

Submission to: Transport for New South Wales

Re: New Inter-City Train Fleet Bicycle Storage

To: The Honorable Gladys Berejiklian, Minister for Transport

Dear Ms Berejiklian.

On behalf of inter-city train commuters on the Central Coast, Newcastle, the Illawarra and Blue Mountains; recreational cyclists in Sydney, the Central Coast, Newcastle, the Illawarra and Blue Mountains; and touring cyclists; we request that the newly announced Inter-City Train fleet includes bicycle parking facilities as described below in the section “On-train bicycle parking requirements”.

Why?

With the large distanced travelled by inter-city commuters it is impractical to cycle commute the whole distance. However, by combining cycling with a train trip (cycle-train-cycle) there are many potential benefits to the individual, the Government and ultimately society as noted below.

Anecdotally, many recreational cyclists are currently dissuaded from catching the train to or from other cities such as Gosford, Newcastle, Katoomba and Wollongong due to the difficulty in taking their bicycles with them, especially when in groups. A similar story exists for touring cyclists as just getting out of Sydney can be a nightmare for non-locals. Both these groups would bring much needed tourist dollars into these regional cities and surrounds if better on-train bicycle facilities were available.

As you can see from sample photos included in the section “Example Train WITHOUT Bicycle Storage” below, carriage of a number of bicycles on existing inter-city trains can be a safety hazard to train customers, may prevent use by disabled/wheelchair customers, may cause damage to the bicycles themselves, and may lead to extended train load and unload times.

There are many countries/cities where sensible on-train bicycle parking has been in place for years or even decades. Some example photos of and links to such facilities are included in the section “

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Example Trains WITH Bicycle Storage” below.

The NSW Government’s Sydney’s Cycling Future report (ref 1) states “The needs of people on bikes will be included in the planning, design and construction of new transport and urban development projects”. A new train fleet is a key “transport project”, as those trains will be in service for many decades.

Some of the benefits of providing on-train bicycle parking:

- ✓ More commuters will choose to include cycling in their commute journeys (multi-mode) hence:
 - reducing health costs to the government and society through the use of Active Transport, calculated at \$1.12 per kilometre cycled per person (ref 3),
 - Reducing car parking requirements at train stations, and
 - Reducing short distance car or bus journeys to/from the train station
- ✓ Some commuters will also choose to alight the train at an earlier station than if they did not have their bicycles with them, and continue their journey on their bikes. This will free up space for short distance (urban) train travellers.
 - This is certainly something I do personally on most work days.
- ✓ As per the Victorian Government’s evaluation of bicycle carriage on Victorian trains and coaches (ref 4), the benefits of integrating cycling with public transport include:
 - expands the catchment area of public transport routes;
 - the Seattle 7 Best Practices report (ref 6) notes a **12 fold increase** in capture area of transit investments through improved access for cyclists.
 - increases mobility opportunities for passengers at the start and end of their journey;
 - increases public transport patronage and reduces excessive car use; and
 - encourages cycling by offering an option to avoid poor weather, fatigue, unsafe routes, riding after dark, etc.
- ✓ Groups of recreational and touring cyclists will be better catered for without adversely affecting other train travellers. This will lead to additional \$s being spent on train travel, and in the Central Coast, Newcastle, the Illawarra and the Blue Mountains regions as more and more people escape the city for mid-week and weekend rides in our beautiful regional cities and surrounding countryside.
 - Anecdotally, many recreational cyclists currently drive to their ride start location, partly due to the difficulty associated with bikes on public transport;
 - The amount of money spent on average by cycle tourists is about 150% of that spent by non-cycle tourists (ref 5)
 - To help enable the tourism sector to contribute to the goal of doubling overnight visitor expenditure, as set out in the NSW Government’s ten year strategic business plan (ref 2).

On-train bicycle parking requirements

1. Bike racks should be grouped together, ideally holding 4-6 bikes in one area;
2. Bikes should generally be stored vertically in racks to minimise floor space use;
3. Racks should be vertically staggered to allow multiple bikes stored side-by-side without clashing handle-bars, pedals, etc;

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4. Racks should not allow significant movement of the bikes due to train movements;
5. The racks must enable the bike to be locked to a fixed item to prevent theft (with lock supplied by customer);
6. Bike storage space should be made available for tandems, trailers and cargo bikes;
7. The design should ensure that stored bicycles do not interfere with passenger aisles or doorways. This may require bikes to be stored in-line with the direction of travel, or aisles/doors to be offset from the centreline of the train.
8. Each 4 carriage set should have at least one carriage with a set of bicycle racks; so an 8 carriage train would have two carriages with bicycle racks;
9. To minimise train load time, the carriage with the bicycle racks should be the same on each train. Eg, always the rear of the front carriage, or always the front of the last carriage;
10. Adequate seating close to the bicycle storage where cyclists can keep an eye on their bikes;
11. Carriages with bicycle racks must have clear external bicycle signage as recommended in the UK Department for Transport "Bike and Rail, A Good Practice Guide"(ref 8), ideally with an indication of available bike rack space;
12. Bicycle markings could also be placed on station platforms adjacent to where the bicycle carriages will stop;
13. All new carriages must be easily retrofitted in future with additional bicycle racks as demand increases.

Potentially other "wheeled vehicles", such as wheelchairs, mobility vehicles/scooters and prams, could use the same modified carriage if suitable access and storage was provided, as is the case in Germany. As per the Australian Governments recent review of disability standards for public transport (ref 7), space for disabled persons should be separated from other users wherever possible.

Separate consideration should also be given to on-train secure luggage storage (eg, lockers), as many Inter-city services provide important holiday and business transport to other Inter-City locations, to Sydney and to Sydney Airport for connecting flights all over Australia and internationally. Currently travel baggage either clogs up the aisles becoming a trip hazard, or takes up valuable seat space (even though some overhead storage is provided, it is either too small for the baggage, or some people are not strong/flexible enough to raise their 10-20kg bags to above head height).

We look forward to your positive reply, and are happy to discuss the details to ensure a workable on-train bicycle storage solution for all train travellers.

Yours sincerely,

Alan Corven

President, Central Coast Bicycle User Group

CC: NSW Shadow Minister for Transport, Penny Sharpe

References

1. NSW Government's Sydney Cycling Future, December 2013
2. NSW 2021, A Plan to Make NSW Number One (<http://www.nsw.gov.au/2021>)

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3. The Australian Government's Department of Infrastructure and Transport "Walking, Riding and Access to Public Transport" report, July 2013
4. "A technical evaluation of bicycle carriage on Victorian trains and coaches" by the Institute of Sensible Transport for the Victorian Department of Transport, July 2010
5. Tourism New Zealand's Cycling and Mountain Biking, July 2014
(http://www.tourismnewzealand.com/sector-marketing/special-interest/cycling-and-mountain-biking/#_ftn1)
6. Seattle Transit Master Plan Briefing Book "7 Best Practices – Bicycle Access to Transit", February 2011
7. Australian Government Review of the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport – Draft report May 2014
http://www.infrastructure.gov.au/transport/disabilities/review/files/Draft_Transport_Standards_Review_Report_May_2014.pdf
8. UK Department for Transport's "Bike and Rail, A Good Practice Guide"

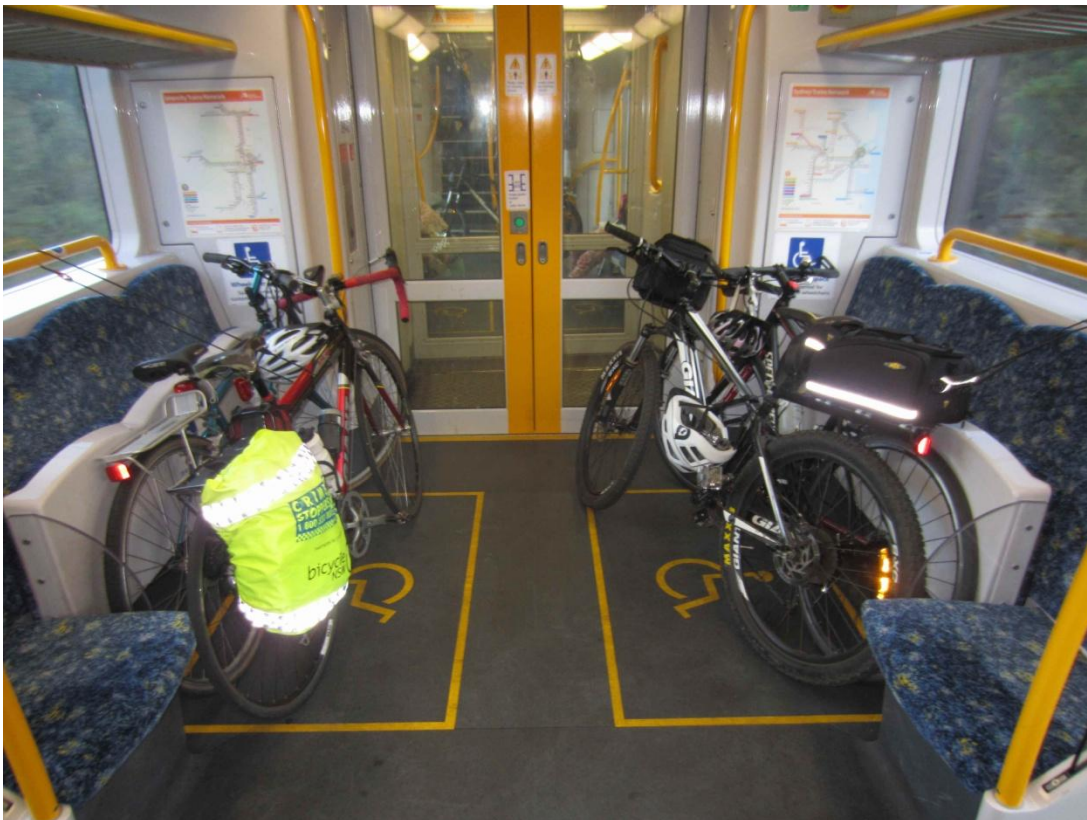
Contributors

- Werner Steyer, iBUG (Illawarra)
- Peter Lee, Newcastle Cycleways Movement (Newcastle)
- Gilbert Grace, ARTcycle (Sydney Central Region)
- Robert Moore, Bike Leichhardt (Sydney)
- Sara Stace, BNSW

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Example Train WITHOUT Bicycle Storage

New South Wales 2014 -



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Example Trains WITH Bicycle Storage

Here are just a few of the trains that provide for bicycles today, some for many years or decades.

Germany 2004 (photo by Paul Delconte) -



Tandem on the DB train from Passau to Munich, 2007. This is the dedicated bicycle area in one half of a train car. (photo by Brian Wasson) -



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Minneapolis 2006 (yes, even in the USA) -



Miami 2011 - <http://www.transitmiami.com/miami-dade-transit/metrorail/metrorail-bike-and-ride-gets-a-boost-with-new-hanging-bike-racks>

Washington Light Rail 2014 –

