays. The attraction of the motor car has overridden most people's desire or consideration to travel in any other mode of transport. Transport and urban planners have encouraged

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ing, cycling, public transport, and more efficient use of motor vehicles. At a State level, transport agencies need to be restructured to provide responsible funding and integration of the ecologically sustainable forms of transport, walking, cycling, public transport, and the shared use of motor vehicles (Parker 1999).

Unfortunately bicycling does not fit into a neat government ministerial portfolio. Rather the issue of bicycling crosses several ministerial portfolios, including transport, law, health, tourism, environment, treasury, and urban/rural infrastructure development. The BFA, in its many previous submissions to government, has highlighted the need for an integrated planning and

of energy and resources to maintain them on the road or on railways. These motorised forms of transport will need to be used efficiently and integrated with cycling and walking in order to improve energy efficiency and overall energy use.

Presently there are huge human personal, social, and economic disincentives that are preventing cycling from becoming a major mode of transport in the new era of expensive oil. Federal and State Governments need to create appropriate personal incentives and necessary bicycling infrastructure on the roads, at work, at shopping centres, and at key public transport nodes. There is a need for more

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this mode of transport wherever possible. We are now seeing traffic grid-lock and congestion on our city streets despite the enormous expenditure on freeways and tollways.

The BFA considers that it is time to get people out of their cars more often and into other modes of integrated public and non-motorised modes of transport. This approach requires that facilities for non-motorised and integrated public transport be available, reliable and targeted towards the needs of communities. This approach also requires communities and individuals need to be consulted and informed effectively about their current and future transport needs and have equity of access to other transport choices. The solutions offered need to be flexible enough to enable individuals within communities to make informed choices and have flexibility in making those choices.

The BFA considers that cycling and walking can substitute significantly for short car trips. These short car trips are major contributors to energy consumption, Greenhouse emissions, and air pollution as most cars are not operating at peak efficiency with these short trips. Travel blending and substitution programs will only be successful when there are the bicycling facilities and personal incentives set up which make cycling a cheaper, safer, and more effective, convenient, and secure method of transport.

For longer car trips, multi-modal integration of cycling, walking, and public transport will help to reduce reliance on motor vehicle trips. Incentives for people to use multi-modal forms of transport need to replace current incentives encouraging use of business or private vehicles.

Presently transport and city planners are avoiding an underlying

problem in our cities – of mass inefficiency in transport use. Single person occupied vehicles amount to more than 80 per cent of the cars on the road. More than 40 per cent of drivers during peak hour are driving company provided cars. Individual car users presently do not plan their car use or integrate their use with other members of the family or with work colleagues.

A significant number of women feel more secure in their cars, compared with either walking, cycling, or using public transport. This feeling of insecurity is exploited by marketing ploys which exploit these fears and create psychological deterrents to use other means of transport, which keep women in their motorised cocoons. We need to plan for massive increases in bicycle use and integrate this into our urban and rural landscapes and make these networks more accessible, convenient and safer for people to use. Women need to feel safer when they are on their own – they prefer to ride in small groups and not be verbally or physically harassed. Cycling can be a very social and communal form of exercise – witness the popularity of annual city bike rides when the roads are opened up to cyclists for short periods.

There are perceptions in the Australian community at large that bicycling is unsafe, difficult, and inconvenient, relative to cars. In most cities, in most electorates, this is currently true because of the lack of suitable and safer on-road facilities, traffic congestion, and lack of secure parking at office and shopping locations. The BFA would like to see a reversal of this perception and to see well designed and integrated cycling facilities in places where cycling can substitute for short car trips.

Walking has been a natural and healthy mode of transport for a long period in human history. Since the

advent of the safety bicycle one hundred years ago, cycling has added to the choices available in active and healthy transport.

Therefore, the opportunity for their use should be maximised in planning and design of future transport needs. With provision of better facilities and laws to protect both cyclists and walkers, urban areas can become enjoyable, safe, healthy, and ecologically viable and sustainable neighbourhoods. The health benefits of non-motorised travel need to be recognized and targets set for reducing the non-motorised user death and injury rates per 100,000 population. To promote these active and healthy modes of transport, Australian governments should accept the new European Charter as a model to follow:

Develop and implement policies to promote modes of transport that lead to health and environment benefits, aiming at a shift to modes of transport with lower specific energy and pollutant emissions and accident risks. In particular, promote safer and environmentally friendly cycling and walking by providing safer infrastructure and networks, implementing measures for traffic management, enforcing speed controls and speed limits that are appropriate to local circumstances, and designing roads and settlements taking into account the needs of pedestrians and cyclists.

Reduce the need for motorised transport by adapting land use policies and urban and regional development plans to enable people to have easy access to settlements, housing and working areas, and shopping and leisure facilities by cycling, walking and public transport.

Raise the attractiveness of public transport, walking and cycling, and promote inter modality between them, not the least by prioritising public transport, walking and cycling in connection with the extension of infrastructure.

Provide incentives to use the best available technologies and encourage ambitious vehicle emission standards and fuel quality requirements, in order to improve safety and reduce air pollutants, noise and fuel consumption. 