

CENTRESTAND

December 2011



THIS ISSUE

S-E REGISTER TOY RUN

HELMET STANDARDS

BASYC BARRIER SYSTEM TESTED

BLOOD RUN TRIBUTE

**AMC IN UN ROAD
SAFETY PROGRAMLIFE**

MEMBERSHIPS

Let those who ride decide



M.R.A.
MOTORCYCLE RIDERS'
ASSOCIATION OF SA INC.

Established 1979

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Australian Motorcycle Council Inc.

EDITORIAL

Peter Mount

I must begin by apologising to George Osis, the current President of the South-East MRA Register who was awarded life membership on August 27 at Naracoorte. My errant fingers typed his name with a 't' in the last *Centrestand*, and I didn't pick it up until after publication.

Talking of life memberships, on September 18 at the Mid-North MRA Register's Bushpig Rally, we were fortunate to welcome Greg Stevens, current Secretary of the Mid-North Register, into the ranks of those with MRA life membership. Greg was the Mid-North's first president when it was started in July 1986 (during my third year as MRA Prez). Greg has been constantly active on the committee since that time in a range of capacities, and we owe him a debt of gratitude for his contribution to maintaining the Register in a healthy and effective state over 25 years.

Phil McClelland, our Register Liaison Officer, travelled to the Bushpig Rally to present the award to Greg, with the support of David Povey, Ian Lowis, Cathy and hubby Ebi.

David, who, as with George, has known Greg for many years, has written about Greg's involvement in the MRA and other aspects of his life that go to make the man, as a deserving tribute to him for a quarter-of-a-century of support of our organisation.

I also neglected to identify the riders on the cover of the last *Centrestand*. They are Jerry and Elwine Flis, who happened to be riding past the turnoff to the MRA Great Escape Rally on their magnificently kitted-out GoldWing trike. A chance meeting with friends in the middle of nowhere. It seems to happen a lot with motorcyclists.

Hope you all have a good Christmas and many great rides in the New Year.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2012

The Annual General Meeting of the MRASA Inc. will be held on Monday February 27 2012. This will commence at 7pm at the Director's Hotel, 247 Grote Street Adelaide.

All positions of the Association listed below will be declared vacant and the 2012 - 2013 Committee will be elected.

President	Vice President
Secretary	Treasurer
Editor 'Centrestand'	Publicity Officer
Membership Secretary	Minutes Secretary
Stock Control Officer	Register Liaison Officer
Road Safety Officer	Webmaster
General Committee Representatives (number unspecified until the AGM)	

At this meeting the auditor for the 2012 - 2013 year will be appointed.

All financial members of the MRASA Inc. are eligible to stand for election to one or more of the positions. Nominations should be in writing to the Secretary of the Association prior to the beginning of the AGM. All members and friends are invited to attend the meeting.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The bulk of our collective activities in recent months have focused, broadly speaking, on the Toy Run and road safety. More specifically, though not exclusively, both these areas have included media interviews by Neville, Phil, Harald and myself, and have involved newspapers, radio and television.

Interviews on the former have been through local and Australia-wide interest in the move to Victoria Park and Callington. Those on the latter have occurred due to the relatively high number of motorcycle fatalities in SA this year, and have ranged in media location from Adelaide and surrounds to the West Coast.

One point we have been pushing constantly in the media is that, contrary to common portrayal and public perception, a large proportion of motorcycle crashes involving other vehicles are caused by the drivers of those vehicles, not the motorcyclists. This point has come across with some success, to the extent that reporters and voice-overs now include advice for drivers to look for motorcyclists, and that all investigating bodies should determine the causes of each individual crash before assuming that the rider is culpable.

We have also been promoting advice to motorcyclists to wear good gear regardless of the sunshine and never to assume a driver has seen you even if you have made eye contact.

Jock, the MRA Webmaster, has been in hospital for nearly three months with some bugs he picked up, and his wife Sue has been constantly by his side. He is gradually getting better and, although he will probably not make the Toy Run, as much as he wants to, we can imagine him on it and wish him a full recovery.

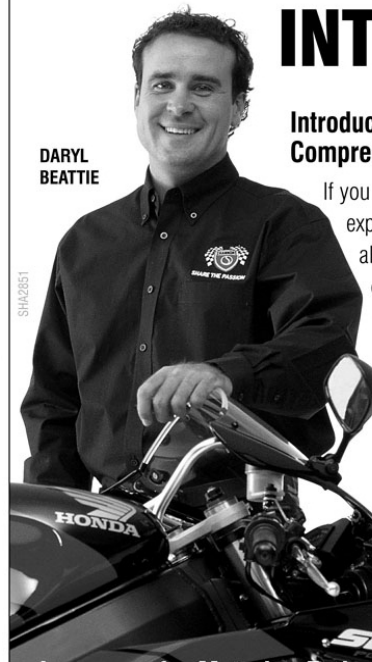
Most fortunately, an MRA member, Graeme Rawlins, learned of Jock's illness and generously offered his considerable expertise in programming, not only to manage our website but to help us develop a new one from the ground up. Graeme's consummate professionalism is of inestimable benefit to the MRA at this critical time, and he is hopeful that the new website can be launched in time for the Toy Run. So check it out and tell us what you think.

Remember, we must all be vigilant over the Christmas period to ensure we don't make a contribution to the motorcycle statistics.

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LONDON CALLING ON THE CONTINENT WITH 760

The start of a series of columns by Ken Binns, MRASA member 760

Never promise an 8-year-old anything!

My brother-in-law won a 2-year scholarship to study at Notre Dame in North Indiana. At the time his 8-year-old daughter asked her aunty, "Will you come and visit?" My wife, not wanting to upset her niece said, "Of course we will."

FAIL!

The first Skype link up we had, all the niece would ask was, "When are you coming to visit." This set the wheels in motion for an extended holiday around the world. One day while working at home my wife launched into my office and said, "I just remembered, I was born in Cornwall, England."

"And...?"

"I can get a Pommie passport!"

"So....?"

"This means we can work there, we don't have to come back so soon!"

Lights finally came on in my head. "Oh yeah, sweet."

That was 2007.

2008 was taken up with planning and saving plus suffering the requisite amount at the office of big stamps in your passport. After some travel which included the much talked about and promised visit to the rellies we landed at Heathrow. We got jobs and a flat in London by April 2009 and we then had to search for the most important thing: some motorbikes!

When you travel it is important to talk to people. It is amazing how many people out in that big wide world are friendly and helpful. In the course of my job I met a Turkish guy, Tomas, who works for the Border agency. He rides a bike. We chatted and he invited me up to Ace's cafe, a biking landmark one must visit, on a Friday night for the fun and craziness that goes on there. We met his group of mates, most who are into stunt riding but one, Faruck, is into bike touring and owns a BMW 1150GS. After some dinner and a coffee, Faruck declares he knows what sort of bike my wife needs and knows of one for sale at a really good price. So middle of the week he picks me up from Kings Cross and takes me over to Dalston Motorcycles to look at a 10-year-old BMW F650GS with all the luggage and only 1700 miles (2,700k) on the clock and in perfect condition. My wife and I buy it for £2000. Me because it's an insane bargain of a great bike, her because its yellow.

Personally I was very keen to buy an SV1000; I just really liked the idea of having a V-twin sports bike for a while. One long weekend ride two-up to the Peaks District which is south of Manchester, so a good 4 hours in the saddle, plus touring the Peaks for 2 days, really poured cold water on the sports bike dream.

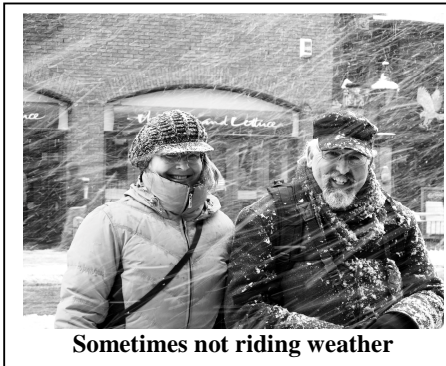
The roads over here once you get off the motorways are pretty rubbish. Then add some water, mud, cow pooh etc. and you just know it's a case of when, not if, you will land on your ear if riding a sports bike. Also the 1000cc thing faded as I had really got into the idea of a modern 650cc. So I acquired a fully kitted '05 DL650 VStrom. I hated the bloody thing when I got it. All my research and the sensible part of me said this was the bike for me, but the romantic in me wanted: KTM off-roadability, 916 looks and GoldWing comfort – I don't ask for much.



Riding in Europe is so different to Australia, it is hard to know where to

begin. In Adelaide I used to wear a Brando leather jacket, jeans and Johnny Reb boots from Thomas Cook. When it got wet and cold I threw on my DriRider stuff and Rossi boots. Life was good, life was simple. Here I wouldn't set foot on the pavement in a jacket that doesn't start out with full body armour. Secondly, even if the sun is shining I take the jacket liner and a woollen jumper (Aussie wool naturally). Your boy racer helmets are no good here simply because they don't hold out the rain and don't have a

built in flip-down sun visor, which after your first autumn and winter here you can't buy fast enough. At Easter the AA estimated that there were 20 million cars on the road in England alone on Good Friday. You can fit 5 Englands in South Australia; just think about that for a moment.



Sometimes not riding weather

So your team for the column are Kristina the BMW F650GS

girl, Ken the Vstrom 650 guy and Harald the world's most demanding editor. I hope to enlighten you with tales of interest and wonder. When we tour we go on the road less travelled so can take 10 hours to do 100 miles (160k). We book funky out-of-the-way places to stay. We are both avid photographers so hopefully there is a shot or two that will be acceptable to the readers of this newsletter.

Get in the wind

Ken. Member 760

HELMET COMMITTEE AT STANDARDS AUSTRALIA

By Guy Stanford

At a recent meeting, the desire by NSW regulators to place conformance and regulatory items into the Australian Helmet Standard was rejected. This rejection indicates a raised level of awareness of the regulator, correctly guiding the Terms of Reference for the Committee. A small win. Why?

The helmet standards of Japan and Australia are based squarely on that of the USA, hence all are virtually identical in performance. The European Standard has a different biomechanical philosophy that drives it, giving lighter weight helmets, and just as effective. It's a bit like the arguments with computers, between PC and Apple. Both do the same job effectively, each has its proponents.

In effect, the Australian Standard provides no net benefit to consumers, as equally good helmets are available which comply with the national standards of other countries. Restricting choice to the Australian Standard alone is, in effect, restricting the marketplace for no safety benefit. Sort of like demanding that a Windows PC can have only one particular configuration and denying sales to Apple.

On top of that, the Australian Standard has, in my opinion, reached its "use by" date. It is now only a commercial gate-keeper to the market, having been amended multiple times to allow into Australia product available in Europe. Each recent amendment has adopted a part of ECE 22-05, so it's been like adding bits of Apple to a PC so the market doesn't whinge too much; e.g., the latest amendment going through right now is to allow internal visors and rear views ("internal projections"), product already available through ECE 22-05, but the Australian Standard stifles innovation. Prior to that was the realisation that the Australian Standard didn't really address "snagging" of external air vents, so the ECE 22-05 part was copied into the document ("external projections").

The AMC Position

(a) AMC members seek national harmony between laws for sale of products and laws for use of products on roads (prime target).

(b) AMC members seek to have the mandatory Standard (Consumer Protection Notice No.9) reviewed to have three other Standards placed alongside the Australian Standard as "deemed equivalent".

Australian	AS/NZS 1698:2006
Japanese	JIS T8133
USA	FMVSS-218 ("DOT")
Europe	UN/ECE 22-05

Regulatory reform in this area is urgently needed.

Points for clarification

(a) We don't want Snell. It's a commercial scheme, not a government Standard, and has no recourse available from Australia (sort of like dialling 911 for an emergency). Snell is really about litigation protection of manufacturers in the USA. US cultural imperialism arrives by sheer weight of media. Don't get side-tracked by Snell.

(b) Each country maintains its own conformance process. Some regulatory detail discussion may be required as to whether helmets privately bought over the internet must only be supplied with the Standard from within the country of supply; i.e., ECE 22-05 helmets only via the net from a European retailer, DOT only from a US retailer, JIS from Japanese retailer only. No rubbish direct from Guangzhou. Importer/distributors, have to have the Proof of Certification paperwork from the point of origin, which fits exactly into Australian Consumer Law and other ACCC regulations (which includes US, Japan and Europe).

(c) International Agreements and Mutual Recognition Agreements are all in place for this, but presently ignored, or in the psychedelic neo-reality of NSW, they're a toucan in a kayak; e.g., ILAC, APLAC, IAF, PAC.

(d) There are around 17 helmet Standards worldwide, most being for developing countries to distinguish between a helmet and a hat. These are the "best four" (or "best two" as three are virtually the same) UN/ECE 22-05 is adopted in over 50 countries worldwide.

Mandatory Standard

We are heading into a review of the mandatory Standard in December, with no outcome likely until late February next year. This is when the work gets hard-boiled, as commercial interests will go into overdrive to protect their market. Take it as given, they are tough fighters and tricky.

At the moment, government regulators are listening and this will continue as long as we keep this professional and argue clearly for our case. The worst part is the wrong beliefs in this area, due to misunderstanding from being misinformed through a pattern of behaviour, apparently from commercial interests. But the better regulators are waking up to the fact that facts ain't beliefs and starting to take an interest.

NSW Road Rules

The NSW road rules are proving to be quite a skirmish, but it is necessary to prevent their spread to other jurisdictions in Australia. The NSW road rules

demand JAS-ANZ accreditation of Conformance Assessment Bodies, which:

- is a reverse use of JAS-ANZ, which was set up for export conformance, not imports;
- erects a technical barrier to trade;
- protects the local members of JAS-ANZ from international competition;
- protects local test laboratories from international competition;
- increases prices;
- does not add to the quality of conformance for local products;
- has allowed the overlooking of non-compliance from JAS-ANZ members;
- confuses riders, retailers and police.

It is also superfluous, as the Australian Consumer Law (ACL) provides rigorous regulation of this area anyway, so the NSW road rules are "doubling up" with a confusing anti-competitive system that shows lack of faith in the Commonwealth product safety system and forces responsibility onto riders, that under the ACL is rightly placed on the manufacturer. It's absurd and based on commercial trademarks.

Fines in NSW

We have a NSW helmet fine case that's going to court. Fully compliant helmet, meets all requirements, but police interpretation is the problem due to confusion.

It's escalated to a really complex issue now and damned expensive to defend due to the NSW road rule being so confused with "secret" provisions.

The last thing any other State of Territory wants is NSW road rule 270.

FEMA General Secretary Encourages United Collaboration on Motorcycling

In an historic collaboration between the Australian Motorcycle Council (AMC) and Motorcycling Australia, motorcycle rider groups were privileged to meet the Federation of European Motorcyclists' Association's General Secretary, Aline Delhaye, in Melbourne this week at Motorcycling Australia's head office.

Ms Delhaye was in Australia from Belgium for the Australasian Road Safety Research, Policing and Education Conference in Perth as a guest of VicRoads.

In addition to information sharing with VicRoads and the Victorian Parliamentary Road Safety Committee, she also made time to sit down with rider representatives from groups including the Australian Riders' Division (ARD), AMC, Victorian Motorcycle Council (VMC) and the Federal Chamber of

Automotive Industries (FCAI) to discuss national and international motorcycling issues.

AMC Chairman, Shaun Lennard, said the meeting in Melbourne highlighted the ongoing association between the AMC and FEMA. "We worked closely with FEMA in hosting the First International Motorcyclists' Conference in Brussels last year, and it has been great to have Aline here in Australia for the road safety conference and other meetings this week," Shaun said.

In support of AMC and ARD Ms Delhaye urged rider groups, industry and road safety agencies to work in collaboration on motorcycle safety issues. "There is an opportunity here to work with authorities on a broad range of motorcycle issues including filtering, motorcycle research and motorcycle safety strategies." Ms Delhaye agreed with the Australian Riders' Division that motorcyclists internationally share many of the same issues and only through open dialogue can solutions be found and opportunities used for the mutual benefit of both motorcyclists and authorities.

"There are many international examples of governments and government agencies working effectively with and taking direction from motorcycle user groups with great success," Ms Delhaye said.

In a positive step, Ms Delhaye was particularly encouraged by the response of Australian government agencies and police to her presentation at the Perth conference. One of the issues discussed in Perth and with VicRoads was that of filtering. Ms Delhaye reported that government agencies and police were very open to ongoing discussion regarding legitimisation of this widely-accepted practice.

On the subject of alleviating congestion, Ms Delhaye quipped with a typically Belgian shrug, "If you do not have filtering, there is no point in having a motorcycle."

On the topic of rider groups working with authorities, VMC representative Rob Salvatore commented that "The interest expressed by the authorities in working with motorcyclists is encouraging."

In response to Ms Delhaye's visit, the ARD has committed to supporting the AMC and further developing collaborative relationships with VicRoads and other organisations over motorcycle-related issues.

For more information on the ARD visit the MA website www.ma.org.au or contact Megan Hannan, Communications Officer, Motorcycling Australia, Tel: (03) 9684 0511

GEORGE OSIS – LIFE MEMBER

I have known George for more years than either of us would like to admit, certainly twenty-five, so when the chance of riding to Naracoorte to present him with his MRA Life Membership came up, I was, to say the least, very keen.

The greatest honour and the highest award that a club or association can offer a member is life membership. George is a very worth recipient of this award.

This prestigious recognition is not given lightly. Only after recognition of service to the club in varied fields over many years, and all club members agreeing to the nominee's acceptance, will this award be considered.

George has been a member since the mid 1980's. He has always been the first one to put up his hand when a chore needs to be done. He found time to work around his business to assist in every way possible for the function and well-being of the club, particularly the South East Register. George's property, at South End, has been used as the venue for the Radiata Rally for many years. He has also attended many other rallies on his much-loved Harley (I won't hold that against him), and I have had the pleasure of riding with him on several occasions.

George is an excellent rally cook and once even convinced a female acquaintance that she was eating chicken, when in fact it was rabbit. The dear lady in question claimed that she would never eat rabbit and that she disliked the taste and texture of the meat. However, after George had cooked it, she came back for seconds. He has also been known to light up rally sites with out-of-date marine flares.

When preparing for a rally George is always the first there to set up and the last to leave after the clean up. His fireside conversations are always amusing, regaling listeners with stories that may have a little extra embellishment added. As one gets to know George, he reveals a side of himself that is deep and meaningful. He has a thoroughly honourable character and is a man amongst men.

I am proud to call George one of my friends.

David Povey

SPRINGS AND WASHERS

- ☛ Thanks to Yamaha World which recently donated 40 plastic side-stand supports to the MRA.



L-R Frank Koennecke, Ellen Koennecke, Jane, David Povey, Klutz's ear, George Osis, Crazi, Turbo

George Osis has been an extremely valued member of the S-E Register of the MRA for many years. He is the current President and we are proud that he has been recognised for his work and is now a life member. He joined the MRA in 1988 and has been a member ever since.

He has always been the first in preparing for rallies at Mosquito Swamp, Rennick, Mount Gambier, South End and now at his shed in South End. At all times he has been busy cutting back trees, rolling tracks, supplying water, lights and anything and everything involved with camping; George is sure to have whatever is needed. Steve (his nephew) and George are famous for their camp oven meat and, with all the mod cons at his shed, they now cook the roast for our Saturday night meal.

The wearer of many hats and the supplier of all things, George has been Father Christmas, Rally Coordinator, and now President.

George loves his family, Harley, camping and fishing, and is a true friend. He tries to help all that he can and enjoys life.

We are proud to have such a valued member in our club.

Ellen Koennecke, S-E Register Secretary

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- ☛ Leather jacket, lady's size 12. Flannel lining. Excellent condition \$60

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ON RIDE THIS WEEK

- 🎧 AMC Chairman Shaun Lennard reflects on the recent Federal Polliies' Motorcycle Ride in Canberra
- 🎧 Barrister Wayne Baffsky shares his concerns about the direction of anti-association laws
- 🎧 Heavy Duty Magazine's Neale Brumby celebrates the mag's 20th Year
- 🎧 MRA Victoria's Grant Delahoy fills us in on the OZ GP Ride.
- 🎧 We find out how Disciples Christian Motorcycle Club re-invented itself after 30 years
- 🎧 And we preview the latest motorcycle movie on the block
- 🎧 Plus lots of news, views and music from Australia and beyond

Tune in Sydney live on 90.5 FM and across Australia on www.2ccrfm.com from 10pm – midnight EST on Thursdays. Check out Facebook and if you like the programme don't forget to 'like' this page and recommend it to you friends.

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/RIDE-on-2ccrfm-with-Greg-Hirst/265400733475447>

Ride: What's the next best thing to having some motorcycle fun? Listening to others who are having it as well! And you can do that on Thursdays for two hours from 10pm EST on 2CCR FM 90.5 when national motorcycling identity Greg Hirst will entertain you with:

- 🎧 Humorous stories of a motorcycle nature
- 🎧 Interviews with well known motorcycle riders
- 🎧 Stories from Aussie motorcycle clubs about their positive activities
- 🎧 Update of key some motorcycling issues
- 🎧 News on local and national motorcycle events (especially for those listening online)
- 🎧 Studio guests to talk about their personal motorcycling experiences

And lots of great Aussie rock, blues and alternative music, plus a little overseas stuff.

So listen in every Thursday for some motorcycle radio fun on radio in Sydney or online on www.2ccrfm.com around Australia. 2CCR broadcasts all its programmes online, so *Ride* can be heard in Queensland, NSW, Victoria and Tasmania at 10pm, South Australia, Broken Hill and the Northern Territory at 9.30 and in Western Australia at 8pm.

For more information contact Greg on www.greghirstenterprises.com.au

SOUTH-EAST REGISTER TOY RUN

By Ellen Koennecke

The S-E register of the MRA had their first Toy Run in 1985 where we rode as a group as part of the Mount Gambier Xmas Parade.

When the number of riders increased it was decided that we would have our own run on the first Saturday of December, parading along Commercial Street with a police escort. The run passed Boandik Lodge where gifts were received from the residents and then proceeded to the Valley Lakes where the gifts were distributed to the Salvation Army. The ride increased over the years, going from Penola to Mount Gambier, and now starts at Naracoorte. We leave Naracoorte at 9am and go to Penola 50km away and meet others there. We leave Penola at 10am and go to Mount Gambier another 50km collecting more bikes along the way. At Mount Gambier we leave at 11am to parade along the main street (Commercial St) and on to the Valley Lakes to distribute the toys and gifts to Vinnies and supplying a BBQ for the riders and friends.

Our Toy Run ride is gradually increasing in size with now over 150 bikes participating. We are unable to go through Boandik Lodge now because of the number of bikes involved. Riders come from Kingston, Keith, Bordertown and all places to the south; we also have many travelling long distances from Victoria. The MRA members supply a raffle and all the proceeds go to St. Vinnies. Our success is due to the many volunteers that help us on the day, The Police, SES, St. Vinnies, family and friends. We have a great day together and welcome any who would like to join us.

**2011 SOUTH EAST
TOY RUN
DECEMBER
3RD
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Hosted by the South East MRA
The ride will leave from the following places
NARACOORTE 9am Shell Road House
PENOLA 10am Shell Road House
MOUNT GAMBIER 11am Information Bay
Cnr Penola and Bishops Road
Parading along Commercial St
and on to the Valley Lakes

Presentation of toys to St Vinnies
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Further information
Mount Gambier Andrew 0427249779
Jane 0418826194
Naracoorte Ellen and Frank 0887651030
0429065103

COME AND
JOIN THE FUN

MY RIDEby **Dave Karlotski**

There is cold, and there is cold on a motorcycle. Cold on a motorcycle is like being beaten with cold hammers while being kicked with cold boots, a bone-bruising cold. The wind's big hands squeeze the heat out of my body and whisk it away; caught in a cold July rain, the drops don't even feel like water. They feel like shards of bone falling from the skies of Hell to pock my face. I expect to arrive with my cheeks and forehead streaked with blood, but that's just an illusion, just the misery of nerves not designed for highway speeds.

Despite this, it's hard to give up my motorcycle in the autumn and I rush to get it on the road again in the spring; lapses of sanity like this are common among motorcyclists. When you let a motorcycle into your life you're changed forever. The letters "MC" are stamped on your driver's licence right next to your sex and height as if "motorcycle" was just another of your physical characteristics, or maybe a mental condition.

But when warm weather finally does come around all those cold snaps and rainstorms are paid in full because a motorcycle summer is worth any price.

At 50 kilometres an hour and up smells become uncannily vivid. All the individual tree-smells and flower-smells and grass-smells flit by like chemical notes in a great plant symphony. Sometimes the smells evoke memories so strongly that it's as though the past hangs invisible in the air around me, wanting only the most casual of rumbling time machines to unlock it. A ride on a summer afternoon can border on the rapturous.

The sheer volume and variety of stimuli is like a bath for my nervous system, an electrical massage for my brain, a systems check for my soul. It tears smiles out of me. A minute ago I was dour, depressed, apathetic, numb. But now, on two wheels, big, ragged, windy smiles flap against the side of my face, billowing out of me like air from a decompressing plane. Transportation is only a secondary function.

A motorcycle is a joy machine. It's a machine of wonders, a metal bird, a motorised prosthetic. It's light and dark and shiny and dirty and warm and cold lapping over each other. It's a conduit of grace. It's a catalyst for bonding the gritty and the holy.

Cars lie to us and tell us we're safe, powerful, and in control. The air-conditioning fans murmur empty assurances and whisper, "Sleep, sleep." Motorcycles tell us a more useful truth: we are small and exposed, and probably moving too fast for our own good, but that's no reason not to enjoy every minute of the ride.

A motorcycle is not just a two-wheeled car; the difference between driving a car and climbing onto a motorcycle is the difference between watching TV and actually living your life. We spend all our time sealed in boxes, and cars are just the rolling boxes that shuffle us from home-box to work-box to store-box and back, the whole time, entombed in stale air, temperature regulated, sound insulated, and smelling of carpets.

On a motorcycle I know I'm alive. When I ride, even the familiar seems strange and glorious. The air has weight and substance as I push through it and its touch is as intimate as water to a swimmer. I feel the cool wells of air that pool under trees and the warm spokes of sunshine that fall through them. I can see everything in a sweeping 360 degrees, up, down and around, wider than Panavision and IMAX and unrestricted by ceiling or dashboard. Sometimes I even hear music. It's like hearing phantom telephones in the shower or false doorbells when vacuuming; the pattern-loving brain, seeking signals in the noise, raises acoustic ghosts out of the wind's roar.

But on a motorcycle I hear whole songs: rock 'n roll, dark orchestras, women's voices, all hidden in the air and released by speed.

<http://bmwmotorcycletech.info/>

(adapted for our Southern Hemisphere weather. Ed)

MOTORCYCLE MUSINGS

A motorcycle – a matter of form or function?

Not everyone understands what a completely rational process this is, the maintenance of a motorcycle. They think it's some kind of "knack" or some kind of "affinity for machines" in operation. They are right, but the knack is almost purely a process of reason, and most of the troubles are caused by what old-time radio men called "a short between the earphones," failure to use the head properly. A motorcycle functions entirely in accordance with the laws of reason, and a study of the art of motorcycle maintenance is really a study of the art of rationality itself. Talk about rationality can get very confusing unless the things with which rationality deals are also included.

We are at the classic-romantic barrier now, where on one side we see a cycle as it appears immediately – and this is an important way of seeing it – and where on the other side we can begin to see it as a mechanic does in terms of underlying form – and this is an important way of seeing things too. These tools, for example – this wrench has a certain romantic beauty to it, but its purpose is always purely classical. It's designed to change the underlying form of the machine."

Excerpt from Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance, Robert Pirsig, Corgi 1974

TOY RUN REPORT by Harald Lindemann

The Toy Run is well on its way to being organised. We have a dedicated team of people who are working hard to bring this event to you. Let me introduce them to you.

Myself as your Coordinator, I pay attention to just about everything and make sure that it all happens as it should; Peter Mount is in charge of the site arrangements and management, making sure that we have enough to eat and drink on the day and trade sites to keep us occupied when we arrive at the oval, Dutchy van Halm is responsible for our transport on the day – the tautliners for the band, our truck and other needs in this area; David Vaselli takes care of the entertainment and makes sure that we stay true to the Toy Run principles; Graeme Cane takes our meeting minutes and offers some great suggestions; Geoff Grant organises the Santa sleigh; Martin Humphries cuts through the crap to make some good suggestions and then makes them happen; David Povey and Cathy organise the marshals that we need for the day; Sean Beames makes sure that we have the stock on hand in the MRA tent for the day; Kerry Turnwald is our Safety Officer and electrical expert; Angela Gordon is our St. Vinnies rep on the Committee – and that’s only half of what they do. Thanks to everyone for your contribution and for ensuring that the event continues to be successful.

As mentioned in the last issue we will be gathering at the Clipsal Track on Wakefield Road and heading for Callington Oval at 11.00am. My information so far is that the message is still not getting across to bike shops and riders, so I am asking you to do a bit for the Toy Run and let all your mates know about the changes. Don’t assume that they know – ask them if they know. We will be putting up signs and advertising all over the place, but I think that nothing beats word-of-mouth. So tell everyone what you know. A good way is to email everyone on your email list and ask them to tell everyone whom they know. Put a notice on your Facebook page telling all of your ‘friends’ to spread the message – Toy Run Clipsal Track to Callington Oval.

Tell everyone that the parking is better than at Hahndorf and on the flat. One way in and one way out – leave when you feel like it.

We need your donation. Last year donations of toys were down considerably, so if you can’t make it on the day, take your donation to a St. Vinnies shop and tell them that it is for the Toy Run and they will make sure that it gets to the right place.

See you there and don’t forget to bring your mates.

4Bs STATISTICS RECOGNITION

For those wanting some light reading (or not), there was a report published by CASR (Centre for Automotive Safety Research) in September 2010 regarding motorcycling in SA. This was titled “Motorcycling in South Australia: Knowledge Gaps for Research:.

As they say on their website, the Centre is focused on:

- Conducting multidisciplinary research to understand how road crashes and the resulting injuries are caused
- Proposing and evaluating ways to prevent crashes and injuries
- Providing independent professional advice on road safety matters to government and non-government organisations in Australia and overseas

Like it or not, their output is listened to by state and federal governments and we need to know what they are saying about motorcycling. The 4Bs are mentioned in this report.

“The Bent and Buckled Bikers’ Brigade (4Bs) is a data collection program operated by Motorcycle Riders’ Association volunteers in South Australia, which involves interviewing injured riders in hospital about their crash.

The nature of any sampling biases in the data collection is unclear. CASR has been provided with around 400 cases extending back to the 1980s. Around 100 of these are for the period since 1990. It is hoped that CASR could continue to obtain these data in future.

Again, a number of variables could be used to match the records to those in TARS (and again, matters of privacy and confidentiality would need to be strictly controlled).

Data recorded by the 4Bs include: sex and age of rider, type of licence held, riding experience in years, whether a pillion was being carried, date and time of crash, location of crash, description of the crash, make and model of the motorcycle, clothing worn, helmet type, speed zone, lighting, road surface, weather, hospital attended, and description of the injuries. Note that the data are all self-reported.”

<http://casr.adelaide.edu.au/>

The full report is available at

<http://casr.adelaide.edu.au/casrpubfile/1014/CASR075.pdf>

GORGE ROAD CRASH **By Nev Gray**

In previous issues we have reported on the new BASYC roadside barrier protection system. At last (unfortunately) we have a real 'crash test dummy' who has hit the BASYC system barrier protection device on the Gorge Rd. in the Adelaide Hills.

On Saturday afternoon the 5th of November, a mature-aged rider on a Honda Fireblade hit the barrier some 400 metres north of the dam wall at considerable speed. The bike was smashed into many pieces with forks ripped off etc. (Photo 1) but the rider walked away with only a cut to his right knee. The rider was wearing helmet, gloves, DriRider jacket, boots, standard jeans that shredded, T-shirt, no back protector under jacket. If he had been wearing reinforced jeans, his injuries would have been zero.



Photo 1

It seems that the rider low-sided and came off his bike and slid along the pavement edge and impacted the BASYC system barrier head first. As a result, all the graphics were rubbed off his helmet so it is safe to assume that he slid along the length of the protective ribbon. (the bottom protective skirt). By the wound to his right knee, it would appear that he was on his right side at impact. It also appears that the bike became airborne and hit the actual W-Beam barrier higher up, inflicting the damage seen in the photos. The BASYC system barrier was not marked in any way and is intact and ready to do its job again.

On subsequent inspection the day after, there are no discernable new scrape marks on the pavement surface. Older scrape marks are apparent. You can see an oil leak in Photo 2 which is the final resting place of the motorcycle, which was travelling towards Adelaide. The motorcycle slid over the white lines into the opposite lane. I do not know where the rider ended up, probably still next to the BASYC barrier.

Luckily, a member of the MRASA Committee was following independently behind by a minute or so and had the foresight to snap these photos on his mobile phone. The barrier was not damaged in any way.

We are waiting on the rider's permission to further this matter with a letter to DTEI (Department of Transport, Energy and Infrastructure) outlining the incident's fortunate outcome.



Photo 2

GREG STEVENS – LIFE MEMBER

By David Povey

Greg Stevens is a man who wears many hats. He is a successful farmer in the Snowtown district. Greg is currently President of the Yorke Peninsula Field Days, the largest agricultural display in South Australia. He is also active in other clubs in the area. Last but not least he is very deeply involved in the Mid-North MRA Register.

Our interest is in Greg earning life membership with the MRASA. He joined as a member in 1984 and held the position of the first President of the newly-formed Register. Apart from his many years of loyal service to the MRA, he has held just about every position on the executive committee and is currently the Secretary.

He is the organiser of the now famous Bushpig Rally at Crystal Brook and has been involved for as many years as I have been attending. My first recollection of the site was on a private property between Snowtown and Bute. This is still a highly successful and well organised rally that has just celebrated 22 years, and many hours of planning and effort can be accredited to Greg. The exceptional skills Greg has leave many standing in awe. On the lighter side, his sense of humour and quick wit make him a treasured member of any group conversation.

It is because the Bushpig Rally epitomises Greg's many facets that we decided to present him with his life membership here, at the rally, amongst his many peers. Our Register Liaison Officer, Phil McClelland, presented Greg with his award.

I felt honoured to be present in the crowd around the clubhouse early on Sunday morning. Congratulations Greg, you are a most worthy recipient.

FLASHBACKS

"What is the strangest thing you hit/almost hit?" You never know when this will happen to you, so always be alert. Thanks to <http://www.examiner.com>

🚲 Back in '86 I was riding my R100S on the M5 Motorway, traffic was light and I was going well. I saw the car in front of me twitch and then hit his wash/wipe, then a sound like someone throwing a handful of gravel at my visor/screen and I was effectively blinded, some kind of clear goo was covering my visor. A few miles on there were some services, I pulled in and cleaned the goo from my visor, still unsure of what I had hit. Close inspection between the engine's cooling fins revealed I had hit a swarm of bees.

🚲 While going across a bridge in the left lane, I see something shiny along the inside barrier wall. The car in front of me went by the shiny stuff and I suddenly realised what it was. Somebody had lost a bunch of CDs, and they are now flying around in front of me. Not only do those things friggin' hurt when you hit them at 60+mph, but they are rather slick on concrete!

🚲 I was driving thru the tunnel near my house and I saw a little bag. No big deal. I slowed and swerved and as I passed I realised it was a bowling bag. About half-a-second later I see the bowling ball rolling down my lane. I dodge it easily and wish there was some way I could move it or something but I am not about to stop in a tunnel and try to grab a bowling ball.

🚲 King Kong's toilet paper. Headed north on the interstate into Albuquerque a semi truck was hit with a sudden microburst of wind that knocked it on its side. It skidded along the pavement, the back doors came open and ginormous rolls of paper fell out and unrolled everywhere. These things were about 4 feet in diameter and, well, had similar proportions to toilet paper. Made for some interesting moving obstacle avoidance.

🚲 I was riding at the front of a pack of bikes on 27 south of Jackson, MI, headed towards a party/chili fest. I ran over a dead woodchuck which was then launched out from under my bike rearwards into the unsuspecting pack of about 15 bikes, all riding side by side with the odd man following in the middle behind the last two bikes. Mostly Harleys, riding gear consisted of T-shirts and half-helmets. Mr. Woodchuck hit the bike behind me, and was sent through the pack like a stinking, wet, furry pinball. Everybody got some, especially the last guy in the middle who got him right in the chest and was almost knocked off his bike.

🚲 A robin tried to fly through my front wheel once. Feathers and guts all over the rim, forks, and mudguard.

🚲 I almost got hit by a hay bale falling out of a third story window in midtown Manhattan where they keep the horses for the Central Park carriage rides.

🚲 Mice. Thousands of mice. There was a mouse plague.

🚲 A draft horse that was in the road in Colorado because a mudslide had flattened the fence. As I approached he spun around and I ducked under his head.

🚲 Driving behind a bunch of trailered Harleys on way up to Blue Ridge Parkway and as I passed a Harley dropped on the lane next to me. Did not have to avoid the bike but did have trouble keeping in my lane I was laughing so hard.

These stories all came from a US website. Visit and enjoy and while you're thinking about it write in and tell us about *your* stories. Surely the Yanks don't have a monopoly on weird happenings. For example:

🚲 I was riding near Canberra some years ago ~~fanging~~ heading down this straight stretch of road. The wind was blowing pretty hard from my left but I was protected by a windbreak in the form of a row of poplars. At some point in the row half-a-dozen poplars were missing and the bike went from upright to almost horizontal in 0.01 seconds and then back to upright again. I almost browned my shorts, but I didn't have time. My pillion, oblivious, had no conception of what just happened. She didn't even notice.

🚲 Riding to the Barossa to see my folks on my first bike, a Yammie DT 250, I was wearing an open-faced helmet and goggles when I noticed something in the distance making a beeline for my face. Entranced, I watched it come closer, when all of a sudden, smack! It smacked into the left eye of my goggles. Before I could even think about what it was – Smack! Smack! Smack! I had ridden into a swarm of bees. In an instant I couldn't see for the dead bees on my goggles and I was slightly disconcerted by the pain of the bees hitting my unprotected face at 80kph. Luckily I didn't get stung, but I had to stop to clean my goggles and jacket, and oh, the smell. Dead suicidal bees do not smell like honey! Ed

RALLIES

March Great Escape Rally

See the MRASA Website for ride details.
www.mrasa.asn.au

TOO MANY MOTORCYCLISTS DYING ON SA ROADS

By Neville Gray

Did you know that motorcyclists are 30 times more likely to die in a road crash compared to any other road user? There has been almost double the number of motorcycle fatalities this year compared to the entire 2010 calendar year. There have been 18 fatal motorcycle crashes this year compared to 10 fatal crashes in 2010.

Police are very concerned about the increase in motorcycle fatalities on South Australian roads. In response to this worrying trend police will actively target drivers who put motorcyclists at risk on the road and also motorcyclists who speed or display reckless behaviour as part of Operation Safe Motorcycles. Safe Motorcycles is a state-wide police operation that commenced on Tuesday November 1 until Wednesday 30 November 2011.

Motorcyclists have a higher risk of death or serious injury than all other road users. A motorcyclist is 30 times more likely to be killed on South Australian roads. "Motorcycling is a lifestyle, a passion for many people as well as simply a form of transport," said Officer-in-Charge of SAPOL's Traffic Enforcement Branch, Inspector Andrew Thiele.



Members of SAPOL's Traffic Enforcement Branch with the Motorcycle Riders' Association of SA's Vice-President and Road Safety Officer Neville Gray.

"Unfortunately, motorcycle crashes often spike around this time of the year as more riders take to the road over the warmer summer months," he said. "Before you take your bike out for a ride this summer, make sure your bike is roadworthy. New tyres can be dangerous until they have been run in," he said. "If you are returning to riding after a layoff we encourage you to complete a defensive riding course."

Police will use a range of tactics across the state as part of Operation Safe Motorcycles including: highly visible police presence; directed patrolling activities, speed detection, and static and mobile random rider testing.

On-the-spot fines will be issued for speed and dangerous riding as well as drink and drug riding. Police will also be targeting drivers who are not paying attention to the road and putting motorcyclists at risk. "There are simple ways that car drivers can help to reduce the risks," Inspector Thiele said. "It is vital for drivers to share the road, stay alert and be aware of motorcycles. At intersections be extra vigilant and watch out for riders. We share the roads so we must share the responsibility for road safety, whether we are the rider or driver, and each make our own efforts to keep ourselves and each other safe."

Motorcyclists are less protected in the event of a crash than other motorists, and those aged 16 to 40 are 36 times more likely to be killed than drivers of other vehicles of the same age.

According to the Motor Accident Commission (MAC), from 2005 until 2010 motorcyclists accounted for about 13 per cent of fatalities and 12 per cent of serious injuries yet account for less than 1 per cent of total kilometres travelled on SA roads. "Wearing full safety gear will minimise the risk of death or serious injury in the event of a crash," Inspector Thiele said.

In South Australia, less than two per cent of travellers are motorcyclists, yet they and their pillion passengers represent 12 per cent of all fatal and serious injuries on the road. Motorcyclists have many factors to consider and allow for when they're on the roads. They are particularly vulnerable as road users, therefore even minor crashes can be severe for riders. "The road is no place to race," Inspector Thiele said. "There are a lot of things on the road that are a danger to motorcyclists."

Police will pay particular attention to areas where fatal and serious injury motorcycle crashes have consistently occurred, such as the Gorge Road and other known hotspots in the Adelaide Hills. "Speeding or dangerous riding means a high risk of death or motorcycle-specific injuries so bad you may never be able to ride again," he said. Riders most often get hit at intersections where drivers have not seen them. "At intersections, riders need to be extra vigilant, watch out for drivers and employ defensive riding techniques," he said. "Motorcyclists need to ride within their capabilities and the capabilities of other road users around them."

"Enjoy your riding, but above all, ride to survive."

SAFETY TIPS FOR RIDERS THIS SUMMER

Be wary at intersections

Approach intersections with caution, slow down and be prepared to stop, even if you have the right of way. Look for motorists who are not looking for you.

Ride to be seen

Avoid travelling in a motorist's blind spot by positioning yourself where you can be easily seen. You need to be able to observe and anticipate drivers' actions. Never assume you have been seen.

Give cars plenty of space - keep a three second gap

By having a three second gap between you and the vehicle in front, or a four second gap if you are being tailgated and your concentration is to the rear, you will be able to react and act to avert disaster.

Change lanes carefully - look and indicate

Do a head check as well as looking in the mirrors when changing lanes or merging and remember to indicate.

Ride at a safe speed

Speed limits are set at the highest speed you should travel. Adjust your speed to suit the conditions.

Don't drink and ride

Between 2004 and 2008 nearly 29 per cent of motorcycles fatalities and 15 per cent of those with serious injuries had a BAC above the legal limit. Motorcycling requires concentration, high-level observation skills and the ability to react quickly – all of which will be affected if you have been drinking.

Regularly check your bike before riding, especially brakes and tyres

Tyres should have ample tread and correct pressure. Brakes should work well and have correct fluid in the master cylinder. Brake lights and all other lights should be working. Service your bike regularly, making sure it is roadworthy, safe and reliable.

Make sure pillion passengers know how to ride safely

The presence of a pillion passenger doubles the risk of fatality. Make sure that your pillion passenger knows the correct techniques for pillion riding and is wearing appropriate protective clothing and a helmet.

Dress for safety and comfort

57 motorcyclists who were either killed or seriously injured between 2004 and 2008 were not wearing a helmet. Helmets must meet the approved standard and must not be damaged. It's a good idea to replace them regularly. Gloves, jacket and boots designed for riding are essential for safety and comfort.

GENEVA ROAD SAFETY CONF.

Shaun Lennard, AMC Chairman

I'm sending this note from the other side of the world just to let everyone know that the meeting in Geneva was a great success and it was certainly worthwhile making the trip.

As expected, the forum of the International Road Federation at the UN in Geneva was made up almost entirely of road agencies, engineers, researchers and other government representatives. Also someone from the World Bank, as it is involved in a lot of road safety programs in developing countries.

In terms of road users, there were two reps from the FIA (Federation Internationale Automobile) as well as myself. The FIA does a lot more than sanction Formula 1 – they are very active in the Decade for Action, certainly more so than rider groups in other countries, I'd have to say.

I was indeed the only motorcycling rep present. I took the chance to address the meeting on why it was important for those working to improve road safety to engage with road users. Similarly, road user representative groups also have a real and leading role to play in working to reduce the global carnage of over 3,300 deaths a day (1.2 million annually).

Peter Damen from the ARRB Group (based in WA) was also there. Having the AMC involved with this international initiative should assist in getting more recognition for motorcyclists in the work that ARRB does in Australia for the road authorities. I hadn't met Peter before. He is in fact a rider – has a GSXR1000 – and he was impressed to see the AMC virtually taking the lead on behalf of motorcycle riders in this forum.

I also learned that Marco Simoncelli had been an ambassador for the Decade of Action in Italy, and the FIA reps paid an emotional tribute to him. #58

The meeting developed a list of around 30 actions, one of which was to pursue increased engagement with road users. I can reasonably say that this came about as a result of the points that I had put forward in the morning.

I consider it a great honour to have represented the AMC at this meeting at the UN – so thanks to all who have provided support.

www.amc.asn.au

The Australian Motorcycle Council supports the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020

MRA Blood Donation Run by Ebi Lux

By chance I got to hear about the April MRA blood donation run and on a crazy whim I decided to take part. That off-chance coincidence was to be the beginning of a life-changing event. For years I have avoided donating blood, using a dislike of needles as an excuse not to go. However, with the support and, to a degree, peer group pressure of fellow bikers, I decided to take the plunge and risk being poked and prodded by a needle imagined to be bigger than the Mannum pipeline.

The first donation run on Saturday April 24 was a success, with no ill effects caused by “the needle”. I decided this was a worthwhile thing to do and would definitely continue donating, needing little encouragement to join the Plasma programme.

It was at the next appointment that I was told my haemoglobin levels and blood pressure were up on the previous reading and heading towards the upper limit, and that I should get this checked. A visit to my GP was booked where my BP reading was confirmed as being perfectly normal, proving once again my white coat phobia, but the blood test reading was a concern. Unbeknown to me or my family, I have an hereditary condition known as haemochromatosis which results in excessively high iron stores. If left untreated, in its severest form it can prove fatal. Treatment however is as simple as frequent donations of whole blood, reducing iron stores back to normal levels. You can imagine the impact of this news especially in light of the fact that my grandmother and sister both passed away at a relatively young age from causes which could be related to high iron stores.

Thanks to the marvelous work of the Bloodbank and never-ending support from Cathy, I have completed a series of weekly whole blood donations. My last blood test showed my iron stores have dipped to within normal parameters. The threat to my life is under control and will be VERY closely monitored in future. I find it highly amusing that at the end of each donation I am thanked for making the donation. My response to this is, “No; I thank you for letting me donate. Thank you for helping me.”

I encourage everyone who is able, to donate blood. The feeling that you are saving someone else is amazing, but absolutely nothing compared to the knowledge that this remarkable service is saving your own life. This doesn't have to be as a genetic issue; it may be as simple as regular blood pressure checks and basic blood tests. The life you save could be someone closer than you think .

Really the Blood Service slogan should be “ EVERY DONATION SAVES FOUR LIVES”.

Views On Advanced Motorcycle Training – Sweden by Elaine Hardy

In 2010 the Swedish riders' organisation – Sveriges Motor Cyklister (SMC) – commissioned a survey to find out motorcyclists' views regarding advanced rider training. 1733 Swedish motorcyclists responded to the website questionnaire which focused on their opinions about the impact of advanced motorcycle training. The survey was compiled and analysed by Right To Ride's Director of Research, Dr Elaine Hardy.

The results, which indicated a beneficial effect of the training lessons, were presented to the VTI (Swedish National Road and Transport Research Institute) Transport Forum, the biggest of its kind in Sweden.

About 70% of the respondents stated that they have participated in some sort of advanced training for motorcyclists. The responses clearly demonstrate that participants of advanced training courses feel more secure and confident about the handling of their bike. Two-thirds are of the opinion that the risk of accident involvement reduces after an advanced course. More than 70% say that advanced training gave them improved abilities to avoid critical situations. Almost 90% of the survey participants stated that their skills had improved after advanced training. A high number also pointed out that they had gained important tools to focus better on traffic situations as a result of advanced training.

The booklet “Full Control” sent out to members with the SMC magazine, MC-Folket, was also considered to have improved their knowledge about motorcycling.

“This is a very good rating for the courses we offer in the SMC School. The result also shows that motorcyclists are safety orientated” said Jesper Christensen, General Secretary of SMC. “Every year thousands of motorcyclists make huge investments of time and money to improve their own safety with motorcycle training courses. The results show a clear trend towards an increased safety consciousness among motorcyclists and today we are indeed observing a significant drop of killed and severely injured motorcyclists in accident statistics.”

The study reveals that most people ride a motorcycle because it is fun or because it provides a sense of freedom. Participation in advanced training makes it even more fun to ride a bike. The study also shows that the majority of the respondents considered renewing their skills through training on a regular basis to be helpful.

For the SMC study in English: <http://www.righttoride.eu/virtuallibrary/statistics/SurveySMCfullreport2011.pdf>

A LETTER FROM THE AMC CHAIRMAN SHAUN LENNARD

Hi all,

I'm honoured to let everyone know that I've been asked to be part of a forum that has been put together by the International Road Federation, to develop input into the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety.

This is to be known as the 'group of experts on road safety', and I'm quite humbled to have been invited to join. There are around 200 people worldwide, and as far as I know the only other person from Australia involved at this stage is James Holgate from Vic Roads. In terms of motorcycling, I'm not sure of any other rider representatives who are part of this. I understand that the new Secretary of the International Motorcycle Manufacturers Association (IMMA) has also been invited. I see my role in part being to put forward the views of motorcycle riders at the planning/policy development stage – the sort of thing we have been hammering on about for a number of years.

The areas this group will look at include:

- accident statistics
- road accidents knowledge base
- road safety guides
- sharing the roads
- road safety management training courses
- speed and traffic control devices
- road surface characteristics
- financing safe road infrastructure

There is also a strong interest in non-infrastructure issues from members, the most popular in a pre-poll being road safety education and training.

There have been a series of launch meetings – those in India and Abu Dhabi have already been held.

Following generous donations from MRASA and MRAACT, the Executive has accepted the invitation, and I will be attending the launch meeting of this group in Geneva next week. This is being hosted by the UN at the Palais de Nations, so it's fairly high-profile. I will only be away for a short time, which on Monday includes a meeting with the British Motorcyclists Federation in London, before travelling to Geneva. Travelling such a long way for a one-day meeting may seem unusual, but in a way it's like an initial meeting of a large project team, where a face-to-face meeting is held to get something underway and then much of the subsequent business is done via email. The Executive was of the view that this was an opportunity for motorcycling worth seizing, so I thank them for their confidence.

As soon as the Geneva event is completed, I will be returning via Perth for the 2011 Australasian Road Safety Research, Policing and Education Conference. The RAC of WA has kindly sponsored my registration at this conference. This is thanks to the excellent negotiation and sales skills of Dave Wright – thanks Dave. The TMC is also assisting with travel costs in respect of the Perth conference.

Thanks again to MRASA, MRAACT and the TMC for making all this possible.

Best regards,

Shaun Lennard, Chairman, Australian Motorcycle Council (m) 0417 396 835 Twitter: @aust_rider www.amc.asn.au

TOY RUN REPORT 2

The 2011 Adelaide Toy Run will be held on Sunday December 11th. That's this Sunday. If you haven't already heard about the changes to the route, read this:

Riders will gather at the **Clipsal Track** on Wakefield Road from 8.00am. Breakfast will be from 8.30. The ride will leave at 11am.

The route:

- Left along Wakefield Road
- Left into Hutt Street
- Left onto Glen Osmond Road
- Glen Osmond Road to the SE Freeway
- Arriving at **Callington Oval** about noon

Don't go to Glenelg or Hahndorf as we won't be there!

Thanks to our sponsors: MAC, Mt. Barker Council, TOLL, First Care Medical, B&C Security, StarTrack Express.

And thanks also for helping out: Adelaide City Council, Hutt Street Precinct Group, the Messenger Press, Couriers Please, SA Motor Sport Board, the Bremer Callington Cricket Club.

**MOTORCYCLE RIDERS' ASSOCIATION OF SA
INC.
MOTOR ACCIDENT COMMISSION
2011 TOY RUN PARTNERS**



ABS NEWS FROM EUROPE

The European Commission's proposal for the Approval and Market Surveillance of two- or three-wheeled vehicles and quadricycles is moving through the IMCO (Internal Market and Consumer Protection Committee), with a vote scheduled for November 22, before going to the European Parliament.

The Commission included so-called safety technology such as the mandatory application of Advanced Braking Systems (ABS).

The argument that the Commission and the Department for Transport in the UK have used is that ABS will reduce around 20% of fatalities over the next ten years.

Until now, we have stayed away from the "safety" debate regarding ABS, because there is a general consensus that, overall, it does help in certain conditions to stop the motorcycle and help to stop loss of control.

To balance the debate, we have asked for the views of two highly respected motorcycle trainers: David Hough – U.S. motorcycle trainer, writer and journalist, and David McGuckin – Northern Ireland motorcycle training instructor. Both give us their insight into ABS from their knowledge and experience and both have come to very similar conclusions.

David Hough said, "Rather than attempt to make up for a rider's lack of braking skill by incorporating "safety" devices into the machine, I suggest training riders to manage the situation, including skilled throttle-to-brake transitions, and independent front-rear braking."

David McGuckin observed that, "My firm opinion is that mandatory ABS is going to do very little for accident reduction unless very expensive training is also mandatory. It's strange that we can force everybody to pay more for expensive technology but not to be able to train people to use what we already have properly."

Our experts have indicated that training is a far better option than mandating ABS technology.

However, the European Commission has stated that it will maintain its position NOT to include items such as training in the proposal that are irrelevant to technically approving a motorcycle. In its opinion on the Commission's proposals, the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) agrees with the proposals in reference to ABS, but it also reiterates the need to properly evaluate the cost-effectiveness of the

different systems, depending on the different products and their usage patterns.

In this respect, the EESC supports a technology-neutral approach in the area of advanced braking systems, in order to provide manufacturers with the necessary flexibility and stimulate innovation, in the interest of the consumer. This is what we have consistently argued. However we also believe that the inclusion of ABS in the proposals is not just an issue of cost, but a means by which the Commission and Parliament can state that they have done their part to reduce motorcycle casualties.

In our opinion, a statement that ABS will reduce casualties by 20% over the next 10 years is reckless because it may lead motorcyclists and safety organisations to believe that ABS will reduce casualties in ALL braking situations, rather than stop the motorcycle safely in specific scenarios. Along with David Hough and David McGuckin, our opinion is that ABS is not the panacea to reduce motorcycle casualties that our friends in Brussels would have us believe.

From Trevor Baird www.righttoride.co.uk

Read the full document at - http://www.righttoride.eu/regulationdocuments/ABS_The%20Great%20European%20Poker%20Run%2015_10_2011.pdf

ABS: SOME AUSSIE PERSPECTIVES

ABS is not a substitute for skill. Those who can't brake will seek ABS as an alternative. What we see is that those who can't brake buy a bike with ABS and still can't brake. There are some wild claims made about ABS that are simply not true – unless the rider already has high-level skills.

This point is made here – <http://www.righttoride.eu/?p=8181> and here – <http://www.tvsapache.com/the-brake.html>. Watch the video "You Can Brake Later". This Indian Apache advertising pitch is really scary. It apparently means you can charge into corners really, really fast and not only come out fast but humiliate your competition.

Like when you back off for traffic lights changing up ahead, because you're reading ahead, while yet another ABS-equipped 4WD hurtles past and brakes at the last moment, using up every last bit of braking distance into the goeey stuff near the line at the lights. Lowered perception of risk = more crashes. It isolates the thinking about braking from any observation about the road surface ahead.

The other claim is that ABS will enable you to brake hard in a curve. Well, yes, but you don't need ABS to do that, you need good countersteering skills. If you have the countersteering skills, you can get about 70% of straight line braking force at 30 degrees of lean – but you must be able to steer against the braking forces on the steering. Even with ABS, you still need the countersteering skills to brake in a curve, or else you run wide and get intimate with hard scenery.

On the other hand, a new BMW GS has ABS brakes that will simply stun you with their ability. Really. It's a totally different kettle of fish to the older ABS systems. But it's only just arrived and costs a bomb. New ABS systems are very good – from high-end manufacturers. Trouble is, there are crappy old ABS systems that have some weird quirks, like not working very well at all and letting go the brakes over road ripples. With some, it's like a 1950 BSA, needing a telephone appointment to stop. Add worn shocks to these and you have no brakes on bumpy surfaces. Any rider who has ridden an older technology ABS system knows this and has a very jaundiced view of the claims made for ABS.

The assumption by roads authorities that ABS will solve motorcycle crashes is a fairytale at best, illustrating their lack of comprehension of the nature of riding skills. However, the latest technology is very good indeed and will change your views – BUT, you still need the skills to use it to its full ability. All demos and sales pitches are done with highly-skilled riders.

While ESC on cars works for the unskilled and can also outperform the skilled, ABS really only works for the already skilled – except for the single circumstance of the panic-grab of the front lever. Identify how many crashes were caused by a front lever panic-grab and we can start figuring out how many crashes could be addressed by ABS – and it ain't that many, being a sub-set of a sub-set of data.

It is our proper role to ensure riders are not misled into a belief that may kill them.

Guy Stanford (NSW Motorcycle Council)

I'm certainly not against ABS per se. My bike of choice for the past 5 years is fitted with very good and effective ABS. I am a supporter of ABS for bikes, particularly on tarmac surfaces. However, it is my strongest view that "learner" riders and perhaps some existing riders will need to be taught how to use ABS. Most car drivers who first engage ABS lift their foot from the brake in response to the "vibration or shudder" from the ABS. This of course is entirely the wrong thing to do. Ditto for Motorcyclists...!

I would also question the use of ABS on some off-road bikes, particularly those of smaller capacity. ABS on broken, wet, grassy, muddy, sandy or gravelly surfaces is questionable, as was clearly evident at the VicRoads / TAC ABS demonstration early this year at Sandown. The answer may lie in a switchable ABS.

Like many other technical advancements in recent times, they need to be mastered to be truly effective.

Peter Baulch (Victorian Motorcycle Council).

One thing to remember in all of this is that it's not only governments embracing ABS – motorcycle manufacturers are too.

There's no point getting all worked up in opposition to ABS and thinking that lobbying government about this is going to have any effect if *manufacturers* are already embracing it. Try telling BMW and Honda (also car manufacturers) to stop developing motorcycle ABS. I referred to this issue in my column in Two Wheels magazine in February.

Tread warily, folks. In various conversations I've had with people this year people have mentioned to me the emerging view that "motorcyclists are opposed to safety measures." I'm willing to pick up the argument with riders who don't think ABS is a positive motorcycle safety measure.

Shaun Lennard (AMC Chairman)

I fully support ABS being incorporated into modern bike design, however there are possibly a few caveats.

Firstly, for dedicated off-road and the GS (enduro) machines it would need to be switchable, as ABS can be counterproductive if you are riding with a locked front wheel on a greasy decline.

Secondly, it is not mandated that it has to be operational like we had with the lights-on policy whereby the bike was defective if the light wasn't working (in the middle of the day).

Thirdly, we introduce training in our rider development and at our learner level on the effects of riding bikes with and without ABS, unlike what is happening with our 4-wheeled counterparts.

On a personal note, I have owned a number of bikes with ABS and a number without. ABS and servo boost on my BMW 1150GS Adv saved me from converting two emus to an evening meal at 130kph and most probably my bacon on a wet road just west of Balladonia.

Peter Major (MRA ACT)

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Believe it or not, the view does get boring eventually

Being stuck in hospital does tend to become boring, especially if your illness or injuries don't allow you to move around. As for being on your back, in a bed for up to six weeks recovering from a broken pelvis.... boring somehow doesn't seem an adequate description.

The 4Bs is a sub-committee of the Motorcycle Riders Association (SA) and one of our goals is to provide help and support for hospitalised motorcycle riders and their families.

One of the simplest and most effective ways we have found to assist patients in passing the time is to provide them with movies to watch. To that end we have set up a DVD Library in the Royal Adelaide Hospital. We started this scheme two years ago and it works so well our library needs to be expanded.

Which is where you and your business or social group can help with very little effort. We have supplied DVD players for long-term recovering patients. Please assist us with donations of up to six DVDs. They can be movies,

sport, TV classics or documentaries...think about what you might want to watch.

Details of the last DVD handover can be found on our website at <http://www.mrasa.asn.au/html/4bs/>

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