

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE ACTIVE MODES INFRASTRUCTURE GROUP

For transport professionals, there are a myriad of acronyms that seem to crop up, be they organisations (NZTA, RCAs, IPENZ-TG, etc) or technical terms (AADT, LOS, RMA, etc). For those who are involved with walking and cycling, now you have one more to get familiar with: AMIG.

The Active Modes Infrastructure Group is convened by the RCA Forum and comprises a number of representatives from local councils and the Transport Agency. I was previously involved providing research support, and now act as the IPENZ Transportation Group liaison on AMIG. This report introduces the group and what it does; in the future, I'll provide you updates on latest developments.

AMIG was actually first set up in 2012 as a working group to consider the question of cycle markings for situations like



shared lanes; it was from the subsequent trials that "sharrow" markings (*left*) were ratified for general use in New Zealand. Since 2014, the group has taken on the wider remit of considering all aspects of walking/cycling signs and markings, rules, and best-practice design and guidelines. After discussion amongst the group, many of these developments will subsequently end up in guidelines like the new *Cycle Network Guidance* (CNG, another acronym for you) and/or be included in legislation such as the Traffic Control Devices Rule.

AMIG typically meets about 3-4 times a year at different locations around the country, usually taking the opportunity to have a first-hand look at local facilities, innovations or technical solutions as well. The most recent meetings have been in Wellington in April and Auckland in July; next up is Christchurch in October, ahead of the Asia-Pacific Cycle Congress.

What kind of things are discussed? Here are some of the most recent issues and developments being looked at (by no means an exhaustive list!):

- New signs and markings have been ratified for use on separated cycleway crossing driveways (*right*). They'll soon make their way into the TCD Manual and CNG (<http://www.nzta.govt.nz/cng>). For now, you'll just have to hunt the details down in *New Zealand Gazette*, No. 39 (13 April 2017).



- New guidelines for planning and designing pedestrian and cycle rail crossings have now been released for general use (find it at <http://www.kiwirail.co.nz/infrastructure>). Some AMIG members were on the steering group providing feedback on the earlier drafts.

- Some interesting designs for bus stops alongside separated cycleways have been developed in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. Lessons learned from these are being collated for inclusion in updates to the CNG.

- Various trials of shared path signs and markings have been underway around NZ. The consensus now is to use the Austroads set of path behaviour protocols (keep left, get off the path when stopped, etc) and to allow shared path markings to

have the same regulatory status as the equivalent signs. There is also some interest in using joint shared path crossing signals that feature both a pedestrian and cyclist in the same aspect.



- New signs are available to help inform approaching cyclists of the presence of a "hook turn" box at an intersection (*left*). These are advance boxes that allow right-turning cyclists to make a two-step manoeuvre by keeping to the left-hand sides of the intersection.

- Proposed changes to road rules and traffic control devices have been drafted for where paths cross intersections. In particular, solutions are being developed that would give priority for path users over side-road traffic. There has also been recent research looking into allowing footpath cycling by children, and regulations for electric bicycles and other low-powered wheeled devices, and these have also been reviewed and discussed by AMIG.

- Trials are currently underway to test cycle directional signals in Auckland and Christchurch (*right*). Unlike conventional cycle signals, which allow cyclists to travel in any direction, these signals provide for specific directions only.



So, what can you do next?

For NZTA/RCA staff: If you are involved with the provision of walking and cycling infrastructure in your area then chances are that you will get good value out of attending the regular AMIG meetings (or at least being on the mailing list). Most of the larger city councils are regularly represented at AMIG, but there is still the opportunity for others to join the group to both learn and contribute to the discussions. Many new traffic control device and design innovations are also often in need of places to undertake operational trials of them. Contact co-convenors Wayne Newman (RCA Forum) or Gerry Dance (NZTA) to be included.

For consultants and others: You might like to check whether Transport Agency or council staff that you deal with are aware of AMIG and its developments; perhaps they should be encouraged to sign up. Also, if you have any ideas for introducing new walking or cycling treatments (or amending existing ones), please pass them on to me and I will raise them on your behalf at AMIG.

For more information, you can also check out the group's webpage:

<http://rcaforum.org.nz/working-groups/active-modes-infrastructure>

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