



Joint Select Committee on Road Safety
Parliament
Canberra

25 August 2021

Re Joint Select Committee on Road Safety inquiry

Uber welcomes the opportunity to submit to the Joint Select Committee on Road Safety's inquiry into measures to reduce trauma on Australian roads.

Road safety is a complex area, which requires industry cooperation with experts and government stakeholders. We are committed to forging partnerships and working collaboratively to raise the bar for safety for everyone who works on Australian roads.

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.

Positive impact of shared mobility options on road safety outcomes

Uber supports the Vision Zero ambition adopted across Australian governments, and a safe systems approach should be at the heart of government policy. We believe Uber can play a role in achieving Vision Zero through advances in our technology, described in more detail below, and fundamentally by providing an alternative to drinking and driving.

Earlier this year, researchers from the University of California, Berkeley conducted a study based on US Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) data from 2001–2016 and measured it against Uber activity from 2012–2016. This study improves on existing studies by using more granular Uber data on rideshare usage intensity on a census tract level. The research indicated that Uber has reduced alcohol-related traffic fatalities in the US by 6.1%, and has reduced overall traffic fatalities by 4%.

Workplace road safety

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 into our technology to support the safety of everyone who uses our app.

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. Our goal is not only to help ensure the safety of people who drive using our platform, but also for everyone who shares the road. For example, driver-partners receive potential trips by way of a notification on their smartphone, which can be accepted or rejected in a single click. There is no necessity to click through multiple screens, or otherwise interact with the smartphone beyond following GPS directions to the pick-up point.

We have led the way for the industry with a number of long-standing policies, processes and features built into 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 driving 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:** We continue to build features to help improve safety for riders and driver-partners on the app, such as the Safety Toolkit, the Share My Trip feature to give partners the ability to share where they are on the map with loved ones, and an emergency assistance button.
- **Insurance and Support package:** Uber provides every driver partner and delivery person with specialised insurance which covers accidents and injuries, as well as income support, should something go wrong while they're on a trip. This insurance package is provided at no additional cost to driver partners/delivery people, and also includes counselling support.
- **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. 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

Our focus on safety also extends to a range of products under development. While Uber rides have been GPS-tracked from the beginning, we recently introduced Ride Check, a feature that detects possible incidents or crashes, prompts driver partners and riders to use our Safety Toolkit (including a button to directly contact emergency services), and facilitates our safety team following up with a phone call. We are also working on new technology, like safe routing to help drivers avoid complex or higher risk driving manoeuvres and safe driving notifications.

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.

Uber Eats is proud to be a founding signatory of the National Food Delivery Safety Principles. The Principles outline the standards of practice that food delivery platforms have committed to, to help ensure the ongoing safety of food delivery people. Designed to complement the valuable work being done across state governments on food delivery safety, the Principles take a nationwide approach to ensure accountability across every state in Australia.

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.
- **Bike lane alerts:** Our app can send riders a push notification informing them that their upcoming drop-off point is near a bike lane or along a cycling route, and reminding them to look out for people on bikes before opening the door and stepping out of the car.
- **Personal protective equipment:** Earlier this year we began 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 people 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 for cyclists, and safer streets are currently being reviewed by third party experts including former NSW Assistant Commissioner Michael Corboy, WeRide, and Bicycle QLD.

We agree with the conclusion in the draft National Road Safety Strategy 2021-30 that governments should take action “to support the safety of delivery workers, for example by provision of separated bike lanes” and “[i]mplement Movement and Place frameworks to support best practice speed management and tailored safe system road treatments” to protect vulnerable road users.

We would also support 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.

Concluding comment

Thank you again for the opportunity to submit. We look forward to being part of the discussion.