

PORTFOLIO: TRANSPORT – DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT**ISSUE: INQUIRY ON PERSONAL CHOICE AND COMMUNITY SAFETY**Cycling – Bicycle Helmets

Under the *Road Traffic Act 1974* and the *Road Traffic Code 2000*, cyclists are required to wear an approved helmet with the retention straps fastened at all times. The helmet must comply with AS/NZS 2063:2008—Bicycle helmets.

The State Government supports compulsory helmet legislation for all cyclists, as part of the National Road Safety Strategy, to reduce road-related death and serious injury. For this reason, compulsory bicycle helmet legislation is supported across all Australian jurisdictions.

A research report titled *Bicycle Helmet Research*, published in 2010 by the Queensland University of Technology's Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety, found clear evidence that bicycle helmets that meet national standards provide protection against head, brain and facial injuries. The report can be found on the following link – https://eprints.qut.edu.au/41798/1/Monograph_5.pdf.

The report also looked at whether bicycle helmets were impacting cycling rates. It found that although helmets reduced cycling rates 20 years ago, the majority of people today who do not cycle choose not to do so because it does not suit their lifestyle. Research undertaken by Biegler and Johnson (2015)¹ indicates that mandatory helmet laws offer substantial utility and are entirely defensible within the framework of a liberal democracy.

The Government recognises that cycling is an activity that offers considerable transport and health benefits. As such, the Department of Transport (DoT) works with many government and non-government organisations to support the use of cycling as a healthy and sustainable mode of transport.

Marine Safety – Lifejackets

In 2017, there was an amendment to the Navigable Waters Regulation 1958 (WA) that extended the choice of WA compliant life jackets available to recreational boaters to include jackets built to international standards (ISO), and therefore gave greater choice to WA recreational boaters.

The mandatory wearing and carriage of lifejackets is being examined as part of the comprehensive Recreational Vessel Safety Equipment Review currently being undertaken by DoT. The review is expected to be finalised by mid-2019.

The review includes extensive stakeholder engagement with peak body representatives such as Boating Industry Australia, Boating Western Australia, and Yachting Western Australia.

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CONTACT NAME: Ashley McCormick, T: 65516163 – Cycling
Steve Wenban, T: 0457 562 622 – Marine Safety

¹ Biegler, P., & Johnson, M. (2015). In defence of mandatory bicycle helmet legislation: response to Hooper and Spicer. *Journal of Medical Ethics*, 41(8), 713 - 717. DOI: 10.1136/medethics-2013-101476