



Media Release

Andrew Stoner MP **Michael Richardson MP**
Leader of The Nationals Shadow Minister for The Environment
Shadow Minister for Roads
Shadow Minister for Water and Ports

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COALITION TO START PEDALLING ON CYCLE PLAN

The NSW Coalition believes more should be done to promote cycling as a viable means of transport – and it has asked Liberal Candidate for Balmain, Peter Shmigel, to do something about it.

“Labor’s promises about cycling have all been abandoned or broken,” Andrew Stoner, Shadow Minister for Roads said.

“Labor has:

- slashed bicycle funding from \$25million to \$5million per year;
- failed to construct the promised 200km of cycleways each year;¹
- abolished the Bicycle Unit at the RTA;
- mothballed the *Bicyclist Safety Action Plan*;
- failed to cut cycle accidents by 5 per cent, as promised in 1999², and;
- made no progress on increasing bicycle use three-fold statewide, also as promised in 1999³.

“As a result, bicycle use is basically static with fewer than one per cent of people cycling to work,⁴ and there has been no significant improvement in bicyclist safety⁵,” Mr Stoner said.

Shadow Minister for the Environment Michael Richardson described Labor’s failings as a lost opportunity.

“Cycling should be growing as a recreation and transport option in NSW. But the Labor Government has simply stopped pedalling,” Mr Richardson said.

“The right strategies will encourage more people to use bicycles beyond the current quarter million, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, saving people money and improving the community’s physical fitness.

“This is a Government that doesn’t care about the environment, and that doesn’t care about developing sustainable and practical transport options. Indeed, this Government’s approach is typified by the closing of the William Street bike lanes,” Mr Richardson said.

Mr Stoner said he had asked Mr Shmigel to look at infrastructure issues, including safety “black spots”, bicycle network connectivity, integration with public transport, traffic management practices, Government agency arrangements, education and to extensively consult with key user groups and others.

¹ Action for Bikes, RTA, 1999.

² Action for Air, EPA, 1999.

³ As above.

⁴ Household Travel Survey, Transport & Population Data Centre, 2003.

⁵ RTA accident statistics.

Mr Shmigel will also conduct an on-cycle audit of the 44 bike links in Sydney that Labor promised in its *Action for Bikes* announcements in 1999.

“Peter is a regular bike commuter and a professional sustainability consultant. He understands cyclists and cycling issues,” Mr Richardson said.

“He will give us some real, workable policy recommendations that will provide a better deal for cyclists.”

Mr Shmigel said he was looking forward to the challenge – in between campaigning in Balmain on his bike.

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