

Bicycle Victoria Annual General Meeting

Monday 12 November 2007

Members Questions and Answers



We thank those Members who have provided us with Questions. We have grouped the questions into themes and provided explanations as follows.

Education of road users^{1 2}

Bicycle Victoria launched the first Share the Road program in 1995. A number of versions of brochures and information have been distributed since that date.

VicRoads is planning to coordinate an 'all users' version of Share the Road. We support this initiative and look forward to the roll out of the campaign. As one of the questioners said 'Cyclists need to be educated about safe and courteous riding and motorists need to be educated about their responsibilities toward cyclists and about cyclists' rights.'

One of the key principles of Share the Road is that we tell motorists what riders want them to know and tell riders what motorists want us to know. We continue to take this approach today through a variety of means including pages on our website, publications, and media interviews. Other organisations such as the RACV help from time to time by including information to drivers about bike riding.

We agree for example that many motorists are unaware that riders may ride two abreast. We recognise that a number of motorists will harass riders in various ways. Better facilities reduce conflict and collisions. Generally collisions and verbal conflict is reduced when there is a bike lane on the road – we agree that separation will not occur everywhere. Also the rising number of riders and the perception that bike riding is more popular these days tends to reduce conflict. The State Government Share the Road program is likely to add to this momentum.

To lift the reputation of bike riding in the community and marginalise the people who are against bike riding, we plan to continue our programs to improve bike riding behaviour including the Light Up! program in 2008.

AGM & Statutory matters^{3 4}

All current Members are welcome to attend the AGM with or without an RSVP. As a courtesy, we do ask that Members let us know if they are planning to attend, so that we can properly provide for the correct number of attendees.

The notice of the AGM required by the Constitution was provided in the Summary Annual Report flyer included with the October/November edition of Ride On which went out at the start of October. In addition an article was in the October/November *Ride On* edition and full details of the AGM have been available on our website since July of this year. Also a reminder was placed in the *In the loop* newsletter and in the online Annual Report.

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In the Summary Annual Report provided to all Members at the start of October we requested Members to provide us with questions, we also reminded Members to give us their questions by using the Website and *In the loop*. By providing the questions with notice we can ensure that we can properly prepare and answer the questions. We have to have a cut off date for questions *with notice* to enable us to do this, hence the reference in the *In the loop* that Members **must** provide the questions *with notice* by Friday 2 November. We apologise for the inconsistency in the publication of dates in the October edition of *Ride On* and the Summary Annual Report.

The Constitution says that Members must have the proxy form with Bicycle Victoria by 5pm on the last business day before the AGM, in this case that was Friday 9 November 2007, hence the reference in *In the loop*.

Regional Victoria⁵

There are two ways to consider the Bicycle Victoria membership. One is ‘what’s in it for me?’ Benefits such as the Insurance, discounts at bike shops or access to *Fitness to Live* are valued by Members throughout Australia and New Zealand.

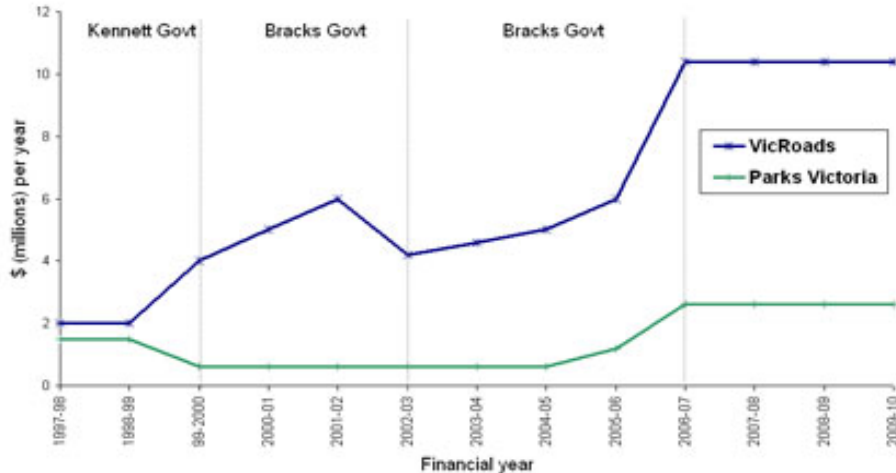
The other way to consider the membership is ‘Will my support get More People Cycling More Often.’ We have a long term record of successfully achieving this purpose. This work is of course not prioritised geographically. For example for a number of years we gave a high priority to the Bay Trail in Brighton. Currently we have a number of high priorities in the western suburbs. We would be unwise to encourage members to think that by joining they can draw campaigning effort to their area.

Nonetheless there has been a significant impact on bike riding in regional Victoria as a result of the work of Bicycle Victoria. Half the money spent on the Principal Bicycle Network over the last ten years has been spent in regional Victoria. From an equity point of view this is highly favourable to the less populated regions. We could estimate this amount of money at more than \$10m.

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Cycling and Walking Projects 1997- 2010



In the last two years Bicycle Victoria has facilitated more than \$5m investment in rail trails in regional Victoria.

Members should be aware that Bicycle Victoria does not limit its operations to Victoria or Melbourne but indeed is working with other appropriate cycling groups or individuals where to do so would further the purpose of More People Cycling More Often. Examples include our recent efforts in Hobart and Sydney.

Recumbents and other forms of cycles on the Portfolio Partners Around the Bay in a Day⁶

All of the Around the Bay in a Day rides are individual challenge rides and marketed as such. They are all mass participation high volume events on public roads.

The conduct of a safe ride is paramount to us. In particular in the Portfolio Partners Around the Bay in a Day ride we wanted to improve the bunch riding. Members will remember that a rider died after a bunch crashed on last year's event.

Our decision to ban recumbents was based on the view that recumbents do not mix well in bunches with standard bicycles. We continue to hold this view. Nonetheless recumbents did participate on the event in 2007 after discussions with various recumbent riders. We will consider our policy for the 2008 ride as part of the post event evaluation and post it on the event website. Members or Riders with a view on how recumbents may be safely integrated into the ride are welcome to share their thoughts with us by emailing bicyclevic@bv.com.au.

We made the decision to exclude unicycles from the 50km ride as they do not meet the standards for Bicycles on Public Roads. Childs seats and Tagalongs were excluded because we judge that they unnecessarily increase the risk to other riders on the event and do not reinforce the individual challenge message. MS now runs a family ride in the autumn and participants are likely to be able to ride with child seats and tagalongs on this event.

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National Bicycle Coalition⁷

At the last AGM we reported that we enjoy good relationships with all the interstate member groups with full time staff: Queensland, NSW and South Australia. We also reported that the extent to which such relationships develop with those groups and others will depend on our capability to contribute, the local “climate” or preparedness to work with us and the alignment with our purpose of More People Cycling More Often.

We have been meeting with other similar organisations from around Australia and for two years Bicycle Victoria has been endorsed by these organisations to take the lead on national programs such as Ride to Work and Ride2School. The Coalition is a continuation of that process. The larger bicycle organisations have agreed to work more closely and on a wider agenda. We expect this process to continue.

The Coalition website shows the current projects and those under development. We will keep members informed through this site as the Coalition develops.

Individual Board Members achievements and vision⁸

The institution of any Board is rooted in the belief that a collection of individual’s wisdom will exceed that of an individual. Boards act as decision making groups reaching a deliberated consensus for the good of the organisation as a whole. A Board working amongst itself until reaching an agreed consensus is a fundamental requirement to the group functioning and optimising its performance. That is why there is no room for individual Board Member platforms or aspirations that are not endorsed by the Board as a whole. The achievement of the whole Board and its vision for the organisation is spelled out in the Annual Report.

Having said this, we are working on ways for the membership to better understand who is on the Board and will be posting Boardmember profiles on the website in the future.

Bikes and the rail system^{9 10}

The availability of secure parking at railway stations is irregular; at some sites lockers are available. New cost effective parking initiatives are being trialled and we have made information available on our website. We are optimistic that this initiative will be able to be rolled out across the entire network. We will continue to work hard at improving facilities and acceptance of bikes on both Metropolitan and Rural rail system but it is a difficult task and will take a while.

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¹ Euan Buchanan

With my bicycle as my primary means of transport I prefer to ride on the road even if there is a shared path available as I find it more expedient and safer.

On several occasions I have been harassed by other road users for using the road where a shared path is available, most notably Center Dandenong Road between Dingley Village where I live and the Nepean Highway. I have also been harassed for legally riding two abreast in a lane, which incidentally would not safely accommodate a lone cyclist and a car. I have also been harassed for riding between half a meter and a meter out from the kerb, the inference being that I should be as close to the gutter as possible, not as close to the gutter as is safe to do so.

It is my opinion that there is a level of ignorance and intolerance as to the rights and responsibilities of cyclists, in no small part exacerbated by popular media and media commentators. In recent months it seems to be getting worse, yet I see little from cycling advocacy organisations which redresses this.

Given that the biggest risk to cyclists comes from other road users, does BV have a course of action in mind to educate all road users as to the rights and responsibilities of cyclists? If not, why?

² Murray Nicholas

I'd like to know what plans are in place for BV to participate in or drive an education campaign for safe sharing of the roads. We hear a great deal about the need for separation but the reality is that, ultimately, we can't provide separated facilities to duplicate the entire road network.

Separation has a place where there are large volumes of conflicting traffic but too much separation implies bicycles have no valid place on roads and leads to the perpetuation of this attitude from some members of the motoring public.

Cyclists need to be educated about safe and courteous riding and motorists need to be educated about their responsibilities toward cyclists and about cyclists' rights (e.g., to ride two abreast or to claim a lane).

³ Nancy Atkin

Your latest newsletter received 1 November has the following notice:

"Members are invited to the [Bicycle Victoria AGM](#) on Monday 12th November 2007. Members must [submit questions](#) with notice 5pm Friday 2 November 2007. [RSVPs](#) and [Proxys](#) must be received before 5pm Friday 9 November 2007."

It is not true that you "must" RSVP. The constitution says clearly that all members can come and participate. As I was looking at the constitution, I also noticed that eleven days notice is also not enough – it should be 21 days (unless the notice was sent out in the newsletter). This means that the cut off time for questions on notice, was only 24 hours.

BV should be run according to its rules, which have been set up to make sure that it is democratically governed.

Apart from legal implications, that's the basis on which we join.

I am not sure what you should do to fix this problem, but at least you should immediately send a notice to members saying they are all welcome to attend!

(In fact, the whole proxy clause should be in the notice as well, but the other mistakes seem more crucial to democratic processes).

⁴ Phillip Crohn

An inconsistency occurred between the closing date for questions between *RideOn* and the summary annual report.

⁵ Timshel Knoll-Miller

I must say that I'm disappointed in the short notice for questions with notice. I have a couple of questions I'd like to ask, but as your email announcing that you are accepting 'questions with notice' was only sent at 11pm last night, and the deadline for such questions is 5pm today, I'm not going to have the opportunity to properly think about, draft and compose the questions which I'd like to be asked at the AGM. As a cyclist in regional Victoria, I'm already feeling somewhat unrepresented by BV, and it is unlikely that I'm going to be able to make it to the AGM due to distance. So in the absence of a proper amount of notice to submit these questions, my hastily-composed questions I'd like to see asked are:

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A number of my cycling friends ceased their membership of BV when they moved from Melbourne to a regional area of Victoria, stating that they didn't feel they were getting anything for their membership money due to BV being focused on Melbourne. With this in mind, my questions are:

- 1) With the exception of rail trails, what is Bicycle Victoria doing towards campaigning for safer and better cycling infrastructure, and more in regional areas of Victoria?
- 2) Does the board intend to better cater for the needs and interests of cyclists in regional areas of Victoria?
- 3) If so, what measures does the board propose to take towards improving BV's campaign presence in regional and rural areas of Victoria, improving membership in these areas, and better living up to its name as a state-wide organisation?
- 4) Will the board ensure that reasonable advance notice is provide for questions with notice at next year's AGM?

⁶ Philip Crohn

I would like the following questions to be answered at the AGM.

According to the BV website <<http://www.bv.com.au/great-rides/40191>> Terms and conditions of entry for Round the Bay in Day include:

"Mode of Transport

17. Only standard, two-wheeled, human-powered bicycles are permitted on the 250km, 210km and 100km Ride options. Unicycles, recumbents, scooters, motorised and power-assisted bicycles, child seats, tagalongs, trailers and animals are not permitted on the 250km, 210km and 100km Ride Options.

18. Standard, two-wheeled, human-powered bicycles plus unicycles and recumbents are permitted on the 50km Ride Option. Scooters, motorised and power-assisted bicycles, child seats, tagalongs, trailers and animals are not permitted on the 50km Ride Option."

Firstly, many touring recumbent riders routinely cover 200 km daily, and unicyclists 100 km daily, and in 2006 several unicyclists successfully completed the 100 km route in better times than many bicyclists, so why were they banned from this year's longer routes?

Secondly, given that BV's slogan is "More people cycling more often" and the 50 km option is promoted as a family ride, why were child seats, tagalongs and trailers specifically banned?

⁷ David Leong

Please provide some commentary on the history behind the formation and future agenda plans for the National Bicycle Coalition

⁸ Phil Crohn – Question tendered in writing on the evening of the AGM

Could the three present tell us what they've achieved & hope to achieve in the future.

⁹ Chris

Is there general knowledge concerning the lockable bike boxes at railway stations?

¹⁰ Darren Room

Comment: delighted with the efforts of Bicycle Victoria on cutting the costs on country trains, however the overland costs \$40, nearly the same as a passenger fare.