

Bicycle helmet law in Australia.

I believe this law should be scrapped countrywide. It should be a personal choice for the following reasons.

I have read studies on the impact on injuries in cyclists wearing a helmet and wearing no helmet and it doesn't seem to have much difference. Even if there is a small difference in favour of helmet wearers it still should be down to the individual to choose and manage the risk involved in it. Should a cyclist have an accident and should it be made worse because he/she was wearing a helmet, the only consequence will be on the cyclist in question. With or without a helmet it makes no difference whatsoever to whoever else might be involved in the accident. A helmet law does nothing to protect third party injuries in a bike accident, so there is no case to be made here.

Furthermore, and this is anecdotal evidence from my travels overseas, no obligation to wear helmets gets more people riding casually short distances. Struggling bike sharing schemes, such as the one in Melbourne, would greatly benefit from this, as people wouldn't need to always carry a helmet with them, buy a new helmet or wear a shared one.

There will always be reckless and irresponsible people out there, and if they injure themselves as a result of poor risk management, then it is only logic that they face the consequences.

Considering the argument behind the helmet law, then the government should also consider banning cigarettes, as they cause far more damage to the society as a whole than a few injuries – or deaths – that might stem from non-helmet wearing cyclists.