

Media Release

17 December 2015

Car commutes halve during RAC e-Bike Trial

Initial results from the RAC e-Bike Trial have shown that car trips made by e-Bike participants for commuting were almost halved during the trial period.

RAC Senior Manager Policy and Research Anne Still said the car trips participants made to and from work, as a driver or passenger, reduced by almost half for the duration of the 10-week trial.

“Prior to the trial, 61% of participant trips to and from work were made by car and this dropped to an average of just 32% during the trial. These car trips were typically replaced by e-Bike, with 55% of all commuting trips over the 10 weeks being made by e-Bike.

“In total over the 10 weeks, 1,778 e-Bike trips were made, 81% being for commuting to and from work and 19% for other purposes such as for fitness, leisure and shopping.

“Usage of the e-Bikes for commuting purposes remained high throughout the trial. Furthermore, with 83% of participants already owning a regular bike before applying to take part, we believe the increase in cycling maintained throughout the trial demonstrates the potential of e-Bikes to make cycling a more realistic option for more people.

“It’s predicted that by 2031, seven of the nation’s 10 most congested roads will be in Perth while congestion will cost the State \$16 billion in lost productivity.

“While there is no single solution to Perth’s congestion problem, an increase in cycling can help to reduce the number of cars on the road while also providing significant benefits for individuals.

“The feedback we’ve received from the participants has been very positive and it’s apparent that many have a newfound, or re-ignited, passion for cycling.”

The RAC e-Bike Trial was run in partnership with the City of Perth, City of Wanneroo, the University of Western Australia, and the North Metropolitan Area Health Service through Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre Trust. It was also supported by the Departments of Transport and Sport and Recreation through the *Your Move* program.

RAC is exploring options to provide its members, and the community, with the opportunity to try out an e-Bike. In early 2016, RAC will trial a member e-Bike loan scheme to allow RAC members to borrow an e-Bike to see if it’s a commuting option which could work for them.

Details of the RAC e-Bike loan scheme, and full results of the RAC e-Bike Trial, will be released in early 2016.

The RAC e-Bike Trial

- The trial included 40 participants. All held current driver’s licences.
- 83% owned a bike, however only 45% cycled at least once a week for any purpose.
- 75% worked full time.
- Interestingly, despite the fact that females are typically under represented when it comes to cycling, 60% of our trial participants were female and 40% were male.
- Usage of the e-Bikes remained high, peaking at 65% in Week Six, and only decreased to 48% in the last week of the trial.
- Over the 10-weeks, the most frequently given reason for using the e-Bikes for commuting purposes was for the fitness / exercise benefits (77%). This was followed by enjoyment / comfort (66%) and because their destinations were within a reasonable cycling distance (59%).