



2 April 2021

Office of Road Safety  
Canberra

**Re National Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030**

Uber welcomes the opportunity to comment on the National Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030 and commends the Office of Road Safety for its aim to get to a place where, as a community, we no longer accept a transport system that results in death and serious injury to Australians on a daily basis. While the opportunity to submit formally on the Strategy has passed, given Uber's business in rideshare and delivery, we wanted to comment in brief on three aspects: workplace road safety, vulnerable users and vehicle safety.

With over 100,000 people using our apps to earn driving and delivering on Australian roads, we are committed to doing our part to promote the safety of all road users. Safety is built into our technology to ensure Australians who drive and deliver using our platform can do so safely and seamlessly.

While we take our responsibility seriously to provide best in class support and resources to our community, well designed road safety systems are fundamental to our communities' ability to mitigate risk and access a safe working environment. We have led the way for the industry with a number of long-standing policies, processes and features built in to our technology to support the safety of everyone who uses our app.

**Workplace road safety**

As a platform which enables tens of thousands of Australians to make a living, we are highly conscious of the need to enable a safety culture and consider critically our WHS obligations. We have led the way for the industry with a number of long-standing policies, processes and features built in to our technology to support the safety of everyone who uses our app.

These include:

- **GPS tracking and support:** All trips or deliveries on the platform are tracked - something that had not always been possible in the taxi sector. Our safety product and operational teams are continuously working on potential ways our technology can be leveraged to automatically identify when an incident occurs.
- **Fatigue management:** Our Fatigue Management feature forces drivers and delivery people to take an 8 hour break once they've been online on the app for 12 cumulative hours without an 8 hour (or longer) break. Drivers and delivery people also receive multiple notifications when approaching the 12-hour limit.
- **Annual bike safety tests:** Additionally, we have annual bike safety tests which bicycle delivery people need to pass in order to keep access to the app, and partner with Bicycle Queensland to roll out state-specific safe bike riding videos.
- **In-app safety toolkit:** In 2018 we launched Share My Trip to give partners the ability to share where they are on the map with loved ones, RideCheck reminders to and an emergency assistance button as part of an in-app safety toolkit to help people stay protected.
- **Incident Response Team:** All delivery people have the ability to report any concerns or issues to us via the app that goes to our 24/7 support team. This is a team of dedicated Incident Response experts trained to handle safety incidents. We encourage delivery people to contact us with any concerns or issues they may be having and we will work to resolve these with them
- **ANCAP Policy:** We have Australia's largest 5 star ANCAP policy. Since 2019 all new vehicles that joined the Uber rides platform were required to have a 5 star ANCAP safety rating, and from October 1 this year it will apply to all vehicles on the platform. We understand from ANCAP that this is the largest policy of its kind in Australia.
- **Law Enforcement Team:** We also have a team of former law enforcement professionals who are on hand to work with police at all times, respond to urgent issues and help assist during an investigation

We commend the National Road Safety Strategy's suggested actions to bolster workplace road safety and particularly commend the action to support the safety of delivery workers, for example by provision of separated bike lanes.

### **Vulnerable road users**

The rise of home delivery has materially increased the demand for fast, efficient and frictionless delivery services. The Uber Eats platform supports thousands of delivery partners who use bikes, ebikes and motorcycles to deliver products to consumers seamlessly and efficiently. Two wheel transport modes are proven to be better for the environment and provide positive outcomes for both traffic and road congestion. There are significant public health benefits of using bikes and e-bikes regularly and this mode is used by delivery people across Australia.

While this cohort of vulnerable road users continue to contribute positively to the future livability and connectivity of cities, they are exposed to risks on the roads that cannot be understated. Following the tragic incidents toward the end of 2020 across the food delivery sector, it is

especially clear that more work needs to be done to promote the safety of vulnerable road users, including those delivering on bikes and motorcycles.

Recent changes and new technology we have introduced to support vulnerable road users include:

- **Helmet detection:** We are rolling out a new global first helmet detection feature to help confirm that bicycle delivery people are wearing a helmet before they can start delivering with the Uber app.
- **Bike safety checklist:** Every day a delivery person riding a bicycle logs online to the app, they will be asked to review a visual safety checklist. This serves as a reminder on the necessary precautions, such as using safety equipment and following road rules before accepting deliveries.
- **Personal protective equipment:** We have begun rolling out access to free Bicycle Safety Kits for delivery people, which include a reflective safety vest, bike lights and reflectors, a bell and a mobile phone holder. This saves delivery partners around \$100. In addition, we're also working on a partnership to offer discounted motorbike equipment to motorbike and scooter delivery people through a leading motorbike equipment provider.
- **New and enhanced safety training and support:** We are constantly iterating and improving, and our education modules two-wheeler safety, risk mitigation, driver awareness of bicyclists, and safer streets are currently being reviewed by third party experts including former NSW Assistant Commissioner Michael Corboy, WeRide, and Bicycle QLD.

In order to help enhance the safety for vulnerable road users we support the Strategy's list of actions. In addition to the Strategy's list of actions, we also believe the Office of Road Safety should consider incorporating a cultural change campaign to improve community sentiment towards cyclists and ensure four wheel transport modes have a shared understanding and respect for cyclists and delivery people on the road.

## **Vehicle safety**

Vehicle safety is an important facet of Uber's road safety principles. Uber has Australia's largest 5-star ANCAP policy, with all vehicles joining from 1 October 2021 required to have a 5-star rating. Uber also believes in the potential of automated vehicles to substantially improve road safety outcomes by reducing the number of crashes caused by human error. We have an important investment in this technology through Aurora Innovation and we believe earning and building public trust in this technology will require close partnership with governments.

We agree with the actions of the Strategy to pursue technological improvements and uptake of safer vehicles and will continue investing in Uber's approach to vehicle safety.

We appreciate that the opportunity to submit formally has passed but would welcome a discussion with the Office of Road Safety about our own efforts on this front and how we can contribute to achieving the Government's priorities.

Kind regards



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