

# Making the case

## Gaining management support for a workplace bicycle



Management support is critical to the success of a work bike. This factsheet highlights how to make a business case, identifying organisational benefits and suggestions for addressing management concerns.

To get your manager's support for a workplace bicycle, you may require a business case. The format may vary depending on your organisation, but is likely to include the following questions:

- Why start a bike fleet?
- What will it cost?
- What are the risks?
- How will you do it?

### Why start a bike fleet?

The answer to this question will vary for each workplace, but to get you started here are a few common benefits of a workplace bicycle.

#### Cost savings

A bicycle is generally a much cheaper way of getting around than taxis or a fleet car. See if you can get some figures around your organisation's current staff travel costs and estimate the potential savings from shifting a proportion of work travel to a bicycle.

#### Staff health and wellbeing

Regular cyclists on average take one less sick day a year than non-cyclists.<sup>i</sup> Cycling is a great way for staff to meet recommended physical activity levels. Physical inactivity is one of the main causes of ill health in Australia. Cycling is also an effective method of reducing depression and anxiety, helping to reduce sick days and boost work performance, leading to productivity gains.<sup>ii</sup>

#### Corporate social responsibility

A workplace bicycle can be a great way of meeting an organisation's environmental or health targets. Replacing car trips with bicycle trips reduces the organisation's emissions, as well as getting staff fit and healthy. Plus, a workplace bicycle can be great for public relations, sending a message to the community about your organisation's commitment to health or environmental goals.

### What will it cost?

Seek quotes from local bike shops for a bike and equipment. You will also need to allow for ongoing costs of maintenance, such as replacement inner tubes and an annual service. Consider whether there will be any costs involved with storing the bike securely. Contrast these costs with the cost savings and other benefits you anticipate.

#### Further information

Visit <http://www.dpti.sa.gov.au/communityprograms>  
Email [dpti.TravelSmartSA@sa.gov.au](mailto:dpti.TravelSmartSA@sa.gov.au)



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## What are the risks?

It is a good idea to think of potential concerns your manager might have about a workplace bike, and develop responses to these prior to presenting your case. Below are some common concerns that may be raised.

### The safety risk is too large

Cycling is often perceived to be more risky than it actually is. Australian and international data show that as cycling rates double, the risk per kilometre in fact falls by 34%.<sup>iii</sup> As with staff vehicle use, there are steps a workplace can take to minimise risk, such as developing a bike use policy and a screening process for employees who will use the bike – for further information, see the factsheet [Developing a work bike policy](#). If appropriate, you could undertake a formal risk assessment to identify other useful risk mitigation strategies.<sup>iv</sup>

### Staff will spend more time travelling

This is not necessarily the case. For shorter journeys of around 5km or less, travel time by bike is often quicker than by car.<sup>v</sup> Bikes can usually travel from door to door, with no time wasted searching for a park. Plus, bike lanes and paths can allow riders to avoid traffic jams. You might like to identify a regular work trip that would be suitable for cycling and present approximate journey times by bike and by car to your manager. The Cycle Instead Journey Planner at [www.cycleinstead.com.au](http://www.cycleinstead.com.au) may be useful

for calculating the bike journey time – as well as a safe and suitable route.

### Staff will arrive at meetings sweaty/in non-business attire

Cycling does not have to be any more strenuous than walking. If riding at a leisurely pace, it is possible to ride in business attire quite comfortably without raising a sweat. A bike with a mudguard and chain guard, accessories such as trouser clips and panniers to carry work materials/paperwork can make it even easier to arrive at your destination looking neat and presentable.

### Maintaining the bike will be difficult or time consuming

No more so than a car – less if you consider that you don't need to refuel it. Depending on use, the bike might need some basic maintenance around once a month: checking the tyre pressure, brakes, chain and lights. You could take the bike to a bike shop for a professional service annually.

## How will you do it?

Try to find other keen staff members to help you to get your work bike up and running. This will also help demonstrate the level of support for a workplace bike to your manager. Check out the factsheet [Getting on the bike: tips for encouraging work bike use](#) for ideas.

i Australian Bicycle Council & Cycling Promotion Fund, 2011 *Australian cycling: An economic overview*. Cycling Promotion Fund, Melbourne.

ii Cycling Promotion Fund, 2008 *Economic Benefits of Cycling for Australia*, Cycling Promotion Fund, Melbourne.

iii Cycling Promotion Fund, 2008 *Economic Benefits of Cycling for Australia*.

iv An example of Brisbane City Council's workplace bicycle risk assessment can be found at <http://www.travelsmart.gov.au/toolkits/bikefleets/pubs/bikefleets-appc-riskaction.xls>.

v Austroads, 2010 *The Australian National Cycling Strategy 2011-2016*, Austroads, Sydney.

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