

ride to work day 2009

Ambassadors for Bikes

*Ride to Work Day Ambassadors around the country are busy spreading the word, as **Toni Jordan** explains.*

Andrew Lind has a hectic life. A partner at the Sydney office of Gadens Lawyers, Lind has three small children and was, he says, “struggling to work fitness into my life”. Riding to work, a 35–45 minute cycle from his home in Willoughby to the CBD, was the answer. “Now I’ve turned my commute into my daily exercise,” Lind says.

Lind not only loves his ride to work, but this year he’s also stepped up to help his workplace, colleagues and the environment; he’s taken on the role of Ambassador. Ambassadors are senior managers who have made the commitment to make National Ride to Work Day a date on the company calendar and promote it well in advance through the intranet and staff newsletter. Ambassadors also commit to organising a celebratory breakfast or encouraging attendance at one of the CBD



Lind and fellow Gadens’ lawyers start their day with an invigorating ride to work

breakfasts to be held around Australia. At Gadens, Lind makes use of the firm’s intranet to post information about Ride to Work day, and to stress the importance of facilities like bike racks, lockers and showers, and the free breakfast.

Encouraging others to ride is easy for Lind: he just tells them about his own experiences. “I saved thirty-two dollars a week on bus fares, and spent no money on gyms, tolls or parking. At night I process the day I’ve had. I leave home when I want, and I leave work when I want.” He also tells them they can start as gradually as they like and that they don’t need to be Superman (or Wonder Woman) to ride to work. “When it rains, I don’t cycle,” he says.

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In Gadens' Melbourne office, Antoine Pace has been a Ride to Work Day workplace coordinator for the last two years and has already signed up for this year. Workplace coordinators from companies around Australia commit to distributing flyers, putting up posters, reminding cyclists to register and organising sponsors and breakfast on the day. "The trick," Pace says, "is to convince people that a bike is something other than a play thing".

Andrew Lind's best advice for new riders is: "Just do it. First timers should be prepared, so organise yourself with clean clothes and give some thought to the logistics of your ride." For Antoine Pace, the exhilaration of the trip is what's important, and his enthusiasm transmits to new riders. As Pace says "I feel alive when I ride".

"Sustainable transport is part of our environmental management plan and 10% of our workforce participated in National Ride to Work Day in 2007."

Rob Carter-Lewis, Principle Arup

"Looking after your health and financial wellbeing are key for a great retirement. We will be actively encouraging our team and clients to support National Ride to Work Day, and commute to work by bike"

Perry Abbott Chief Financial Officer, Superpartners

"Bike commuting is good exercise and staff health is a key component in our health and well-being strategy – whilst improving productivity, it is fun."

Colin Macdonald Health, Safety and Environment Corporate Manager, CSIRO

The Ambassador's Role:

- Endorse the concept of riding to work
- Place the date in the company diary
- Drive communications internally
- Provide a corporate breakfast on the day
- Speak to business colleagues and friends
- Include in sustainability, HR and facility plans

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For further details and to register as an Ambassador visit
www.ridetowork.com.au

This article first appeared in Aug – Sep 2008 issue of Ride On. [Ride On](#) is the bimonthly member magazine for Bicycle Victoria. For more articles like this, members can log on to [Blink](#) and go to the Ride On library