



Amy Gillett FOUNDATION
Safe together

28 February 2014

Mr Mick Gentleman MLA
Chair
Standing Committee on Planning, Environment and Territory and Municipal Services
via email: committees@parliament.act.gov.au



Dear Mr Gentleman

Responses to Questions on Notice ACT Parliament – Inquiry into Vulnerable Road Users

This document provides the responses to two questions that were taken on notice by the Amy Gillett Foundation (AGF) during our involvement (Dr Rod Katz; Ms Tracey Gaudry) as a witness at the public hearing on 2 December 2013.

- 1. I note that the submission recommends that trial psychological tests, screening tests, should be used for driver licence applicants to find those ones whose attitudes might pose a serious danger to vulnerable road users. Could you tell us more about that concept, please? Dr Bourke***

The AGF recommendation in relation to driver attitude and learner/probationary driver testing was included following concerns raised by a senior driver assessor in the ACT.

In preparing the AGF submission to the Inquiry, Dr Marilyn Johnson interviewed a number of people involved in driver training and licensing in the ACT. In one interview, a senior driver assessor, with over 20 years of experience training and testing drivers, raised concerns that the current testing system does not provide assessors with the ability to remark on the attitude of the person taking the test. His advice was that negative, potentially dangerous attitudes, displayed by some persons taking the test (including a prevalence of younger males) including immaturity (i.e. person does not understand the risk involved in driving), extreme behaviour and verbal disregard of road rules indicated a lack of psychological preparedness to drive safely that was not captured in the current testing protocols.

The driver assessor also noted that some people have expressed negative attitudes towards bicycle riders and this too was evidenced during the practical test, however if the person did not make any critical errors they would pass their licence test. As the examiner he could discuss issues raised during the test and try to address the driver's attitudes but in order to fail the driving test, the person actually needed to breach a road rule - 'If a person drives well, you can't fail them for their attitude'.

At this time, the AGF has not undertaken a review of the literature about driver licensing and attitudes in Australian jurisdictions or internationally. However, in light of the serious concerns raised by the expert driving assessor, the AGF considered it important to bring this issue to the attention of the

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Standing Committee on Planning, Environment and Territory and Municipal Services. We propose that Committee considers making recommendation as part of their report to the ACT Government, to undertake a review of attitudinal components of driver licence testing including the current driving licence tests in Australia, scientific literature and international experiences.

2. Do you or the foundation have a position on insurance for cyclists? You mentioned that registration was primarily focused around insurance for motor vehicle users. What is the position on insurance for cyclists? Mr Wall

The AGF supports bicycle riders being insured for personal injury and property damage in the event of a bike-related incident. As noted in the public hearing, bicycle riders whose crash does not involve another road user will not be covered by third party insurance; however injuries may be sustained requiring extensive medical and rehabilitative treatment, and bicycle equipment may be damaged.

In relation to the above, the focus of the work of the AGF is bringing about a safer environment for cycling, in turn reducing the likelihood of incidences leading to bike rider serious injuries and fatalities. A direct outcome of our mission is the reduced impact and cost of trauma – emotional, physical, and economic – to individuals, families, the community and services to the community.

We trust these responses from the AGF will help you to finalise your Inquiry report and contribute to a safer cycling environment in the ACT. If any additional information is required, please do not hesitate to contact us directly.

As a key stakeholder in cycling safety in Australia, the AGF welcomes an ongoing involvement with the ACT Parliament and agencies to progress actions and improve the safety of all bike riders.

Yours Sincerely



Tracey Gaudry
Chief Executive Officer

Everyone has the right to ride in safety for work, sport and play