



MEDIA RELEASE

Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group

CBD BUG

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Cycling: a simple solution to the rising cost of living

A simple solution to Brisbane's rapidly rising cost of living can already be found in more than 50% of Queensland households – it's called a bicycle.

The suggestion comes after relatively higher increases in housing, alcohol and tobacco and transportation resulted in Brisbane having an overall inflation rate of 3.0%, the second largest movement in prices among all the Australian capital cities during the December 2010 quarter. Compounding the situation for Brisbane households is the city's heavy dependence on cars for personal transport, with Commsec estimating that over just the last six months petrol prices have added \$35 to the average household's monthly fuel bill. Commsec believes there is more price pain to come at the fuel bowser.

According to Central Business District Bicycle User Group spokesman Paul French "leaving the car at home and cycling just 10 kilometres to work or study will take the average person just over a half an hour and save about \$770 a year in vehicle running costs and depreciation, not to mention the many hours you won't waste being stuck in traffic congestion. The savings don't end there either, because with the extra exercise you won't need to outlay hundreds of dollars a year on gym memberships, Zumba classes or personal trainers".

Australian Bureau of Statistics figures show more than 36% of Queenslanders have an average travel distance to their usual work or study destination of only 10km or less. But with 84.9% of people using their car as their main form of transport for these trips Queensland residents are well above the national average in terms of car dependency. The fuel price outlook is so bleak that the NRMA has now described motorists as "sitting ducks" when it comes to fuel prices.

"Getting around by bike is much easier than most people think" according to Mr French. "People have been persuaded over the years that driving is how you are supposed to travel around, and that cycling is not a viable travel option. As a result they now tend to overestimate the time it takes to travel by bike and underestimate the time it takes to travel by car. In fact, many shorter journeys are much faster by bike than by car".

"We often hear people say why they won't ride. In fact once people find the best route and get their routine sorted out, they love their ride to work. It's just a matter of being positive and giving it a go. Then you can enjoy the benefits to your health and finances."

"There are some longer journeys people may still need to make by driving. But instead of jumping in the car for shorter trips, try leaving in the garage and get the bike out instead" said Mr French.

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