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Green lights for bikes

There are so many bikes on the road today that bike riders are demanding their own traffic lights.

With the boom in bike riding, the simple red, orange and green of the traditional signal is just not enough to keep all traffic moving efficiently.

Now the roads around our cities are beginning to sprout traffic signals specifically for bikes. A new report from Bicycle Victoria—**Green Lights for Bikes**—shows the way.

Prepared by Sinclair Knight Merz, **Green Lights for Bikes** reveals little known or used techniques for providing for bicycles at traffic lights.

The techniques presented are all currently in use in Victoria, Australia or elsewhere in Australia or New Zealand.

Bike signals reduce the risk to people on bicycles. Without a bike lantern, bicycle riders may be unsure when they should cross an intersection or whether they will have enough time to cross.

“In cities worldwide, bikes are now accepted as part of traffic,” said Harry Barber, CEO of Bicycle Victoria. “Although the flow of traffic in cities is controlled by signals not enough engineers know about bike traffic lights or are confident enough to put them in.

“With this report we hope to demystify the secret world of signals. We are distributing it worldwide through engineering and cycling networks as the techniques are applicable everywhere,” Mr Barber said.

Green Lights for Bikes makes it clear that bikes have different requirements to other transport modes. For instance bike riders are:

- More difficult to detect at intersections and so may need a separate detection device to activate their signals
- Slower than most motor vehicles and so may require more time to cross an intersection
- Harder to see and so benefit from their own lane and being out in front of other vehicles when the light turns green
- More vulnerable to being “squeezed” by merging traffic and so need time to clear the intersection.

Copies of the report available at: <http://www.bv.com.au/bike-futures/41329/>