

CENTRESTAND

March 2010



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Let those who ride decide



M.R.A.
MOTORCYCLE RIDERS'
ASSOCIATION OF SA INC.
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Australian Motorcycle Council Inc.

EDITORIAL

To write or to ride? That is the question. It is now Sunday and I am working to a deadline to get the March issue of Centrestand finished and to the printers on Monday so that you will receive it in your letterboxes before Saturday. So I am not going for a ride today. Other members of the Committee are similarly engaged today on Centrestand articles or matters relating to the upcoming State election.

This is not an unusual state of affairs for Committee members. We spend a lot of time at meetings with each other and other people who may be able to benefit the MRA and its membership in some way or just to advance the cause of motorcycle safety for all our two-wheeled brothers and sisters. We spend time on the phone to each other, reading articles relating to motorcycling, writing letters and papers to be sent to polities who may or may not take any notice of them with lots of late nights getting things finished.

For a substantial number of hours each week we spend time making sure that the business of the MRA continues and runs smoothly, that the bills are paid and that they can be paid in the future. And why do we do this? Because we feel that this is important. That is why we volunteered to do the jobs in the first place. We are doing this so we can all keep riding.

Sometimes this comes at a cost to time spent with family and on other interests. At times the cost is financial with work opportunities put aside. However, we set our priorities and live within them, just as you do. Sometimes a weekend priority is to spend time with the family or just to do the washing or gardening.

Why has this become an issue for the Editorial? Recently, the Committee has been accused of neglecting the membership because its members don't go on MRA rides enough. The fact is that we wish that we could go on more rides and connect with members. We can't always do that so we provide information in the Centrestand and on the Website. The Website forum is also a place to get information. Most of our personal phone numbers are in the magazine and Committee meeting dates are published so that members can come along to talk about their issues.

As noted elsewhere in the magazine, not all jobs on the Committee are currently filled and some people are carrying more than one job. The more people on the Committee then the more the work is shared out and the more opportunity there is for us to go on rides.

So what are you doing this weekend?

Ride on, ride safe and write in, Harald

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The SA state election is just around the corner. Look for the issues that will affect your lifestyle. You are a member of a minority group that makes up over 10% of the voters in this state. Read the articles in this edition of the Centrestand and remember you are a motorcyclist when you vote.

I would like to thank all who attended this year's MRA SA AGM. These members were given an insight into the very good work our Committee continues to do. These volunteers share a passion; make financial and personal sacrifices, for the good of our association and for the benefit of all South Australian motorcyclists.

A disappointment for me was the number of members who did not attend the AGM. This year we had a significant number of proxy votes. The proxy votes outnumbered the attendees by 2:1. I worry about the direction this could take us and am concerned that at its worst, it may encourage and reward campaigning by individuals who have different agendas to the other members of the Committee and possibly the majority of all members.

We are all volunteers and have to fit the MRASA into our personal lives. Some individuals will have more time available than others. They use this limited spare time working for the association. Who would campaign strongly for the right to volunteer their personal time and money supporting the MRASA? We must be able to work as a team and accept majority decisions; but which majority? 1) The majority of members who don't show an interest in attending any meeting including the AGM? 2) The few members who do attend and hear the reports before casting their single vote? 3) The members who have signed a proxy form by someone campaigning on their own personal agenda? The answer is simple of course. The most legal votes at the AGM carry the day. If we go down this popularity path with proxies, we are setting ourselves up to fail. The skilful member with only limited time will not take up a position and we will be the lesser for it. Also at risk is retaining the dedicated, elected members of the committee when the direction of the MRA SA is controlled by the faceless proxy voters who don't even show up to the meetings.

I have sent a protest letter on your behalf to the Hon Michael O'Brien MP, the Minister for Road Safety. I encourage you to read this letter. The announcement at the recent South Australian Motorcycle Safety Forum that there will not be a specific Motorcycle Safety Strategy in our state, but a single group road safety plan will stall any improvement in motorcycle road safety. There is also a risk that without a government approved Motorcycle Safety Strategy to be implemented; the Motorcycle Taskforce may be wound up.

Ride Safe, Phil McClelland

MRASA INC. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2010 ELECTION RESULTS

The Annual General Meeting of the MRASA Inc. was held on Saturday 27th of February 2010 at 12.00 noon at the Director's Hotel, Grote Street Adelaide. At that meeting most of the members of the Committee were elected. Some vacancies were filled at the subsequent Committee meeting on 9 March 2010

The 2010/2011 Committee will be:

President	Phil McClelland
Vice President	vacant
Secretary	Sue Rogan
Treasurer	Angela McClelland
Editor 'Centrestand'	Harald Lindemann
Publicity Officer	vacant
Membership Secretary	Jock Rogan
Register Liaison Officer	vacant
Minutes Secretary	none elected,
Committee members will take turns until one is appointed	
Stock Control Officer	Sean Beames
Road Safety Officer	Neville Gray
Webmaster	Jock Rogan
General Committee Representatives	
- Phil Creer	
- John 'Dutchy' van Helm	

Sub-committee Coordinators who also are members of the MRASA Committee are elected by their committees at meetings which are to be held within 28 days of the AGM for that purpose. They are:

Toy Run Committee	Monday 22 March, Directors Hotel, Adelaide 7pm
SAMRATS	Have held their meeting. Jock Rogan was elected as Coordinator.
4Bs Committee	Have held their meeting. Phil McClelland was elected as Coordinator
Scooter Club	21 March at BP St Marys at 10 a.m. prior to the run leaving at 10.30am

Peter Mount has indicated that he will be standing as a General Committee Rep at the next Committee meeting. If you are interested in contributing at a Committee level then come along and be counted – 7pm April 12 at the Directors Hotel

MAXIMOTO CLOSED

Maximoto has closed its doors. The shop has been a fixture of the motorcycling scene in Adelaide for some years and it is sad to see it go. The MRA would like to thank Henrik and the boys for their past support of the Centrestand and the Toy Run and hope that we see the shop open its doors again one day.

SECRETARY'S REPORT to the AGM**It's Been An Entertaining Year!**

With hand on heart I am sincere,
Mail has flowed, bills are paid.
Counselling offered for problems made,
Endless phone calls cauliflower ear.
As I said, "Entertaining Year!"

It's my job to inform the mob
From Mid-North group to South-East crew,
Phone calls, mail, nothing new.
The post office groans, "Oh God it's you."

Problems sorted, redirections late,
Insurance screw-ups on my plate
I/net muffed, details lost,
Domain name secured, grey hairs the cost.

I have a Webmaster on my side:
The information highway's mine to ride.
We send the details, information flows;
Lots of email, you know how it goes.

Dumb blonde finger, trees have died
Printing info from this highway ride.
Hand on heart I am sincere –
Oh my God, it's another year!

Sue Rogan

MICK AND MAC by Harald Lindemann

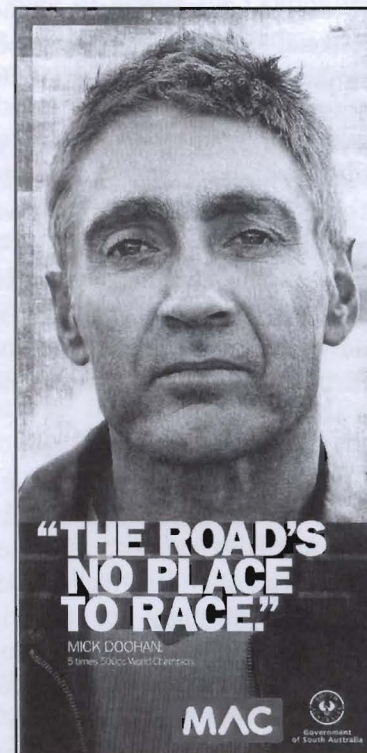
We have a tendency to make heroes out of people who are able to do the extraordinary, who have the capacity to confound our expectations, who have the ability to make us think about things differently and who in small and great ways, have the ability to change our lives. Whether Mahatma Gandhi or Curt Cobain, many of us will model our lives and behaviour on the people we admire. Our lives will contain constant reminders of these people. You can see it in hairstyles, posters, videos and books, to name a few.

The lives of famous people strike a chord within us and help make our own lives more meaningful in many positive ways. They inspire us to do better and to be better than we are, even within our own limited abilities and application.

Like many others, one of the people I admire is Mick Doohan. I've watched his racing career in Australia and then his move to international GP racing, often in awe of what he was able to do on a motorcycle. It was often clear to me that his skills as a rider were so far ahead of the bikes that he was given to ride. He has also demonstrated time and again that not only is he a great racer but that he has managed to continue to be the ordinary, down-to-earth Aussie bloke that he started out as. What's not to like?

As an expert racer, when he talks about riding and bike handling I expect people to listen. His support of the Motor Accident Commission's motorcycle road safety campaign is more than just a paying gig. He has been down the road so many times that the fact that it has always been on a racing circuit has saved his life. He knows that if the same thing had happened to him on the road then he would have been dead many times over. So next time, before you and your mates try to emulate Mick or his mates on the road, think about the other qualities that he would like you to emulate. Like common sense, and respect for your own life and that of other road users – and take your racing to the track because, as he says, **"The road's no place to race."** He knows what it's all about and so should you.

For more info go to www.mac.sa.gov.au/noplacetorace
(poster illustration above copyright MAC Government of SA)

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SA MOTORCYCLE ROAD SAFETY FORUM – ONE VIEW **Harald Lindemann**

The forum was held on February 24th at the RAA headquarters in Mile End. It was arranged through the auspices of the Department of Transport, Energy and Infrastructure (DTEI) and with lots of input and pushing from the MRA's Neville Gray.

I was at the last forum held in 2003. This was a series of talks and workshops where the participants discussed the issues relating to motorcycle safety and ended up with a number of agreed principles and future goals for motorcycle safety in South Australia. The main success of that forum was the establishment of the Motorcycle Task Force on which the MRASA has membership. I expected more of the same to take the development of motorcycle safety in SA forward the next step, but it was not to be. The agenda quickly disabused me of that notion. Instead, it was to be a talkfest where experts would provide us with the latest information about motorcycle safety.

I'm not saying that it was not worthwhile. I just felt that the purpose of the forum was not proactive enough and was not going to provide any opportunity to focus on alternate solutions to the problems of motorcycle safety. And I really didn't feel like being talked at by experts about things of which I was already aware.

Michael O'Brien, the Minister for Road Safety, opened the proceedings and provided some stats. Motorcyclists represent 21% of all driver fatalities but one third of all motorcycle fatalities. The rate of increase of motorcycle injury and fatalities is greater than that for all drivers due to the increase in registrations, mostly scooters, of PTWs (powered two-wheelers). Increases in injury and fatality rates are not as great as expected due to the advances in rider training and the introduction of LAMS. The Rider Handbook was cited as one successful venture in road safety for motorcyclists. The emphasis of future road safety programs would be a four-pronged attack in trying to develop safer roads and roadsides, safer speeds, safer vehicles and safer road users.

Jeremy Woolley, the manager of Safer People, DTEI, provided us with more statistics. Registrations of PTWs have risen from 26,000 in 2004 to around 40,000 in 2009 (3% of all motor vehicles are PTWs.). The risk for motorcyclists of an injury or fatality was 30 times higher than that for a car driver for every billion kilometers travelled and the cost to the community of injuries and fatalities for motorcyclists was more than three times the cost of car drivers per kilometer travelled.

He also noted that the current Motorcycle Road Safety Strategy which was to end in 2010 would not be redeveloped for 2011-2020 but was to be incorporated into the state Road Safety Strategy. (*More about that on page 9 Ed*)

Next was **Dr. Matthew Baldock** from the Centre for Automotive Safety Research. He also presented us with more statistics from the latest research. There has been an increase in the registrations of scooters and lower capacity motorcycles. More older riders are now on the road. There have been no real increases in overall distances travelled by all motor vehicles from 2003-2009 but there are more motorcycles on the road. From 2002-2007 there was an increase in motorcycle fatalities of 3.6% while the increase for drivers was 0.4%; motorcycles represent 4.5% of registered vehicles and 0.9% of distances travelled; for single vehicle crashes 39% of all fatalities occur on curves (57% for motorcycles); riders over 44 figure a lot in most of the statistics; 20% of all motorcycle fatalities had no m/c licence.

Dr Baldock noted that the statistics showed that there was a need to get more detailed information about riders and their bikes, i.e. who rides what, where and when. There was also a need to get more detailed information about crashes, contributing factors, who is at fault, the role of fatigue and other cognitive and physiological factors.

There was also a need to get more information on injuries. Most injuries were to the shoulders and upper and lower limbs. For head injuries 32% occurred when the helmet was worn and 36% when the helmet came off from not being fastened properly. More information is also needed regarding injuries and the ability to cross-reference the type of injuries with details of the rider, the motorcycle and the crash.

His talk became a bit more interesting when he talked about issues regarding licensing. Because of the over-representation of younger riders in the stats regarding injuries and fatalities, consideration is being given in some jurisdictions to the ideas of raising the age for motorcycle licences and making new riders spend more time on their P-plates. Research has also shown that motorcycle riding is a specialised skill and more akin to the skills needed for a heavy vehicle licence than just an extended car licence. His thinking was that car drivers should not get an easy run when applying for a motorcycle licence.

On the matter of skills he noted that most riders tend to underuse the braking systems of their vehicles, especially the front brake, and typically use only around 56% of the available braking power of the bike.

No research has been done on the effectiveness of current traffic law-enforcement measures.

Richard Blackwell, the Marketing Manager of the MAC, then introduced the current motorcycle road safety campaign that Mick Doohan is involved with and explained how the campaign came about and was developed.

Neil O'Keefe, who is the Chairman of the Victorian Motorcycle Advisory Council (VMAC) had some interesting things to say. He said that since the 1970s the road toll has fallen considerably due to seat-belt laws, helmet laws, drink-driving laws, the development of dual carriageways and other things. These have worked, but were easy to do. Governments now have to take political risks in order to do better.

The Victorian government took risks with the \$50 motorcycle levy, with their integrated transport strategy and with their regulations on training and education. He claimed that the levy enabled the government to target areas of specific problems for motorcycle safety. Two-thirds of the funds went to motorcycle blackspots and one-third to other areas of need, and this seems to be working. He said that the levy enabled the government to get a clear focus on the problems, it enabled a collaborative effort with the various departments doing the work, and inclusion of motorcycle groups. The levy was a way to bypass the budget process and provide funds specific to motorcycle safety needs. He said that in Victoria they are trying to understand why motorcyclists ride, and design a transport policy around that reality.

Training and education in Vic is funded through Honda Australia Rider Training (HART), which includes refresher and coaching courses to improve skills.

There is also an intervention program in place through the police traffic department whereby drivers are pulled over for behaviour that might put riders at risk and given a lecture on safer behaviour. The emphasis is on education rather than punishment – only 500 out of 3,000 motorists involved in the intervention program were subsequently booked.

He noted that motorcyclists are singularly conscious of the links between riding skill and drinking and drug taking. In a recent study in Victoria it was found that only 1 in 600 riders were booked through an RBT.

He closed noting that high quality research on motorcycle safety was being done in Australia, especially through the development of partnerships between the different interest groups, and success is aided with the presentation of positive rider role models and collaboration with motorcycle dealerships.

Liz de Rome, the General Manager of LdeR Consulting, which put together the *Good Gear Guide*, spoke about protective clothing. Novice riders tend to wear inappropriate or less protective clothing than experienced riders. 74% of injuries are to the legs but motorcyclists are less likely to wear protective pants. As we all know injuries are not limited to broken bones. More serious and lasting are the soft tissue and joint injuries. 75% of crash impacts are around 50kph. Speed affects only 10% of injuries – the rest are from hitting another object. 71% of injuries could have been mitigated by the wearing of protective clothing.

Most protective clothing is designed for European conditions and will not always be suitable for Australian conditions. Liz spoke at length of the need for the development of standards for protective gear. At the moment the consumer has no way of comparing the usefulness of the gear on the market or even if it has been tested to do the job that you expect it to. As an example she noted that in a typical crash where the rider slides down the road the clothing that he wears needs to resist 4-7 seconds of abrasion. Regular denim jeans have an abrasion-resistance time of 0.6 seconds. She recommended the development of a star rating system which would link to standards of wear, tear and crash resistance for all clothing sold as protective clothing. This would, if successful, increase the cost of products sold in Australia because of the small market here. An easier way to go is to adopt the European standards which already provide the consumer with some comparability between products, but is voluntary so not all products are tested or comparable.

(The guide, is available online at http://www.infrastructure.gov.au/roads/safety/publications/2009/good_gear_guide.aspx. Ed)

Members of **SAPOL** took us through the some of the mechanics and science of motorcycle crash reconstruction and **Ken Wooton**, motorcycle journalist, spoke of his own experiences as a motorcyclist and the importance of being safe and having fun.

There was some interesting information presented in the forum, much of which I suspect was already known by many of the participants seeing as how they were all experts in the area, albeit experts in their own specialisations. As I noted at the beginning of this article, nothing was decided and nothing really new came out except that the State Government was not going to renew the Motorcycle Road safety Strategy, which I think the MRASA should resist as should the Motorcycle Task Force. This will be an ongoing issue at the MRA Committee and, depending on the outcome of this weekend's State Election, will be prosecuted accordingly.

MRASA attendees at the Forum were Neville Gray, Phil McClelland, Peter Mount, Jock Rogan, Rene Borst, Phil Cole and myself.

TOY RUN REPORT

An amended version of the report made to the 2010 AGM

The Toy Run Committee for 2009 consisted of Harald Lindemann as Coordinator supported by Phil McClelland, Angela McClelland, David Vaselli, Peter Mount, John 'Dutchy' van Halm, Jock and Sue Rogan and Graham Cane. Paul Morgan, who had been Coordinator for many years and a number of other long-standing Committee members retired after the 2008 Toy Run and this opened up the Committee to a new group of people equally determined to make sure of the success of the event.



The story of the 2009 Toy Run is mostly one of positive experiences so I can safely say that it was a success, even though the contributions received from the riders and general public fell short of previous years' contributions. This was attributed to the specific financial crises (SFC) experienced by members of our supporting community as a result of the GFC. We had positive comments made about the organisation, the band, the trials demonstration and especially about the Show and Shine which was a huge success. Thanks to Phil McClelland who organised it and Neville Gray who ran it on the day. A large focus for the year was increasing our sponsorship for the Toy Run and this resulted in a record amount of \$11,500 achieved with the possibility of ongoing sponsorship in future years.

We made some mistakes. The sponsors could have been better looked after on the day. We had no VIPs. We hired heaps of portaloos to meet the requirements of our liquor licence and they were hardly used. Power for the day cost a lot more than previous years due to some poor communication – definitely not all MRA's fault. But we learn and we get better at it.

The 2009 Toy Run probably had the largest number of participants that we have ever seen. The crowds were thicker, the bike parking had to include the paddock across the street and the Kiwanis ran out of drinks by 2.00pm. We had a good number of volunteers to help

with setting up and packing up and act as marshals on the day – thanks to the SAMRATS guys and girls and others for being so enthusiastic. We could have organised them a bit better in some places but the high numbers of participants made a mess of our plans.



Phil Smith, Winner of the Best Decorated Bike Award

The Treasurer reported that Income for the Toy Run was \$24,857.00. Expenses were \$23,702.51 and that included a donation to the St Vinnies of \$2,000 to kickstart their Christmas program for 2010. Expenses also included a one-off cost for a container to store all our Toy Run equipment. Sponsorship for the Toy Run was \$11,100 so financially the Toy Run came out positive and we can be confident that the event will continue to support the endeavours of the MRASA in the future.

Thanks to all our sponsors who help make the day a bit more possible: the SA Motor Accident Commission, Andersons Solicitors, Bridgeland Motorcycles, Flotek Engineering, Mount Barker Council, the Pancake Kitchen, Toll SPD, Star Track Express, Miniskaff, Adam Internet, SAPOL, the Holdfast Bay City Council, Mount Barker SES, Cambridge Gas Supplies, Couriers Please, Trevor Denton of Gawler Golfcars and B&C Security Services.

Harald Lindemann Toy Run Coordinator 2009



Waiting for Glen Dix to wave the flag

LETTER TO THE MINISTER

26th Feb 2010

Hon Michael O'Brien MP
Minister for Road Safety
GPO Box 1838
Adelaide SA 5001

Dear Minister,

I wish to draw your attention to a disturbing policy announcement at the recent Motorcycle Safety Forum opened by yourself on the 24th February.

In your opening address you observed that the Motorcycle Taskforce (MTF) was convened as a direct result of the original Motorcycle Safety Forum held in 2003. You also pointed out that the Taskforce had produced the State's first Strategic Plan specifically for motorcycle safety, the Motorcycle Road Safety Strategy 2005-2010.

Following Ministerial endorsement of the Strategy the government has implemented most of its recommendations, contributing to enhanced safety for riders. For example, we achieved the introduction of the Learner Approved Motorcycle Scheme, pushed for the trial of the BAYSIC safety barrier system on Gorge Rd, successfully lobbied the Motor Accident Commission to focus on motorcycle safety, and made the RiderSafe program available to already-licensed riders seeking a refresher course, as well as many other initiatives.

These positive results from the Taskforce were largely possible because the MTF was able to cite the endorsed motorcycle-specific Strategy. It was particularly disturbing therefore to hear Dr Jeremy Woolley state at the recent forum that the Motorcycle Safety Strategy would not be renewed for 2011 and beyond. This will leave South Australia as the only state without a motorcycle-specific strategy and indicates an attitude within DTEI that the safety of motorcyclists along with all other vulnerable road users can be addressed without specific planning. The planning MUST incorporate the road users, industry and relevant government agencies. Without all three groups' involvement, any future planning is unlikely to achieve its goals or satisfy the riding community's expectations.

The inclusion of motorcycling strategies in a general road safety strategy will not encourage specific problem solving around motorcycle-specific issues. It will not recognise for instance specific approaches to road design, infrastructure management, or training issues that the motorcycle riders in this state need. I cannot imagine a motorcycle-specific blackspot

program, which is urgently needed, emerging from a generic strategy document.

On behalf of the membership of the Motorcycle Riders' Association of South Australia I ask that you review with DTEI this retrograde policy. The 40,000 or so motorcyclists of SA are members of the community who deserve recognition, acknowledgement and support around their chosen hobby and/or mode of transport. The government should be seen to be proactive in policy development, rather than the reactionary position taken by the bureaucrats we encounter. Motorcyclists need to be considered at least as much as cyclists, pedestrians and others for whom DTEI seems to bend over backwards.

The MRASA has been involved in motorcycle safety for over 30 years in SA. We initiated the rider training program now run by the SA Government and have a proven track record as a motorcycle safety advocate. We are not asking for anything that has not been formalised in the past. We strongly protest this change in DTEI's policy and urge you to ensure that the Department works with the MTF to formulate a safety strategy specifically for motorcyclists.

Yours faithfully

Philip McClelland President MRA SA

NOT THE GREAT ESCAPE RALLY

We weren't able to get it together for 2009 so we are making an extra effort to meet in 2010. The non-rally will be held at the usual site near Marrabel on the weekend of May 8-9. BYO everything and be aware of fire bans. We will try to get a toilet to the site for you. This is a great opportunity to just chill out and meet up with old friends. Go to the MRASA website <http://www.mrasa.asn.au/html/ralliesruns/> for a map to help you get to the site. See you there!

STATE ELECTION ISSUES

The next two pages introduce a number of questions which the MRASA has posed to all candidates for the State Elections. We have also presented a background précis or rationale for the questions and invited candidates to have their responses posted on the MRASA website. You are invited to check the website to see how the candidates in your areas for the Legislative Council and the many candidates for the House of Assembly have responded.

Although we don't expect the take-up to be high, this at least introduces some of the key issues pertaining to motorcycle safety to our pollies, some of whom would have previously had no idea.

MRA SA – State Elections: Motorcycle Questions to Candidates & Rationales

1. Motorcycle Safety

- How familiar are you with the primary issues regarding motorcycle safety?
- Do you have any other ideas, recommendations or policies which you believe would be of benefit to motorcyclists?

Those who make the recommendations, propose the bills and enact laws pertaining to motorcycling and motorcycle safety rarely have any specific interest in, direct experience of or familiarity with motorcycling. As a consequence, such legislation often does not reflect the best interests of those who ride, even though the intentions may be well-meant.

Motorcyclists, from learners onward, quickly become very familiar with road infrastructure and traffic management issues which threaten their welfare. If you are not familiar with issue relating to motorcyclists, how do you intend to become familiar with them? With whom will you consult, and in what form?

While it may be helpful to identify here what riders think are the primary issues (which may be many and various), the question is not intended to determine an electoral candidate's opinion of these issues; rather it is to determine a candidate's recognition and understanding of them.

2. Scooters

- Do you support a graded system of training and fees for riders wishing to obtain a motorcycle licence, a scooter licence, a 50cc scooter/moped licence or a powered bicycle licence? How do you see such a system being implemented?
- Are you aware of the rate of increase of scooter sales over the previous five years? To what factors do you attribute this?

Scooters are becoming increasingly popular both as a lifestyle and a mode of transport. At present, only a car licence is required to ride a 50cc scooter, whereas anything larger than this requires a full motorcycle licence, with its inherent costs, thereby discouraging the broader uptake of two-wheeled transport.

Motorcycle riding requires specific skills which are not acquired through driving, with the resultant potential to compromise one's safety. On the other hand, the more familiar all road users are with the functional and behavioural characteristics of motorcycles, the safer riders of such machines will be. A balance between the two is highly desirable. In short, 'bums on seats' is good for motorcycling, and the more drivers ride the more they will be aware of riders when they drive.

3. Off-road Motorcycling

- Do you support a dedicated, public access, off-road area for motorcycling?
- Do you support a motorcycle off-road registration scheme?

Currently, there is only one area in the Adelaide region the public may go to enjoy off-road motorcycling on an ad hoc, individual basis. This is privately owned and a fee is charged. Off-road motorcyclists who are unable to utilise

this facility for a range of reasons or do not have personal access to private or club land are limited to normal vehicular sealed and unsealed carriageways with their associated traffic-related risks, limited range of terrain appropriate for off-road motorcycles, and limited motorcycle-specific facilities.

At present, all motorcycles which operate on public land in South Australia are required to be registered for on-road use, regardless of whether or not they are to be used exclusively off-road. As such, they are also required to fully comply with the relevant Australian Design Rules. This means that those motorcycles which are used exclusively off-road have components which can either be easily damaged in a fall, such as blinkers, or can cause harm in a fall, such as headlights and standard-sized numberplates.

Further, the cost of on-road registration and third party insurance is not considered to be directly correlated to the risks associated with off-road riding, particularly as few off-road motorcyclists tend to carry pillion passengers or have crashes with other vehicles.

Dedicated riding areas, together with a dedicated registration system, are therefore deemed by the riding community to be viable solutions. This has occurred in other Australian states.

4. Rider Training

- Are you aware of the total fixed cost of gaining a motorcycle licence, and how it compares with the range of alternative means and costs of gaining a car licence? Do you think this cost disparity is justified?
- Do you support subsidising motorcycle rider training (i.e. RiderSafe) and retraining programs to improve rider competence on the roads?

The state government's motorcycle rider training scheme, RiderSafe, was introduced in February 1987, after developmental consultation with the MRA. As it was made compulsory, and full-cost recovery would not have been received well by the motorcycling community, the government subsidised the scheme to make it affordable. In recent years, the government's policy has been reversed and the RiderSafe scheme is now one of the most expensive in Australia.

This acts as a disincentive to many young people of licensing age who would like to purchase a motorcycle as a first vehicle for economic, enjoyment, ease of parking or other reasons. The MRA believes that the training cost may also be a contributing factor to the number of unlicensed riders on the road, particularly as this group has an above-average rate of fatal crashes.

Some motorcyclists suspend their riding activities after they marry, usually for economic or family transportation reasons, then return to riding after the children have become independent. Many such riders believe 'refresher' training courses to be an invaluable aid to refamiliarising themselves with the skills they had acquired during their earlier experience.

After some experience subsequent to acquiring a full motorcycle licence, many riders seek to enhance their

roadcraft skills by participating in training courses that are more advanced than those required to obtain their licence.

The underlying objective of riders taking refresher and advanced training courses is to improve their safety on the road. The benefit for riders as a group is a reduction in risk leading to fewer and less harmful crashes than there might otherwise have been; the benefit to the community is the reduced demand on the public purse for medical treatment.

A government subsidy on refresher and advanced training courses would encourage, and enable, more motorcyclists to expeditiously acquire or reacquire the skills which would otherwise be obtained through more extended experience and which anecdotal and statistical examination demonstrates leads to safer participation in the road environment.

5. Motorcycles and Transport Policy

- Do you consider it appropriate that motorcycles be included in a government transport policy and encouraged as a viable transport and commuting option? If so, in what ways should this be achieved?
- Are you aware of the number of motorcycle licence holders of voting age in South Australia?

Without inclusion in a state transport policy, motorcyclists tend to be overlooked when the government prepares budgeting and programs for road safety initiatives, road infrastructure, traffic management, safety research, health and welfare, leisure activities and all other areas related to the road and traffic environment.

While this approach may increase the safety and welfare of drivers, it can often be at the expense of the safety and welfare of motorcyclists. Generally, any improvement in the road environment that benefits motorcyclists will also benefit other road users, whereas the reverse is not necessarily so.

Motorcycles are a very efficient, environmentally friendly and practical mode of transport in most situations. Compared to cars, they use relatively little fuel, hence contribute less per capita to pollution; they take up a small amount of space on the road, hence traffic congestion is not an issue; their parking requirements are minimal, with four to six bikes able to fit into a car parking space; they can carry one, two or three people (as pillion, trike and sidecar passengers), comparing favourably with cars, especially in commuting mode where there is rarely more than one person in a car; they are less likely to strike pedestrians due to their manoeuvrability and smaller profile. (Pedestrian casualties due to motor vehicle – that is, non-motorcycle – impacts are a significant proportion of the road toll.)

The number of motorcycle licence holders in South Australia is considerably higher than the number of motorcycle registrations. If all voted on the basis of motorcycle-specific policies, the margins in a number of seats could be markedly diminished or reversed.

6. Motorcycle Safety

- Do you support a standalone replacement Motorcycle Safety Strategy document for the next five years?
- Do you advocate funding for the Motorcycle Task Force (MTF) and support the upgrading of this body from a consultative to an advisory role?

The sunset date for the current *Motorcycling Road Safety Strategy 2005-2010* is this year. One of the inherent problems road authorities have is catering for the safety requirements of different categories of vehicles. However, motorcyclists have quite different criteria for a safe road environment than other road users, and have a much higher probability of being injured or killed in a crash. In a bid to redress this inequity, the *Motorcycling Road Safety Strategy 2005-2010* was developed to identify and address those factors which can cause or contribute to motorcycle crashes. A raft of remedial measures was recommended, many of which have been implemented with a degree of success. Notwithstanding the *Strategy*, however, the road infrastructure and traffic management systems and applications still focus very strongly on the safety requirements of other road users, often to the detriment of motorcyclists.

Consequently, it is necessary to continue this focussed approach with renewed vigour by developing and implementing a motorcycle safety strategy to cover the next five years, with clear, achievable objectives and, particularly, a commitment by government to its implementation. Given motorcyclists' unique requirements for a 'safe system', it is critical that a standalone strategy is established, rather than having those requirements subsumed under a broad 'all-road-users' strategy.

Currently, the role of the Motorcycle Task Force (MTF) is that of a consultative body. While this is a step in the right direction, its recommendations carry little weight and no authority. A high standard of interaction between motorcyclists and those in government is essential for the establishment of a safe road environment. The upgrading of the MTF's role to an advisory capacity (with appropriate funding) would be a progressive move towards improving motorcyclists' safety, as it would enable the MTF to assume a greater degree of responsibility in the development and implementation of safety initiatives.

7. Serious and Organised Crime (Control) Act (SOCCA)

- Do you consider SOCCA an adequate, reasonable and necessary mechanism for dealing with crime in the community?
- Do you believe SOCCA is fully compliant with the Australian Constitution?
- Are you aware of the significant negative impact SOCCA has had on the image of all law-abiding motorcyclists?

Motorcyclists have grave concerns regarding the justification for and legitimacy of the Serious and Organised Crime (Control) Act (SOCCA), including the way that law is being administered and its impact on the motorcycling community at large. The MRA expressed its concerns publicly when SOCCA was first put to Parliament as a bill, with the principal issues being the denial of freedom of association, the denial of the right to due process and a fair trial and the government giving itself control of the judicial process by removing the capacity of the court to exercise its discretion in judgement, constitutionally known as 'separation of powers'.

Continued on p. 10

ROAD SAFETY OFFICER REPORT

Neville Gray

The MRA considerably ramped up its input into motorcycle safety issues during the past 12 months with a real presence on the Motorcycle Task Force through its two representatives covering general PTWs and scooters.

The Task Force is at a crossroad at the moment with an urgent injection of funds needed and for its deliberations to be taken more seriously by the incumbent government. Its reporting status must go from consultative to advisory in line with the current leader in this field, the Victorian Motorcycle Advisory Council.

(The issue of a dedicated motorcycle levy has not been directly raised and we need to get ready with our considered response in case it becomes an issue.)

Highlights include:

🏍️ The printing of the Rider's Handbook for issue to all interested SA motorcyclists. This has proved extremely popular and most hard copies have already been distributed from DTEI Motor Registry Offices. No more will be printed but downloaded electronic copies are available from the DTEI Road Safety website.

🏍️ The Spanish BASYC barrier protective system has seen its first roll-out in Australia on a motorcycle black spot area on the Gorge Road. \$140,000 in funding has been allocated to this project with the next installation being on Sedan Road and in the Strathalbyn area. It is causing considerable interest amongst motorcyclists in other states.

🏍️ A Motorcycle Safety Forum was conducted and hosted by DTEI and the Motorcycle Task Force on March 24th at the RAA headquarters, Richmond. There were some excellent presentations from invited interstate experts. We await the outcomes paper from this forum. A hot topic was the plan from the government for a replacement for the Motorcycle Safety Strategy 2005-2010 which is due for replacement this year.

🏍️ A senior DTEI engineer has taken a place on the Motorcycle Task Force. This is seen as a progressive move as we now have direct input into road safety issues via this member.

🏍️ Meetings with the following Ministers and Shadow Ministers have been attended in 2010:

- Minister for Road Safety, Michael O'Brien
- Shadow Minister for Transport, David Ridgeway
- Shadow Minister for Road Safety, Mark Goldsworthy

🏍️ Other meetings attended:

- Motor Accident Commission (2)
- BASYC engineering presentation DTEI
- RiderSafe Management
- Director, Centre for Automotive Safety Research
- Various planning meetings with DTEI for the Motorcycle Safety Forum
- SA Liberals Transport Planning Seminar at Parliament House

🏍️ The obvious highlight of the year was the introduction of the very successful Mick Doohan campaign by the Motor Accident Commission. This campaign has been awarded accolades from riders and safetycrats from

both Australia and around the world. Mick is locked into a three-year contract and we will see the next round in the near future. (It is hoped that the MAC will in future involve motorcycle safety experts in this campaign.)

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Motor Bike Safety Project presented by
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STATE ELECTION QUESTIONS/RATIONALES

continued from p. 9 Although Australia does not have a bill of rights, these issues are enshrined in the Australian Constitution either directly or implicitly. Undermining or denying them is an infringement of civil liberties and the foundation stones of democracy. SOCCA has been widely condemned by the legal fraternity and other civil bodies on these grounds. There is also a widely-held belief that existing laws adequately cater for the objectives of this legislation.

SOCCA makes no mention of motorcyclists, but it was ostensibly introduced to target criminal elements within the motorcycling community, which was widely reported. As a consequence the MRA, as the representative organisation for motorcyclists in this state, considered the bill and concluded that it had the potential to be applied to any organisation or individual in the broad community, motorcycle-related or not, crime-related or not, with further potential for the powers it conferred to be misused or abused at any time, or to be used as a precedent for the introduction of similarly repugnant laws.

When SOCCA was passed into legislation, its effects were immediately felt by the broad motorcycling community, with members of the public making life hazardous on the road or abusing riders out of hand. SOCCA has had an adverse effect on much of the work the MRA has done since 1979 to improve the public image of motorcyclists.

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