

Bicycle NSW Board update 2011

It has been over 12 months since we have published News from the Board. In that time much has happened.

In the first part of the year the Board considered whether to take part in a concept known as the "National Bicycle Community". This was a project initiated by the Amy Gillett Foundation, to explore ways of harnessing the combined passion for bike riding all Australian Bicycling organisations share, in more effective ways.

There were two significant benefits we saw in the concept:

1. Cost reduction, better services for members
Collaboration, rather than competition would allow a sensible approach to such things as shared back office functions, a coordinated events schedule, and sharing capacity and capability for programs and activities.
2. Increasing our political impact and influence at all levels
Much more could be done collectively with a coherent national voice representing all the different kinds of bike riders – to influence government spending and policy, and attract more engagement and sponsorship from large national and global organisations.

The Board decided BNSW should be involved. Following this decision the Board monitored BNSW's involvement and the outputs from the NBC. This resulted in the Board gaining a much better insight into all the other Bicycle organisations across Australia, including sporting, advocacy and industry bodies. For many participants, this was the first time they had ever met face to face, and gave our (then) new CEO a fantastic opportunity to get to know the other players around Australia.

A systematic review of cycling organisations, information about cycling participation and market trends provided rich data to form the basis for an informed discussion. Again, this was the first time all such information had been compiled and analysed at a strategic level.

Together with eighteen other bicycle organizations nationally, we met three times for workshops about the implications of the external environment for our own capacity and capability. We also considered the potential formation of a National Bicycling organisation. From our discussions it is clear that much could be done to reduce costs and increase impact while maintaining autonomy for Bicycle organisations within their current areas of work.

While it is unlikely that a national organisation will form in the short term, the unanimous view is that this process has brought us all closer together, that there are a number of meaningful cooperative processes and projects underway and, as a result, much good has come from our collective endeavours.

As usual, the Board's focus during May, June and July was the annual budgeting process and working through the financial detail that sits behind this. As this was Omar's first budget, we were delighted to see significant improvements to the

process and reporting for both agreeing budget parameters and the final result. For an organization like Bicycle NSW this is a critical process to get right and ensure both an acceptable level of risk, and our ongoing financial sustainability.

Graeme Edwards, the President of the BNSW Council, presented to the Board in June. Graeme has agreed to provide further insights to the Board about the BUGs and we very much look forward to receiving them.

The Board dedicated a Sunday in August, and significant further time after that day, to reviewing the BNSW Strategy. At the Sunday meeting, which was moderated by James Lau, the Board decided that BNSW was, and ought to continue to be about, "Creating a better environment for cycling". You will see much more of this theme over coming days, weeks and months as BNSW more clearly embraces this theme and informs members and other stakeholders about the pillars under this theme.

The September Board meeting commenced with a fantastic presentation by Matt Faber (RTA) and Peter McCue (PCAL) about their roles and the need for their organisations and BNSW to work together to create a better environment for cycling.

September and October also saw the Board spend considerable time on the Spring Cycle. We were able to leverage our networks and connections to boost the marketing efforts of the last few weeks prior to the event to assist Omar and the team with entry numbers. This time proved to be well invested given the importance to BNSW and the success of this major event.

The October meeting included discussion about and approval of KPIs for our CEO, particularly in relation to the budget established earlier in the year. The Board has also been carefully monitoring the developments around the Bicycle Network and considering the implications of those developments for BNSW.

In October the Board appointed James Lau to the Board to fill a position that was required to be filled under rule 56.6 of the Constitution. This was a position that had been vacant since the AGM. If it was not filled before the upcoming AGM it would have disappeared at the end of the appointees term (resulting in a decrease from 9 positions to 8). The Board considered two candidates, both of whom the Board thought were appropriate for the position, and in a difficult decision the majority of the Board supported James. James' profile is available on the BNSW web page. The Board welcomed James at its October meeting.

The Board has over the past month received and approved the Statutory Accounts and prepared and/or approved all of the material for the AGM.

In addition to this there have been the monthly Audit and Risk Committee meetings, meetings of various other sub-committees and most recently addressing the issues raised by the Special Resolutions proposed for consideration at the AGM.

All in all, it has been a busy time for the Board.