



Bike Racks On Buses Update

25 November 2009

Draft Land Transport Rule: Omnibus Amendment 2009 Rule 10005

NZTA is consulting on a draft Omnibus Rule 2009 which includes a proposal to allow the fitting of a bike rack to a bus. The bike rack proposal can be found in section 7.1 (3) of the draft rule (page 11): www.nzta.govt.nz/consultation/omnibus-amendment-2009/index.html

7.1(3) Clause 4.1 is amended by inserting the following subclauses:

"4.1(4A) A bus of Class MD3, MD4 or ME not exceeding 13.5 m in length may be fitted with a bicycle rack.

"4.1(4B) A bicycle rack is not included in determining the overall length or forward distance of the bus."

All councils who may want to fit bike racks to buses in the future should submit on this proposed rule change. A lot of other non bike rack changes are in this Omnibus Amendment Rule changes so these may hold up the bus length rule changes. It is anticipated that if the rule change is agreed, it will come into effect on 1 April 2010.

Benefits of bikes on buses (BOB)

BOB are commonplace in North America. The principal manufacturer of bike racks for buses is Sportworks, whose website (see links below) includes links to research documents and an extensive FAQs list.

While most people who cycle enjoy the independence that comes from riding a bike, there are many benefits of being able to put your bike on a bus when you choose/need to:

- Rather than drive to the mountain bike trail head, get a lift with the bus
- Avoid a steep hill, a long stretch of road or an intimidating section of traffic
- You can use your bike during the day to transit to and from work meetings, or to do lunchtime errands
- Too far to walk to the nearest bus stop? Cycle to it in a quarter of the time needed to walk
- The bus provides a backup for strong weather events or failed bicycle lights
- You can take your bike on the bus to work with you in the morning so that you can ride home in the evening (to a hot shower if needed)
- If you are just starting out and fitness levels are low, you can bus part of the way and ride the rest
- Got a break-down? Put your bike on the bus to get it to a bike shop

We recommend no charge for the bike as the bus company recovers the cost of the rack through the extra patronage of cyclists.

The Christchurch trial

Environment Canterbury (ECan, the regional council) is the public transport agency leading the BOB trial in Christchurch. Bike racks were successfully trialled on several two-axle 39 seat buses and now will be fitted to 75 vehicles (30% of the fleet) including three-axle 52 seat buses. Three bus companies are involved. When the bike racks are all fitted, advertising will start.

ECan is looking to provide BOB on all **hill** routes, **recreational** cycle destinations conducive to cycling), **long distance routes** (e.g. satellite towns such as Rangiora, Lincoln and Rolleston), the airport & anywhere there is a **constraint** (e.g. the Christchurch to Lyttelton tunnel).

Using bike racks on buses



At the Frocks on Bikes launch in Christchurch, a Red Bus with a bike rack for people to trial was very popular. A rack not attached to a bus to bring into schools and malls is under investigation. Most users found the bike racks easy to use. Here is a great brochure explaining how to use bike racks:

www.metroinfo.org.nz/bikeRacks_loading.html

Bikes with wheels smaller than 20" cannot be put these bike racks, although as of 2006 Sportworks has offered a version which accepts 16" wheels.

Links to how-to-use brochures and fun video clips are at the end of this document.

Ongoing research on benefits of integrating cycling and public transport

Extensive North American research (may be found on National Center for Transit Research website) will be supplemented with a major NZ report expected to be published in 2010. Preliminary results indicate that the benefit cost ratio (BCR) is quite good. The research includes aspects such as parking of cycles at bus stops ("bike and ride") compared with carrying cycles on buses ("bike on board"), and a bit on bikes on rail. It appears taking your bike on board is better economically than providing bike parking, as a bike rack on a bus can be used several times a day.

In Canberra, 1.2% of those boarding are using a bike rack and 50% of these people are new to public transport, delivering a fare recovery benefit. In Canberra half the buses are fitted with bike racks, with another 100 to be added into the fleet. Their goal is to have all buses fitted with racks.

Bus manoeuvring and bus stop length

A report by TERNZ did not identify any safety issues with low speed manoeuvring on 12.6m buses.

There may be issues with the tightness of some bus stops (e.g. Auckland & Wellington) i.e. short bus stops with car parking at either end. Christchurch lengthened a number of bus stops for this reason. Bus stop infrastructure needs addressing as part of any bike rack initiative.

What about sufficient capacity?

Good frequency of buses is important. Most buses with bike racks in Christchurch are on frequent routes, e.g. someone encountering a bus with a full bike rack would only have to wait 15 minutes. If bus drivers consistently leave people with bikes behind, bike parking at stops may be required.

Operator liability

In the litigious United States, transport operators and agencies typically transfer the liability to the user through disclaimers via signage or within the instructional material. If bike damage is caused by the driver the rules of liability apply. Bus companies carry extra insurance up to \$1500.

Resources

MANUFACTURER: www.bicycleracks.com (includes extensive list of FAQs)

HOW TO USE www.metroinfo.org.nz/bikeRacks_loading.html
www.action.act.gov.au/doc/bikenride/bikenride.mpg
www.activelivingbydesign.org/communities/featured-community/bike-rap

CHRISTCHURCH: www.metroinfo.co.nz/bikeRacks_Main.html

CANBERRA: www.action.act.gov.au/bike_n_ride.html
www.action.act.gov.au/doc/bikenride/bikenride.mpg (cool video!)

 Technical queries? Log them at: <http://can.org.nz/forum/329>