



MEDIA RELEASE

Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group

CBD BUG

www.cbdbug.org.au

6 May 2013

'One metre rule' needed after truck driver found not guilty of killing cyclist

Cyclists have renewed their call for a road rule change requiring motorists to maintain a minimum safe passing distance of one metre when they overtake cyclists. This call follows the driver of a cement truck that killed cyclist and gifted violinist, Richard Pollett, being found not guilty of dangerous operation of a motor vehicle causing death.

Aged just 25, Mr Pollett was tragically killed in Kenmore on the afternoon of 27 September 2011 by being hit by a cement truck as the driver tried to overtake him while he was cycling along Moggill Rd.

CBD BUG spokesperson Paul French said "It's difficult to imagine another situation in which a driver needs to exercise greater care and wait for a safe opportunity to pass – a truck weighing at least 20 tonnes, and apparently boxed in by other vehicles so the driver couldn't change lanes, bearing down from behind on a cyclist riding along a narrow, winding road. Yet under the law it now appears motorists can treat a cyclist with the same disregard as they would a witch's hat and leave no margin for error by passing as close as they like".

Prior to Richard Pollett's death cyclists had expressed wide-spread disappointment at seeming government disregard for their safety on this issue, a feeling reinforced by knowledge that similar rules for protecting cyclists apply in a host of other overseas jurisdictions, where it is common that even more space is required of motorists than the one metre sought in the Queensland Road Rules.

"How many more innocent people who just want to ride their bikes while going about their daily lives will be mown down before the government acts on this pressing safety issue" said Mr French. "The State Government's continuing out-of-hand rejection of the 'one metre rule' is sending the wrong message to irresponsible motorists - that when wanting to drive from Point A to B in the shortest possible time bike riders can be treated as mere obstacles".

"The requirement for a 1 metre passing distance would serve as the bare minimum 'duty of care' that should be shown by overtaking motorists in view of the typically large differences in mass and speed between motor vehicles and cyclists".

He pointed out the Queensland Transport Minister's recent out of the blue announcement of a change to the road rules allowing the recreational use of Segways to enable tourism; and that on this basis the bureaucratic red tape that had previously frustrated cyclists seeking the 'one metre rule' now looked to have been removed.

"Swift action is needed from the Government on this safety issue. Any Segway users, many of whom will be overseas visitors, would need to be very careful because if they stray on to the road they are likely to end up as just another speed bump for an impatient motorist".

Ends

Media contacts: Paul French 0423 974 825 and Donald Campbell 0402 609 723

convenors@cbdbug.org.au