

## **MANAGING AN EMERGENCY INCIDENT IN A**

### **GROUP CYCLING SITUATION – by Peter Gurney**

*This subject was covered in the BBUG first aid training day held on Weds 26<sup>th</sup> Feb 2025. It was suggested that it would be worthwhile to circulate the information to all members of BBUG.*

Listed below are a number of considerations if an incident arises and a club member or members (and perhaps other persons too) require first aid or other emergency assistance during a bike ride.

Major incidents will require more consideration than the more minor falls and scrape accidents that we thankfully usually experience. But, in all incidents where the ride group stops cycling and gathers around any casualty the points below should be borne in mind. Note: the group members become a resource to use and, from my experience, all will be willing to do so.

*Let's take the example of someone who has fallen rather heavily from their bike and has some rather serious injuries.*

#### **Most Important:**

**The first rule of any accident situation is to do what we can to avoid further casualties and to keep those injured from further harm.**

If possible, get everyone and their bikes off the trail/road. Then take a little time to consider the situation. Have the casualty assessed by yourself or others. Someone commences first aid. If the ride leader is not on scene, get info to her or him (CB radio, phone, send a messenger).

#### **Next:**

**Appoint traffic sentries in both directions:** located 10 or more metres each direction to warn others of the accident; to stop, slow or caution other riders or vehicles; to seek assistance if necessary.

#### **Determine exact location and call an ambulance:**

When the exact location is difficult to know (no street signs or property numbers) use landmarks, businesses, emergency markers on trails, or **the emergency plus app** [www.emergencyplus.com.au](http://www.emergencyplus.com.au) (This app was developed jointly by the federal government, industry and emergency services. It provides accurate info by the phone's GPS, a pin drop function with street name and property number, latitude and longitude, and **'what3words'**. The 'what3words' system has mapped the earth's surface and has allocated three different words to every 3 square metres of the planet. The app also has call buttons to 000 and a video on how to perform CPR).

Calling 000: The call is answered by an operator who asks 'police, fire or ambulance?' The call is then passed to the relevant service call-taker who asks further location and emergency details. Ambulance is responding while this occurs. The call-taker remains on the line to provide first aid and other advice. The operator triages the call and prioritises the response.

#### **First aider and a 'Hand Holder':**

The first aider gets on with assessing and treating the injured.

The 'hand holder' is someone to stay with and reassure each casualty, to pass info and to ask necessary questions. An important function. Not everyone is suitable for this role.

### **Ambulance Guide:**

If the location is inaccessible by vehicle, it may be necessary to have a rider meet the ambulance and guide paramedics to the site. The 000 operator will advise if this is required, but anticipate this request.

### **Incident Recorder – Important in every incident:**

There's a need to record the details of everyone involved, not only BBUG members, for legal action, personal and club insurance, individual and club records and any follow-up. Names, addresses, phone numbers for those injured and witnesses, photos/video of the scene and any property damage, if taken to hospital - which hospital, note times. These details should be noted while on scene, and soon after a BBUG accident report lodged (BBUG website – Info – Report an Accident).

### **Secure Belongings and Bike:**

Bikes and belongings of those involved must be secured on scene and after. Some items will go with the casualty in the ambulance (phone, wallet, glasses, helmet if a head injury, etc).

Bikes and other items have to be secured and later transported to the injured rider's home. Options - Find a safe place to secure the bike. Someone to return later with a car to pick up. Emergency contact/family to pick up. Bike Network rider rescue service, RACV bike assist (part of RACV total care). For non-club members the police should look after bike and any other property.

### **Call the BBUG rider's emergency contact:**

All ride leaders have BBUG members' emergency contact details. Think before calling, be as accurate as possible. Ask any non-club member involved if they want someone called.

In the case of a very serious accident, perhaps call the club president or another club executive officer, so that person can also speak to the emergency contact, offer assistance and interface with any media.

### **Finally**

Not all incidents will need all of the actions above. But keep these points in mind in an endeavour to best assist anyone who is injured, to avoid further injuries, to get timely medical care and to have all relevant details for any future action.

**Recommendations:** Download the Emergency Plus app. Also download the Heart of the Nation app (helps to locate the nearest AED – for heart attack situations)

Peter Gurney

4<sup>th</sup> March 2025