



What is Active Commuting Travel?

The most usual forms of active travel is walking and cycling, which is the most suitable and easy approach to travel short distances i.e- Commuting to work.

Active travel is an easy and accessible way for people to engage physical activity into their daily lives.

The commuting behaviour change program is targeted at increasing the number of people choosing to get on their bike or walk to and from their workplace. The program engages with workplaces to breakdown the barriers to more people cycling to and from work more often.

The modern day society that we live in requires us to be responsive and alert to the issues around us- two of which include climate change and health. Cycling has a positive impact upon these issues affecting us as individuals, community members, road users and employees. The active commuting travel program guides workplaces through change in developing and expanding their cycle culture and equips employees with the ability to safely ride to work and reap its benefits.



Active work travel plan

Businesses and Organisations should encourage making workplaces more cycle - friendly, as part of a travel plan to reduce car trips for commuting and business. Employers may take a number of steps to make it easy and to encourage staff to travel to work by bike, or to use a bike for business travel. Companies should begin by having a survey which is distributed to the staff and audit the work-site to find out what changes are needed to encourage more people to cycle to work.

The following checklist is of improvements companies may consider:

- Secured and sheltered bicycle parking
- Improved cycle routes to (and on) the company site
- Facilities for showers, changing and lockers
- Maps and resources about local cycling routes
- Incentive scheme for bike maintenance/cycles
- Free staff bikes
- Gear up staff cycling training session
- A staff bicycle user group (BUG)
- Cycling events
- Group of bicycle for business journeys

Once you have all the relevant information you can produce an Active Travel Work Plan. This is a formal way of documenting what you have done and ultimately where you are heading. It would nominate a workplace coordinator, organise a earthride initiative and simple measures such as installing more bike racks. The Active travel Work Plan also looks at ways of promoting other forms of sustainable active transport, alongside cycling. The plan may include measures to help support walking, cycling, public transport, car pooling and tele commuting. The plan will also provide a basic guide for reaching your business by walking, cycling and public transport for people outside of your workplace. The guide can be designed by staff and ideally include bicycle parking information and a map.



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Why promote Active Travel?

In today's workforce there is ever increasing evidence that employee's who are active in their daily lives have improved physical and mental health. Regular cycling and walking to work reduces the risk of coronary heart disease, diabetes, and obesity, some forms of cancer, stress and depression.

Promoting Active Travel in the workplace has beneficial outcomes for their employer including

- **Decrease in sickness absence**
- **Higher staff morale**
- **Improved staff retention**
- **An enhanced corporate profile through investing in staff wellbeing**

People who cycle or walk to work have 40% lower rate of all cause mortality, than those who do not. Cycling and walking offers a great form of physical activity, providing significant contributions to public health. Cycling and walking are also a very effective method to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, traffic congestion and ever increasingly expensive fuel costs.



What is a Bicycle Commuting Club (BCC)?

A bicycle commuting club is another advantage of active travel. A BCC is formed when a group of employees join together to form a club. There are all sorts of reasons for forming a BCC, some for social reasons riding on the weekends out of work; others are a way to promote the benefits of active transport commuting to work. In some cases BCC help improve facilities so that the workplace becomes more cycle friendly these include –

- **Improve facilities such as getting more showers and lockers installed**
- **Organising social rides on weekends and evenings out of work**
- **Provide advice and engage people who normally don't cycle or walk to give it a try**
- **Form a team to ride in charity events**
- **Work closely with other BCC to lobby for extensions of bike paths to their workplace**

A BCC is a very valuable asset as it can raise the profile of active travel within a business.

A lot of workplaces – large and small, government and private have set up BCC for a detailed list please go to www.bicyclensw.org.au and follow the link to the commuting page.

Health Benefits of active commuting

Physical inactivity is a major factor to poor health in Australia.

The more people that engage in physical activity the less they are at risk of major disease such as heart disease, stroke, obesity, diabetes, arthritis, osteoporosis, some cancers and mental health problems.

Including physical activity i.e. (active commuting to work) into your daily routine can help towards prevention and recovery from ill health.

Australia currently has a number of health challenges appearing many of which are caused in part by increasing sedentary lifestyles.

Cycling and walking as a form of active commuting to work is an effective method to help reduce sedentary lifestyle. Australians led increasing busy lifestyles, cycling is in a unique position for its ability to get people to engage physical activity into everyday living.

Facilities

Businesses and organisations should encourage making workplaces more cycle friendly, as part of a travel plan to help reduce car trips for commuting and business. Employers may take a number of steps to make it easy and to encourage staff to travel to work by bike or walking, or to walk or cycle for business travel.

Bicycle Parking

The most effective way to encourage staff to ride to work is to provide a safe place to park your bicycle. Bicycle parking should be close to the actual building; it should be secured, well lit, sheltered from the weather and over looked by nearby offices and people passing by.

Ideally access should be level so cyclists do not have to carry their bicycles down stairs. One option would be to include a lockable compound (accessed by swipe card or key).

Shower, Changing Facilities and Storage

Showers, changing area and lockers should be close to the entrance of the building. There should be a well ventilated area provided to dry clothing apparel for people who cycle or walk to work.

Lockers are also important as showers, they enable staff to store personal items such as towels, clothing and helmets ideally they should be well ventilated secure and lockable.

As well as showers and lockers businesses are increasingly providing “extras” to make it easy for staff to freshen up after cycling or walking to work. These include towels, iron board/iron, shampoo and hair dryers.

