

**From:** Luke Ruskin  
**To:** [Select Committee on Personal Choice and Community Safety](#)  
**Subject:** Submission - Inquiry on Personal Choice and Community Safety  
**Date:** Sunday, 23 September 2018 10:36:54 AM

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To whom it may concern,

I wish to make a submission in relation to the below inquiry.

The Select Committee is to inquire into and report on the economic and social impact of measures introduced in Western Australia to restrict personal choice 'for the individual's own good', with particular reference to —

- (1) risk-reduction products such as e-cigarettes, e-liquids and heat-not-burn tobacco products, including any impact on the wellbeing, enjoyment and finances of users and non-users;
- (2) outdoor recreation such as cycling and aquatic leisure, including any impact on the wellbeing, enjoyment and finances of users and non-users; and
- (3) any other measures introduced to restrict personal choice for individuals as a means of preventing harm to themselves.

Thank you for reviewing your impact on society.

I'd like to confirm a few facts. Helmets stop many, many people from using a bicycle. I haven't cycled once legally since the law, my wife had not cycled since the law. She doesn't 'like' wearing a helmet. I encouraged her to break the law one day and she loved it so much we bought her a bicycle now we cycle illegally to local cafes. Again quiet streets with minimal traffic. Even with cars and motorcycles I own, I still prefer to use a bicycle for many trips. I would do more without MHL.

I understand the general public think helmets are good, as they mainly see sport cyclists on the road, going fast and so close to traffic. They don't mind wearing helmets, and around the world - people choose to wear a helmet sport cycling, with no law mandating! That is the most dangerous way to use a bicycle, and many die wearing helmets sadly, at speed and amongst traffic.

The biggest group of dead cyclists in Australia are wearing helmets, hit from behind. The speed I helmeted riders travel is often way too fast for conditions, they feel safer! MHL has greatly contributed to destroy the casual use of a bicycle, and the sooner it's repealed the better! Bike share services also highlight the fact people simply do not like wearing helmets! It's a fact Melbourne/Brisbane are failing - rest of the world can't keep up! It's also worth mentioning I have one arm! And still do not feel at any danger cycling without a helmet - I separate myself as much as possible from traffic - and ride to conditions.

We cycle the least amount of trips in the world, and there is no link between helmets and

cycling safety.

Please read this study, especially note pages 5 & 11.

[https://cp298pedbiketranpo.wikispaces.com/file/view/Pucher\\_cycling+for+everyone.pdf](https://cp298pedbiketranpo.wikispaces.com/file/view/Pucher_cycling+for+everyone.pdf)

I want to be clear I have no issue with those who chose to wear helmets, I love to wear them on my motorcycles and only wear full-face quality made helmets . But going 15 km hr separated from vehicles, or on quiet streets with nominal vehicles, carries vastly different risks than 110 kmhr on the highway.

There are much more important aspects to cycling safety and injury reduction, than a bicycle helmet.

Infrastructure, speed, separation from traffic, driver and rider education are all more important.

Im 42, and have been cycling regularly since I was 5-6, and have never worn a helmet. But I don't class myself as a cyclist! I'm a person who uses a bicycle, its not a special sport to me just like walking or swimming. It's just a normal everyday activity i do in jeans, shorts or business clothes. Its flat and there are barely any cyclists I ever see. I ride an upright bike and travel approx 20-25 km hr on quiet back streets with no traffic, and about 10kmhr on foot paths. I can carry groceries etc with ease.

Many more people drown by falling in, or being in water, but mandatory life jackets would stop many people being active. But if It could save one life, would that make sense?

MHL was an experiment, but it hasn't worked at all- we need to urgently repeal this law! 50 % of all trips in melbourne for example are under 4.5km! But people drive!

(Page 3 ) <https://transport.vic.gov.au/content/docs/VISTA-2013-Travel-in-metropolitan-Melbourne.PDF>

## VISTA Survey 2013 - transport.vic.gov.au

c o m m o n m e s o f m t r a n s p o r t less common and modes work social/ rec  
shopping pick up/ drop off education other 25% 20% 15% 10% 5% accompany  
someone personal

[transport.vic.gov.au](https://transport.vic.gov.au)

Using a bicycle can be very safe, healthy form of a transport. Dont stop people using bicycles with MHL.

Thank you

Luke Ruskin