

Report 13.19
Date 13 February 2013
File ST/01/02/01

Committee Regional Transport Committee
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Regional cycle skills and scooter training

1. Purpose

To update the Committee on acquiring funding for cycle skills training and to report on progress on scooter skills training across the region.

2. The decision-making process and significance

No decision is being sought in this report as it is updating the Committee on cycling and scooter information.

3. Background

Some parts of New Zealand (such as Christchurch) have had cycle skills instruction throughout their schools for decades. However, the Wellington region's schools have had very little cycle skills training over the last 30 years. A few schools even banned riding to school (due to fears of road crashes or bike theft). At the same time, paradoxically, Wellington is the only city to have seen a steady increase in cycle commuting since 1986. According to the most recent cycle cordon counts (March 2012) the number of commuters cycling into the Wellington CBD has doubled over the last eight years. We now have thousands of adult cycle commuters in the Wellington region who have never received basic cycle skills training.

There are schools currently in the School Travel Plan Programme that have nearly 20% of the students travelling to school by kick scooter. These children usually travel on the footpath where they cross driveways and travel near pedestrians. Due to the hilly nature of the terrain near many schools, the students do reach significant speeds when travelling downhill on their scooters.

Although the crash risk of the kick scooters is not explicitly documented (it is likely that they currently contribute to pedestrian crash statistics), this growing mode of travel has been identified as benefitting from many of the same safety skills as offered in the cycling area.

4. Funding for cycle skills training

As part of the Council's road safety work we have supported en Velo Urban Cycling Consultants (see www.enVelo.co.nz) to establish a regional coordinator role to train cycle skills instructors and network with schools to organise opportunities for cycle skills delivery for children. In July 2012 KiwiSport granted en Velo and the Council \$107,000 over 2012-2015 for this role. That position will facilitate cycle skills training for 7600 children and train 200 additional cycle skills instructors, 50 of which will be mentored through the NZQA assessment process. These instructors will work with schools to deliver NZTA Cycle Skills Guideline compliant grade 1 and 2 cycle skills training.

The partnership between en Velo and the Council has created a regional cycle skills programme brand called "Pedal Ready" (see www.pedalready.org.nz) which is rapidly gaining recognition around the region's schools. Already cycle skills training has been offered to just over 500 students across the region.

In December 2012, an application to the Road Safety Trust for \$211,734 to extend the Pedal Ready programme to adults and extend the training to more children across the region, received full approval. This is the first time such a significant amount of funding has gone towards cycle skills training across this region.

Bike NZ also applied to the Road Safety Trust for funding to deliver five work streams relating to cycling which will contribute to safer outcomes for cyclists and better relationships with other road users across the country. The Council currently delivers several of those work streams in this region. A Memorandum of Understanding was developed with BikeNZ to complement their national project "Making the Journey Safer for Cyclists". It will also deliver on the outcomes of the government's Safer Journeys Strategy by expanding the current regional cycle skills programme and providing additional resources for cycle skills training.

The targets for the Road Safety Trust funding will enable us to roll out cycle skills training to 180 adults, and Grade 2 training for 120 youth in the first year. The total target for the three years is to provide grade 2 training to 750 youth and 810 adults.

5. Scooter training

For the last 10 years scooters have been gaining popularity as a mode of travel for children. Results from the Wellington Region's School Travel Plan programme indicate that over 7% of students' journeys to school are by scooter.

Travelling by scooter can make the trip to school more fun, increase the travel pace of small children to a comfortable adult walking speed and increase children's comfortable travel range. Additionally, scooters can be combined easily with public transport. In the Wellington region 59% of children are driven to school. Half of these journeys are less than 2km long.

Potentially, this means that everyday over 40,000 children are missing out on a short active trip to/from school.

In October and November 2012 a group of six schools was recruited to pilot a scooter safety programme. The scooter safety programme was developed in collaboration with Micro Scooters NZ. The pilot programme, delivered to over 400 children in years 1-3 (5-8 year olds), taught the basics of safe scooter riding including handling skills, traffic awareness, footpath etiquette, pedestrian crossings and intersections.

By increasing the children's confidence, competence and enthusiasm for travelling by scooter, children can be inspired to be safer and more active on their journey to and from school, and parents can develop more confidence in their children's abilities.

In response to feedback collected through the pilot programme, the programme's content will be expanded, and the format will be changed to allow more time for instruction. The programme will be offered to approximately 1000 children in 2013.

6. Communication

Communications will be made on an on-going basis.

7. Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. **Receives** the report.
2. **Notes** the content of the report.

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