

# RACT ACTIVE TRANSPORT POLICY



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# RACT POLICY – ACTIVE TRANSPORT

Organisation	RACT
Business Unit	Advocacy Committee

Version	Author	Description	Date Revised	Review Date
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# MOBILITY STRATEGY PILLAR: SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is the third component of RACT's mobility strategy. Within this pillar, RACT's vision is to have active transport options that encourage Tasmanians to undertake increased physical activity.

## 1) ACTIVE TRANSPORT POLICY STATEMENTS

### 1.1 Active Transport Explained

- Active transport options, primarily walking and cycling, are important for human and environmental health.
- Active transport infrastructure, such as cycleways, walkways and multi-modal transport options, are required to keep Tasmanians safe encourage the public to undertake increased physical activity.
- As well as benefitting human and environmental health, high active transport participation rates are likely to contribute to managing peak hour traffic.

### 1.2 Purpose of this Policy

- Through RACT's Advocacy Strategy a strong focus has been placed on future sustainability incorporating active transport advocacy.
- This policy addresses positive co-existence between cyclists, pedestrians, private vehicles, heavy vehicles and public transport through improved infrastructure, education, incentives and enforcement in Tasmania.

### 1.3 Relevance to RACT

- RACT, like all Australian automobile clubs, has transitioned away from a sole focus on the motor vehicle and onto all forms of mobility. This is part of a new outlook that centres on sustainable transport, including active transport options.
- The safe integration of cyclists and pedestrians with private vehicles and public transport through better infrastructure, incentives and education is an ongoing challenge for all road authorities and stakeholders, including RACT.

## 2) BACKGROUND, EVIDENCE AND POSITION

### 2.1 Background

- Active transport can prevent respiratory and cardiovascular disease, obesity, diabetes, heart disease and cancer through physical activity and less exposure to emissions. It can also reduce traffic injury and noise stress (World Health Organisation, 2018).

- A shift in investment towards active and public transport and away from roads and parking can create mobility equality, while reducing transport costs, congestion and greenhouse gas emissions (Climate Council, 2016).
- Bicycle transport takes up minimal space on roadways compared to private vehicles, allowing more people to travel. This is be a more efficient use of the network compared to road construction as it reduces congestion (Bicycle Network Tasmania, 2018).
  - However, the lack of safe and separated cycling infrastructure is a barrier to some people riding a bicycle for transport in Tasmania.
  - Separation of cyclists from vehicles is the most effective way to reduce the risk of rider injury. Cycleways also alleviate safety concerns of cyclists, enticing more people to ride (Bicycle Network Australia, 2017).
  - Separated cycleways, wider footpaths, street furniture, landscaping, narrower streets and lower speed limits in key CBD, suburban and rural areas can increase the appeal of walking and cycling (Heart Foundation, 2018).
- Dominance of car journeys are also a result of current limitations on other modes of transport, such as walking and cycling, but also public transport (City of Hobart, 2018).
- Growth in urban fringe areas across Tasmania has resulted in dispersed, low density residential development, making it difficult for people to walk and cycle for transport (Transport Access Strategy, 2016).
  - First and last mile issues are prevalent for Tasmanians living or working in outlying areas, where the nearest bus stop is beyond walking or cycling distance. This makes it less likely that a person will use public transit.
  - Unless there are connected active travel routes in rural or urban fringe areas, people who live or work in these areas are forced into vehicle ownership due to a lack of transport options.
- Higher density, more compact and connected environments encourage people to walk and cycle regularly as key locations are closer together. This includes first and last mile connections to public transport (Transport Access Strategy, 2016).
- Public transport can increase healthy outcomes as trips can be multimodal, with people walking or cycling at both ends of the journey (Heart Foundation, 2018).
- Tasmania's population is ageing faster than the rest of Australia, meaning there are more elderly people facing barriers in accessing transit services due to mobility limitations, particularly for those living in outlying areas. This refers to issues with footpath quality on routes to public transport. (Transport Access Strategy, 2016).
- Speed has been identified as a key risk factor in road traffic injuries, influencing both the risk of a road traffic crash as well as the severity of the injuries that result from crashes (World Health Organisation, 2019).

## 2.2 Evidence

- The proportion of people aged 18 and over classified as physically inactive in Tasmania is approximately 68%, which is well above the national average of 66% (ABS, 2015).
- More than 67% of Tasmanians are now overweight or obese compared with 63% nationally (ABS, 2015).
- Approximately 85% of people in Greater Hobart and 90% of the rest of Tasmania use a private vehicle to get to work. Nationally, the figure is 79% (ABS, 2016).

- Approximately 8% of people in Greater Hobart walk or cycle to work. This is the second highest number of walkers for an Australian capital behind Canberra (9%) (ABS, 2016).
- Approximately 6% of people across the rest of Tasmania walk or cycle to work, which is about the fourth highest ratio in regional Australia. Nationally, approximately 5% of commuters cycle or walk to work (ABS, 2016).
- Greater Hobart's average commute is 13.8km, while the rest of Tasmania's average commute is 16.4km. The national figure is approximately 16.5km (ABS, 2016).
- Approximately 90% of private dwellings have one or more registered motor vehicles in Tasmania, on par with the national figure (ABS, 2016).
- Approximately 60% of 1355 respondents to the Tasmanian Travel and Physical Activity Study either did not have access to, or could not ride a bicycle. Approximately 80% had access to a car or motorcycle (Menzies Institute for Medical Research, 2018).
- There is evidence that people will cycle around 6km to work and other destinations, and 3km to access high quality public transport, providing there are safe cycleways and bike storage facilities at transfer points (Transport Access Strategy, 2016).
- Approximately 88% of dwellings in Tasmania are detached dwellings, resulting in a dispersed and car-reliant population. Nationally, the figure is 73% (ABS, 2016).
- Participating in 30 minutes of moderately intense physical exercise daily can lower the risk of cardiovascular disease, diabetes and osteoporosis, and improve mental and physical health (Transport Access Strategy, 2016).
- The United Nations sets a goal of 20% of transport funding to be spent on active transport. Tasmania is estimated to have spent approximately 1.5% of its funding on active travel in 2015–16 (Australian Bicycle Council, 2016).
- In Tasmania, pedestrians are involved in an average of 9% of fatalities and serious injuries per year, with cyclists involved in an average of approximately 4% of fatalities and serious injuries (Department of State Growth, 2017).
- When Spanish city Seville introduced a network of separated cycleways, the number of bicycle trips increased from about 3 million to 16 million and crashes with cars decreased from 15 per million bicycle trips to 6 (Bicycle Network, 2017).
- The National Road Safety Strategy (NRSS) recommends more speed limits of 40km/h or lower in pedestrian and cycling areas (NRSS, 2011-2020).
- Pedestrians have a 90% chance of survival if hit by a car travelling at a speed of 30km/h or below, but less than a 50% chance of surviving an impact at 45km/h or above (World Health Organisation, 2019).

## 2.3 Position

### RACT

- Urges all levels of government to fund and implement initiatives that reduce vehicle interaction with cyclists and pedestrians:
  - Establishing a network of separate and signed cycleways and walkways on Tasmanian roads, both through investment in new infrastructure or retrofitting on-street parking/narrow roads. This would be based on movement data.
  - Speed limit reduction in areas of high pedestrian or cyclist activity across Tasmania, such as retail or school precincts, on an adjustable basis.

- Wider footpaths, speed bumps, kerb ramps and tactile ground indicators, elevated crossings and median islands, longer crossing timing with countdown timers, scramble crossings, overpasses and narrower street entries.
- Supports governmental initiatives that assist with the removal or significant reduction of vehicles and parking from Hobart's CBD in place of active and public transport.
- Encourages all levels of government to develop connections between cities and outlying suburbs through first and last mile active travel links to public transport.
- Encourages installation of start and end-of-trip cyclist and pedestrian facilities at public transport terminals, workplaces and educational institutions, as well as mixed use spaces with higher density housing, amenities and green spaces.
- Urges all public transport providers to provide bicycle carriage facilities on their fleets.
- Supports the installation of audible crossings and ramps for mobility-challenged pedestrians, as well as ramps onto public transport.
- Urges all levels of government to improve urban planning strategies so residences are closer to active and public transport corridors, employment, education, services, and recreational activities in order to reduce car dependency and transport disadvantage.
- Strongly supports laws that dictate the vehicle passing distances from cyclists, including 1.5 metres in speed zones more than 60km/h and at least 1 metre on zones below 60km/h.
- Does not support the introduction of additional transport taxes to fund the establishment of separated active transport facilities.
- Will educate road users on the rules and safety requirements for cyclists, pedestrians and motorists relating to cycleways, passing distances, safety gear and lights.
- Will continue to support educational and enforcement activities by Tasmania Police to encourage safe behaviours and compliance by all pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.
- Encourages a coordinated approach between government, researchers and stakeholders to create an active travel culture. This approach would address community education and incentives, health and cost benefits, transport planning, infrastructure, land use planning and social welfare issues in Tasmania through:
  - An updated Active Transport Policy that is tailored to population growth and increased walking and cycling as well as modern active travel infrastructure.
  - A representative body for pedestrians in Tasmania that can report back to relevant governmental agencies, similar to Bicycle Network Tasmania.

### 3) SCOPE

#### 3.1 Policy Application and Ownership

This policy applies to:

- Tasmanian pedestrians, cyclists, motorists and public transport patrons
- Bicycle Network Tasmania
- Pedestrian Council of Australia
- Metro Tasmania and public transport manufacturers
- Local government
- Tasmanian Government policy makers and ministers
- Australian Government policy makers and ministers

- Sustainability and traffic experts

The ownership and responsibility of this policy is with the RACT Board.

#### 4) APPROVALS

**4.1 Date of approval: [insert date]**

**4.2 Date of review: [insert date]**

**4.3 Signature of CEO: [insert signature]**