

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE MOTORCYCLE RIDERS' ASSOCIATION

A PAPER FOR DISCUSSION AT THE M.R.A. NATIONAL CONFERENCE 1983

INTRODUCTION.

This folder contains proposals for the establishment of an M.R.A. National Body-M.R.A. Australia.

M.R.A. Victoria, the founding and largest branch, believes that M.R.A. Australia is necessary. Such a body would ensure that the M.R.A. becomes an even more powerful force to protect the future of motorcycling in this country. It would also protect the spirit of the Constitution and National Image of the Association.

Australia, in spite of its massive area, is shrinking. Communications, in terms of telephones and computers, travel and the media, are improving daily.

Government Departments are slowly beginning to think Nationally. Transport, Education and Police Departments are gradually moving in the direction of National Organisations. They are a long way behind businesses and unions. Most important organisations in this country are making use of modern technology and looking to the future of Australia rather than individual locations.

Failing to recognise these trends has led to the fragmentation and/or collapse of several bodies. For example, the Federation of Australian Motorcyclists was the major force in motorcycle lobbying. It is now virtually non-existent. The Auto Cycle Union has a peak council but it is weak and as a result that organisation is fragmented. A result is that motorcycle sport in this country is not promoted as a National Sport but as individual club activities.

Motorcycle sport has not yet reached the '80's. The car clubs, (N.R.M.A., R.A.C.V.,) etc., likewise are fragmented and their future Nationally is limited. However, it appears that they may be making moves towards greater National unity, albeit slowly. They have recognised the value of business interests and modern technology. It is NOT suggested that the M.R.A. adopt similar techniques to the car clubs. The M.R.A. must remain a grass roots organisation, protecting members safety and rights and supplying services to motorcycling.

However, to do that the M.R.A. must prepare for the future and recognise the trends and directions of our Nation. It must take full advantage of the facilities Australia has to offer and be prepared to maximise the benefits of future facilities as they become available.

The ground work must be done in 1983 to ensure that this Association is united and flexible enough to use such facilities for the good of motorcycling.

The M.R.A. has demonstrated the worth of its Constitution through its growth and achievements over the last 5 years. But, it is not time to relax and fall into the trap which caught F.A.M. and the A.C.U. The M.R.A. must think in terms of the '80's and '90's and work to ensure a strong future.

The following proposals are just that, proposals. They are based on 5 years experience and expertise which has made M.R.A. Victoria a successful, growing and professional organisation. Also, by travelling to, and in some cases working with other States M.R.A.'s, Victoria has learned a great deal about the operation of the Association on a National level.

The recent visit of the President of M.R.A. Great Britain, Paul Hillock, indicated the future value of an International M.R.A.. These proposals are designed to decrease the work loads of the various M.R.A. Committees and increase their profitability to allow them to better serve their members, while promoting a strong National image.

These proposals will not:

1. Lessen the power or effectiveness of M.R.A. Committees
2. Take funds or gains already won by M.R.A. Committees.
3. Intefere with the work of individual Committees.

These proposals will:

1. Increase the earning capacity of the Branches & Registers.
2. Improve the facalities available to make work in various areas and locations more effective.
3. Ensure a strong National image and promote unity.
4. Give the M.R.A. a system of Federal representation should the A.M.C. fail.
5. Increase the M.R.A. services and goods available to ALL M.R.A. members.

M.R.A. Victoria was misrepresented in the M.R.A. N.S.W. Newsletter when this document, which was more than a year in preparation and which called on all our resources, expertise and 5 years experience, was condensed into 7 lines.

The following proposals will benefit all members of the M.R.A. and it is hoped that the Delegates and Observers present at the M.R.A. National Conference (not forum), January '83, in Canberra, will consider them seriously. As Delegates and Observers you have a responsibility to members in your area to represent them and make decisions in their best interests. You also have a responsibility to ALL M.R.A. members, so the welfare of members throughout the Association must be taken into account.

5 YEARS EXPERIENCE

The Motorcycle Riders' Association began in Victoria. The 3 founding members were introduced to each other at Broadford in 1977. The first official meeting of the M.R.A. was held in a hotel in St.Kilda in May 1978. That night the first 16 members of the Association formed the Melbourne Branch.

The idea was to build an organisation that was universally acceptable, yet strong enough to fight for motorcyclists' safety & rights. This organisation had to be public to fill the gap in motorcyclists' defences left by the soft sell Federation of Australian Motorcyclists. The 2 organisations were to compliment each other. They were to work together.

The form, operation and image of the new organisation was extensively discussed that night in May. Even the name was a long time in coming.

The name had to be universally acceptable. It had to say who and what we were. We were not to be a club. Discussion of the situation led us to the conclusion that what was needed was an organisation that was a union and a service group. A group that worked with other lobby groups to fight for a better deal for motorcyclists.

It was M.R.A. Victoria that put forward the concept of a National Run to Canberra. It was M.R.A. Victoria that worked with F.A.M. A.C.T. to hold the 12,000 bike run on the Nations' Capital on the Australia Day Long Weekend in January 1980.

M.R.A. Victoria has been involved with the establishment of, and supports the Australian Motorcycle Council. We were at the first Narrandera Conference in September 1978.

We had a name and a basic concept. Further discussion led us to the conclusion that the M.R.A. should have a constitution to ensure that future members and committees understood what the M.R.A. was for and how it should look and why it should operate in a certain way.

Part of the Constitution was to ensure that all motorcyclists, members or not, could have input to committee policy making decisions. Public monthly meetings should be held as forums to receive and distribute information and opinions.

Since the work of the M.R.A. would effect ALL riders it was felt that 2 way communication with the motorcycle community was most important. This could be achieved by public meetings, by mail and through the media. Public activities would also play a major role in this communication.

Offices were not available at that time and it was necessary to have a mailing address. It was decided that a post office box was the best way to ensure that the committee was kept in touch with people who could not attend meetings.

It was also decided that records of finances and meetings should be kept and be available to be seen by anyone who had an interest. It was to be an open and democratic organisation.

The aims of the Association had to be universally acceptable too. They had to be easily understood and benign. They had to be aims that you could quote to the media and they could find nothing negative in them.

The aims of the M.R.A. are:-

1. ROAD SAFETY.
2. A BETTER IMAGE FOR MOTORCYCLISTS.
3. FAIR AND SENSIBLE LEGISLATION.

Policies were developed with those aims in mind.

THE FIRST AIM

The most important and most neglected area of ROAD SAFETY was ROAD USER EDUCATION. It still is.

THE SECOND AIM

A better image did not mean that the motorcycle community was going to change. It meant that by using the media, especially at well run public activities, the motorcycle community would be seen by the general public to be a caring and intelligent section of our society. Motorcycles would be seen as a legitimate and contributing part of our transport system.

THE THIRD AIM

The aim of achieving fair and sensible legislation meant that good legislation regarding motorcycling would be supported. For example we would help develop and support the introduction of a skill test for learner permit applicants. We have done this. However, it also meant that we would fight bad laws. For example, front number plates, excessive insurance premiums, no mods laws, differential speed limits, the 250cc restriction etc. We are doing this.

Many laws were being made by Authorities who had no practical knowledge of motorcycling. They did not see the motorcycle community as having anything constructive to say. They do not say it openly but many feel that we are of sub normal intelligence and a negative influence in the community as a whole.

They are still making ill-informed and unjust decisions concerning motorcyclists. They are still discriminating against us and treating us as second class citizens in many cases. They reflect the feelings of some members of the general public.

The M.R.A. was formed as a union to fight injustice and discrimination against motorcyclists.

THE STRUGGLE TO ACHIEVE THE FIRST AIM

Riders die and are maimed at a rate greater than the tolls for the Vietnam or Korean wars. In the same length of time more of our people become casualties than Australian Servicemen became casualties in those wars. We have nothing to lose by fighting for our rights. More than 20,000 Australian riders were killed or injured by other Australians in cars between 1975 and 1980.

Think of that. 20,000 casualties caused by car drivers.

More than 75% of all multi vehicle accidents involving a motorcycle, are found to be the fault of a car driver. We are involved in a Civil War. A hidden war.

The Federal Government was made aware of the statistics in a speech to Federal Parliament by the Labour Shadow Minister for Transport in September 1980. He was the Honourable Peter Morris. He had been to the rally site and attended the 12,000 bike run to Canberra in January 1980.

The Federal Government ignored his plea on our behalf. The Federal Transport Minister ignored the 12,000 bike run. His representative turned up late. He was at the cricket.

Peter Morris' statistics were frightening. He said this:

More than 40,000 motorcyclists have been either killed or injured on Australia's roads since 1975. The majority were young and inexperienced riders who, through lack of proper rider training or driver awareness schemes, had little chance in an accident situation. In 1980/81 it (the Federal Government) expects to increase its revenue from petrol taxes to \$3,978m., an increase of 27%. Less than 0.0002% of this petrol tax revenue will be spent on road safety. That is the value that this Government places on the lives of the motoring public. However, this is not the only implication of the Government's petrol tax for road safety. In effect, it has set in train fundamental shifts in the modes of personal transport. Given the inadequacy of the public transport system and the highly decentralised urban areas an increasing proportion of the motoring public is turning towards motorcycling as a form of personal transport. This shift is reflected in statistics which indicate that national sales of motorcycles increased by more than 45% in 1979/80. The average purchaser is a married man with 2 children in a single income family situation. On average, the motorcycle purchased is a commuter, medium sized road cycle with much greater potential for economy than that of a small 4 cylinder motor car. Government expenditure on motorcycle road safety has been less than ONE HALF OF ONE PER CENT OF TOTAL ROAD SAFETY SPENDING SINCE 1974/75. Motorcycles are an efficient and low cost form of personal transport and their use should be encouraged. It is the Government's responsibility to ensure that the motorcycle rider receives adequate training before being exposed to the hazards of the open road. 40,000 casualties. Some civil war.

What the Honorable Peter Morris was saying was that one half of one per cent was not enough of the road safety money to spend on motorcycling. Considering the amount of petrol tax collected and the cost to the community of 40,000 casualties the Federal Government had been neglecting the motorcycle community. They still are.

After his speech, in the corridors of power, Peter Morris was asked by other M.P.'s why he bothered with the "bikies". They did not listen to the statistics, or did not want to. Such was their lack of care. Were they conditioned to react against intelligent input from the motorcycle community?

Perhaps it was not a conscious discrimination. Perhaps they felt that one half of one per cent of the road safety spending was enough for motorcyclists. Perhaps they felt that we would all be dead soon anyway.

In 1981 I put the idea of a National Motorcycle Safety Month to the Parliamentary Advisory Committees on Education and Road Safety. (P.A.C.E.R.S.) I am the A.M.C. Delegate to that Committee.

In Victoria we have just held our 3rd. annual Safety Month. They have all been successful. I showed P.A.C.E.R.S. a 2 minute video tape and other material M.R.A. Victoria had obtained from the U.S.A. where there are several successful Motorcycle Safety Months. I was given about 8 minutes at the end of a 6 hour meeting which was primarily concerned with re-designing a leaflet that has still not been printed.

I was told that the Federal Government would not be involved in a Motorcycle Safety Month.

THE MOTTO

"Let those who ride decide" was also borrowed from the Americans. It is the M.R.A. motto. It does not mean that we want to make the laws to suit ourselves. It means we want fair and sensible input into decisions that effect our rights and safety. It was picked because it was a talking point. It would arouse interest in why the M.R.A. existed. It would promote dialogue and give us the opportunity to explain what we are about.

Similarly M.R.A. Victoria designed "lights on stinks" stickers. They were meant to provoke conversation with people who thought we were crazy not to want the compulsory daytime use of headlights. They were meant to give us a chance to put our case. They were very successful. Sadly the motto and the stickers were condemned by some people they were meant to help. They said "too militant..We don't want to be seen to be table thumping."

40,000 casualties. Don't table thump.

They should spend some time observing in a Melbourne casualty ward. They should talk to the 4B's. The 4B's started in Melbourne too.

THE IMAGE

To do its job properly the M.R.A. had to project a credible image. It had to be seen as a well organised, representative body of people who did their research and wanted reasonable things. It had to be a strong image. People do not respect other people who make idle threats. Who cry wolf. It had to project a benign image. An image that represented people who cared for their community. M.R.A. Blood Runs, Toy Runs and charity work started in Melbourne. It had to project an image that said we work within the system to improve the system.

The name of the Association gave rise to the initials, M.R.A.. A Letraset type face, "Pump" bold was chosen because it was a benign rounded style. It was bold and highly legible and would be readily available in years to come. The large full stops could suggest wheels to some. The letters shown in a western style type face may have suggested cowboys to some. And so on.

Those 3 initials were to be, and are, representative of what the Association is. Just as the B.M.W., Shell, Red Cross and Qantas have their logos. You do not have to see their names written. A familiar logo is more eloquent than the written name in many cases. M.R.A. in pump represents the Motorcycle Riders' Association.

Since the media was to be one of our weapons and television is the most powerful medium, we needed colors that would compliment the work of the logo. The colors had to be very legible, readily available, fade resistant and easily distinguished from a crowd on camera. Black and white were the obvious choices because it stood in contrast to a colored surround in nature and on camera.

Some have since felt that black was negative. We felt that is was as negative as a Government vehicle, formal wear or a nun's habit. Just as white is as positive as a virgin bride. Black and white are the M.R.A.'s "colours".

M.R.A. Victoria is proud of the achievements all over Australia that the black and whites represent. Other colors are un-constitutional. Other logos are un-constitutional.

Bob Cocker, the President of South Australia's M.R.A., at the last National Conference, said that the logo and colors are designed for public activities. They display a strong, united image at Toy Runs and so on. At functions where media cameras are going.

Members do not have to wear the black and whites every day. They do not have to wear them until they go green under the arms. There are smaller badges and patches that can be worn on fashion colors for daily use. Official M.R.A. garments are black and white.

However, some of us wear our black and whites daily, and with pride.

OTHER BRANCHES

During 1979 the M.R.A. in Melbourne was gaining a reputation, via the media. Concerned motorcyclists contacted the Melbourne Committee hoping to establish M.R.A.'s in their areas.

Since the work of the Association dealt with Governments it was logical to have Branches close to the seats of Government in the capital cities. But riders in other centres needed an organisation to deal with local issues and represent those riders to the Branch and so to Government. The idea of Registers for those centres was formed.

Registers catered for the needs of riders outside the capitals and worked under the Branches.

Just as there was a need for Branches and Registers there is now a need for a National Body. In the future there will be a need for an International Body. It too will need a strong and respected image.

In 1978 there was only 1 Branch with 16 members. In 1982 there are more than 40 Branches and Registers, one Branch is in England. There are 10,000 + members. That has happened in just 5 years and the Branches that have held true to the original Constitution are growing. That indicates that there was a need for an organisation like the M.R.A. and that the original Constitution works.

The M.R.A. in Melbourne wanted to leave the way clear for the democratic growth of the Association so it checked out the riders that wished to start Branches and Registers as best it could. We asked that they uphold the spirit of the Constitution and the good name of the Association. We said that only minor things in the Constitution, like the numbers to make a quorum could be changed. We said that Victoria set the standard for colors and logos until a National Body was formed and a majority vote could be taken.

It was a verbal and moral agreement. We did not put it in writing. That was a mistake.

Some Committees have deviated from the spirit of the Constitution and have not kept to the accepted image of the M.R.A. This is probably through a lack of understanding of the origins of the M.R.A.

It is hoped that the M.R.A. National Conference will resolve these deviations. It is hoped that the Registers will have observers present in Canberra on the Australia Day long weekend in January 1983. It is hoped that members will be told of proceedings and will agree that we are a union and, in spite of political boundaries, we need a strong unified image and ONE Constitution.

The first Constitution took several forms. Typed sheets stapled together and then a type set booklet, but the contents were the same. Those who adopted Victoria's Constitution were morally bound not to change it.

Section 1.(b) of that Constitution said:-
The official colors and logo of the M.R.A. shall be made uniform as to comply with the standards and specifications set by the Victorian Head Office.

Section 17 was included to facilitate changes in minor things such as quorums, not the image or spirit of the Constitution. That has been explained to other Committees, but it has been used as a loop-hole by some. It should have been more clearly defined. That was what the people who started the other Branches and Registers agreed to.

That Constitution is reproduced in this paper. Other concerned riders asked us if they could use our Constitution. We did not force them to start Branches and Registers.

As well as the current Constitution, there is a proposed Constitution for discussion at the National Conference, attached.

As remaining founding member of the M.R.A. holding a Committee position, I am most concerned that the spirit and image of the M.R.A. should not be watered down or corrupted to the advantage of those who place personal gain, in whatever form, before the reduction of our road toll and the defense of our rights and liberty.

We have achieved much in 5 years. Victoria's growth indicates that our original policies are in general correct. We have a long way to grow.

The M.R.A. is at a cross roads. It is the same cross roads where the car clubs, the A.C.U.'s, the F.A.M.'s and others have failed. Political boundaries are negative for most purposes. We can have one strong, unified image and Constitution if we forget the petty State and National boundaries where possible. Leave the little empires to others. The people who make the bad laws for us, and neglect our safety.

No matter what or where we ride, we ride. That is what the M.R.A. was born of.



D. Codognotto,

President,
M.R.A. Victoria.

PROPOSALS FOR AN M.R.A. NATIONAL BODY

1. M.R.A. Annual General Meetings and Elections should be held in August.

This would allow the out going Treasurer to prepare and present a report on the last financial year (ended June 31st.) to the incoming Committee.

It would also give the new Committee time to take over and organise events such as Toy Runs.

It would have the advantage of ALL Committees receiving contact lists of the new Committee members at the same time (Sept.) so that people would know who they were dealing with for the coming year and documents like the N.S.W. M.R.A. Directory could be updated on an annual basis.

Methods of holding elections should be standardised and must be by secret ballot at meetings. Postal voting should be controlled by strict guidelines.

Standard ballot forms should be designed and used by all Branches and Registers.

This proposal will ensure all members have equal voting rights at Branch and Register level and will cut cost and time from the organisation of elections.

2. All M.R.A. membership fees should be \$10A or the equivalent. This would be low enough to allow a good cross section of motorcyclists to be represented by the Association and high enough to allow a National Body to function.

The new fees should apply from the beginning of the financial year.

3. All M.R.A. members should have equal voting rights, rights to facilities and services and the right to inspect books, finances, minutes etc. in all Branches and Registers.

4. The structure of M.R.A. Committees should be standardised. M.R.A. Victoria has had problems, as have other Committees, with working with large Committees. Some members resign mid term and others can't make meetings. However, decisions must be made. Members vote in a Committee person to administer the organisation for them. Large Committees sometimes hamper this work.

Obviously some Committees will need more manpower than others. Where a person is needed to take a role outside that of the Executive Committee that person should be appointed by that Committee, eg: A person would be needed to run the 4B's Sub Committee.

A person thus appointed would have the right to attend and speak at Executive Committee meetings.

Committee meetings at Branch and Register levels should be held at least once a month with the possible exception of January.

STRUCTURE

(a) REGISTERS.,

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT

TREASURER SECRETARY

APPOINTED POSITIONS

MEMBERS

Registers should be divided into 2 catagories.

Operational

Non-operational

To be considered operational a Register should have at least one Committee meeting and one General meeting per month and produce some form of record, eg: minutes book.

It may not be necessary to hold official functions in January or in the Northern Hemisphere during the month when most people take holidays.

Records of meeting should be forwarded to the Branch and the National Body.

Where possible, it would be desirable to circulate minutes to all Branches and Registers.

Registers considered operational should also have a post office box address and a bank account. Financial records should be kept and forwarded at the end of the financial year to the Branch.

Branch Committees would decide which Registers were operational judging them on their merits.

Operational Registers would have preference over non-operational Registers where stock or services were concerned when dealing with a Branch or the National Body.

(b) BRANCHES

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT

VICE PRESIDENT, TREASURER, SECRETARY, MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

APPOINTED POSITIONS (INC. REGISTER REPS.)

MEMBERS

The roles of the Executive positions should be defined but should remain flexible.

(c) M.R.A. AUSTRALIA

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT
(SPOKESMAN)

TREASURER SECRETARY

NO VOTING POWER
FOR EXECUTIVE

1 DELEGATE FROM EACH STATE
HAVING 1 VOTE
POSITIONS AVAILABLE FOR
DELEGATES FROM OVERSEAS TO
VOTE ON MATTERS THAT EFFECT
THEIR MEMBERS.

BRANCHES & REGISTERS

MEMBERS

5. The M.R.A. National Body should meet once a year on the Australia Day Weekend. This meeting would be held at the same location each year so that Branch Delegates and Register Observers could plan for the event. Reasonable travel costs and supply of the venue would be handled by M.R.A. Australia.
If a second meeting was needed then it could be held in other locations but the host Branch would have to negotiate costs, venue and administration with M.R.A. Australia.
6. Locations of M.R.A. Australia and the annual National Conference.

POSSIBILITIES

Canberra-While Canberra is the Nations' Capitol the M.R.A. does not have a large membership there and has few facilities. Many members may be in the Public Service or the Armed Forces and so subject to transfers. Politicians are out of Canberra in their electorates for a good percentage of the year. The A.M.C. is based in Canberra and now has a serious manpower problem.

Sydney- This should be the biggest Branch but its membership has not grown at the rate of some other States. The M.R.A. in Sydney has few facilities and is low on manpower. Further, attitudes of some motorcycle groups and individuals in N.S.W. are anti M.R.A.N.S.W.. This was made clear by problems with Bikers Limited and C.M.A.C. and the most recent edition of Oz Bike. It was not clearly stated that the anti M.R.A. feeling was directed at the organisers of the Wombat Rally and not the M.R.A. in other States.

Melbourne- M.R.A. Victoria can offer a National Body a venue. The hall at M.R.A. House can seat over 100 people. The hall has a P.A. System, tape recording facilities, 16mm projection and video gear (VHS), tea and coffee making facilities, undercover parking, 2 phone lines, its own computer, 2 trucks, dark room, cameras, plate maker, offset printing press and office space with desk and filing cabinets. Melbourne also has 2 fulltime employees and the ability to send them anywhere in the country.

The logical choice for the location of a National Body and the Australia Day meetings would seem to be Melbourne, the birth place of the M.R.A.

7. A quarterly National Newsletter should be established. Newsletters already being produced would not change. However, a National Newsletter could take the place of some local newsletters thus reducing the cost and work loads for some Committees. For example, Victoria would drop its State Newsletter and put all its efforts into a National Newsletter. A National Newsletter would promote unity at a grass roots level because individual members would receive direct information on activities and contacts Interstate and Overseas. A newsletter editor would be responsible for supplying material for the National Newsletter. Since the N.S.W. M.R.A. Newsletter is the best in the country it would seem desirable that Tim Corcoran, its editor, be the editor of the National Newsletter.

8. M.R.A. Australia's National Newsletter could be called "The Deciding Factor" in keeping with the M.R.A.'s motto. Its logo could be as per Fig.3
9. 4B's- Since the 4B members job is an extremely important and responsible position a section controlling such bodies should be added to the National Constitution.
10. Motorcycle Clubs- Clubs wishing to become a club recognised by the M.R.A. should be able to do so by paying a fee of \$20 to M.R.A. Australia. They would then appoint a club member as M.R.A. rep. and that members M.R.A. membership fee would be covered by the club's \$20 payment. That member's job would be to inform the club of M.R.A. activities, distribute Newsletters and sign up M.R.A. members. In this way more clubs could be encouraged to include M.R.A. activities, such as Toy Runs, on their calanders and to urge members to support such functions. Where possible M.R.A. club reps. would attend general meetings. A National listing of M.R.A. recognised clubs and reps. would be handled by the computer.
11. The M.R.A. Toy Run be held on the second weekend in December by all Branches and be the major public activity of the M.R.A.
12. In order to cut costs all M.R.A. stock, stationary and so on be made uniform and ordered (where possible) in large quantities by the National Body. Perhaps a greater benefit would be the improvement to National unity and the credibility of the National Image.

FINANCES-A PROPOSAL

When the M.R.A. National Body has been set up, we will need to have some way of financing it. This has to be done in a profit making & professional way, as the National Body could become a financial burden on M.R.A. Branches, especially the Branches with low memberships. Set out below are three methods of financing a National Body.

PROPOSAL 1

All membership fees (\$10), from the start of the financial year, will be paid directly to the National Body. An income of approximately \$150,000 per annum. With this income the National Body can purchase stock on a yearly order from producers in the State that has the cheapest quote, i.e. M.R.A. Victoria pays \$3.30 per t-shirt on orders over 50. If we order 10,000 per year to be delivered at a rate of 1000 per month. The cost could be as low as \$2.50 per t-shirt. This stock purchased at a lower price and sent to the Branches at that price will mean a bigger profit margin for the whole Association. The National Body can print the Newsletters at no cost to the Branches and distribute same. It can run membership listings on its own computer and even have terminals in all main Branches, again at no cost to the Branches.

Money that is not being used at the time can be invested on short term money market, giving the National Body a way of increasing its income. The current rate of interest on the short term market is approximately 25%. Branches can not, and never will be able, to earn an income through investments due to the small amounts of finance they have. At best, M.R.A. Victoria may be able to invest \$5,000, the yearly return on that will be \$675. If the National Body invests a minimum of \$20,000 (which is quite possible) the return will be \$4,800 per annum. An increase of 611% on profit making abilities. Branches that require funds to operate and cannot make the appropriate income through sale of stock etc. will put a submission to the National Body for funds. At the end of each financial year the National Body will return a percentage of its income to all State Branches which in turn the Branches can pass part of their income to their Registers.

The percentage return at the end of the financial year will be in proportion to the amount of members at the Branches.

On that income M.R.A. Australia will supply all printing, computer services, computer terminals and stationery at no cost to all Branches. It will pay all costs for the National Conferences, such as travel expenses for delegates and accommodation.

PROPOSAL 2

The National Body will receive a percentage of the membership fees (i.e. \$2 out of \$10) which means an annual income of \$30,000. This income will not be sufficient to run the National Body. The M.R.A. Victoria, Head Office, expenditure averaged \$60,000 per annum over 5 years.

To supplement this deficiency the National Body will have to purchase stock and sell it at a small increase. It will have to charge the Branches and Registers for services such as printing and distribution of the Newsletter, running the membership listings etc. Also because of the percentage of membership fees paid into the National Body, some of the Branches will be disadvantaged due to the fact that W.A. fees are \$10 at this time, so they will actually lose

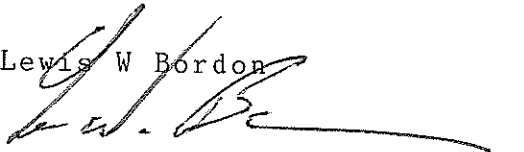
\$2 on each membership. Victoria membership is \$8 at present so they will gain nothing. The only States that will profit from this are the States with a membership of \$5.

PROPOSAL 3

The National Body can be financed by asking the Branches to pay a specific amount into it, such as \$5,000 per annum from the 6 Branches. Making the total income of \$30,000 per annum, again not near enough for the proper operation of the National Body. The rest of the income can only be supplemented by the resale of stock at a profit etc.

I have been an accountant now for 10 years, in that period of time I have learnt the ways of making money work for you. To my belief the only way the M.R.A. can continue to grow is by following the first proposal. The only way for you and your members to be sure of my proposal is to actually speak to an accountant or a business man. Anyone that has no knowledge of business, accounting or book-keeping is only fooling himself by saying that he knows better. Funds and equipment currently held by Branches and Registers would remain the property of those Branches and Registers in all 3 proposals.

Lewis W Bordon



M.R.A. Victoria-Treasurer.

PROPOSED NATIONAL M.R.A. CONSTITUTION

1. THE NAME

- (a) The name of the Association shall be the Motorcycle Riders' Association of Australia herein referred to as the M.R.A.
- (b) Branches of the M.R.A. shall be known by the State name. e.g. The Queensland Branch of M.R.A. Australia.
- (c) Registers of the M.R.A. shall be known by a local name. e.g. The Gippsland Register of M.R.A. Australia.
- (d) No member shall use the name of the Motorcycle Riders' Association or any names or titles registered by law to the Motorcycle Riders' Association for the purpose of personal profit or advancement or for the profit of some other company or organisation without written permission of the Motorcycle Riders' Association. Permission is only to be granted subject to the majority vote of the National Body.

2. THE LOGO AND COLORS.

- (a) The official logo and colors of the M.R.A. shall be uniform for the National Body, all Branches and all Registers of the M.R.A.
- (b) The official colors shall be black and white.
- (c) The official logo of the M.R.A. shall be the initials M.R.A. in the Letraset "Pump" type face as in Fig.1.
- (d) The official designs for M.R.A. garments and badges shall be as shown in Figs.2,3,4,5,6 and 7.
- (e) M.R.A. Branches and Registers may print the name and or logo of their Branch or Register on the backs of official garments.
- (f) Garments or badges produced for specific M.R.A. activities may incorporate other colors or designs, but the logo must be in black or white in the "Pump" type face.

2. THE OBJECTIVES OF THE M.R.A.

The objectives of the M.R.A. shall be to:-

- (a) To work for road safety.
- (b) To promote and improve the public image of motorcycling.
- (c) To work for fair and sensible legislation to protect the motorcyclist's safety and rights.

4. MEMBERSHIP

- (a) Any person who has an interest in the objectives of the M.R.A. is eligible for membership in the M.R.A.
- (b) The annual membership fee of the M.R.A. shall be \$10A or the equivalent in another currency.
- (c) The Committee of M.R.A. Australia shall set membership fees.
- (d) Any member who in the opinion of a State or National Committee has, or is acting in a manner detrimental to the M.R.A. shall be expelled from membership of the M.R.A.. Such action is to be decided by a majority vote of the State or National Committee concerned. The membership fee is to be forfeited to the M.R.A.. All membership badges and cards are to be surrendered to the M.R.A.

- (e) A financial member may appeal against expulsion to the National Committee.

5. FINANCE

- (a) The financial year shall terminate on the 30th June each year.
- (b) All accounts shall be presented and passed for payment at a Committee meeting and the minutes in relation thereto shall be included in the minute book.
- (c) The funds of the M.R.A. shall be banked in the name of the M.R.A. in a bank decided upon by the Committee.
- (d) Signatories of the M.R.A. cheques shall be any two (2) of the following:-
 - (1) President
 - (2) Vice President
 - (3) Treasurer
 - (4) Secretary
 - (5) Membership Secretary
- (e) The income and property of the M.R.A. wheresoever derived shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the objects of the M.R.A. and no portion thereof shall be paid or transferred directly or indirectly by way of dividend, bonus or otherwise howsoever by way of profit to the members of the M.R.A. provided that nothing herein shall prevent payment in good faith of remuneration to any officer, member or servant of the M.R.A., duly authorised by the Committee of the M.R.A., in return for services actually rendered to the M.R.A. or reasonable and proper rent for premises let by any member of the M.R.A.
- (f) Each State Committee is to be supplied with a balance sheet showing monies received and expended for the previous twelve months by the National Body no more than thirty (30) days after the 30th day of June each year.

(g) AUDITOR

The auditor for the M.R.A. Branch and National Committees shall be elected at each annual general meeting.

(h) BOOK INSPECTION

- (a) All books of the M.R.A., and the names of members, shall be open for inspection at the time and place of meeting of the M.R.A. by any member, on such member giving three (3) days previous notice in writing to the Secretary, requiring their production.
- (b) Members personal details shall be confidential.

(i) DISSOLUTION

- (a) In the event of the M.R.A. being dissolved, the assets and properties after payment of all just debts and liabilities shall not be distributed to members but shall be distributed to a fund or funds with similar objects and/or to a fund or funds exclusively for charitable purposes.
- (b) If a State Branch is dissolved, all assets and properties, after payment of just debts and liabilities, shall be distributed to the Registers of that State. If there are no such Registers, then all assets and properties shall be distributed to M.R.A. Australia.

- (c) If a Register is dissolved, all assets and properties, after all just debts and liabilities have been paid, shall be distributed to that State main Branch.

6. STRUCTURE

See Proposals for a National Body Pages.

7. MEETINGS

- (a) General meetings shall be open to the public.
- (b) Non members may voice opinions.
- (c) Only financial members shall have voting rights.
- (d) The annual general meeting and election of the Committee shall be in August of each year.
- (e) In all meetings the President shall preside, should the President be absent the chair shall be taken by the Vice President, and in the absence of the President and the Vice President the chairman shall be elected from those present.
- (f) General and Committee meetings shall be called at any time by the Secretary, upon authority of the President.
- (g) Extraordinary general meetings at Branch level shall be called by the Secretary upon the requisition made in writing and signed by not less than fifteen (15) members of the M.R.A.
- (h) Extraordinary general meetings at Register level shall be called by the Secretary upon the requisition made in writing and signed by not less than five (5) members of the M.R.A.
- (i) Extraordinary general meetings at a National level shall be called by the Secretary upon the requisition made in writing and signed by not less than four (4) State Delegates. In special circumstances the requisition may be made by telephone.
- (j) A Committee meeting shall be called by the Secretary upon the requisition made in writing and signed by not less than three (3) members of the Committee at Branch level or two (2) members of the Committee at Register level.
- (k) The Secretary, shall within seven (7) days from a receipt of a requisition call a meeting in accordance therewith, for a date not more than twenty-one (21) days after the receipt of such requisition.
- (l) The Secretary shall give twenty-one (21) days notice in respect of annual general meetings and extraordinary general meetings. Where special emergency circumstances exist the foregoing length of notice may be dispensed with by the President.
- (m) All notices of meeting, or other business in connection with the M.R.A. shall be deemed to be duly sent to the members by the Secretary, posting same by pre-paid letter to the members at their last known address.
- (n) M.R.A. Sub-Committees such as 4B's shall be bound by the rules of the Constitution and the Appointed Committee person shall fill the role of President of such Sub-Committees.
- (o) The names of Committee members and special visitors in attendance at meetings shall be recorded in the minutes and the number of people present shall be recorded in the minutes.
- (p) The National Body will meet at least once a year and as is deemed necessary by the National President. A chairman at each meeting is to be elected by majority vote of the National Body and all decisions made are to be made by majority vote.

8. QUORUMS

- (a) Quorums for meetings shall be set by the President of the National Body or the State Branch or the Register or the Subcommittee after consultation with the Secretary and Treasurer of the Committee involved. The number of members needed to make a quorum shall be approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ the number of members that usually attend a meeting.
- (b) The number of members needed to make a quorum shall be recorded in the minutes of the first meeting after the quorum has been set.
- (c) If within 30 minutes after the time appointed for the meeting a quorum is not present the meeting, if convened upon the requisition of members, shall be dissolved, in any other case it shall stand adjourned to the same day in the next week at the same time and place and if at the adjourned meeting a quorum is not present within 30 minutes from the time appointed for the meeting the members present shall be a quorum.

9. VOTING

- (a) On a show of hands every member represented in person and entitled to vote shall have one vote.
- (b) Any member has the right to demand a secret ballot of any vote taken at the general meeting.
- (c) At all meetings the chairman shall have a casting vote.
- (d) A member unable to be present and entitled to vote on any matter on the agenda may communicate his vote in writing, such vote to be in the Secretary's hands prior to the starting time of the meeting.
- (e) A member shall appoint another member to act as his proxy provided notice in writing is given to the Secretary at the commencement of the meeting.
- (f) Election of office bearers and Committee shall be by secret ballot.
- (g) At a secret ballot vote any member being voted upon shall have the right to call a recount if the votes differ by a margin of 5% or less.
- (h) Standard secret ballot forms shall be available from the National Body and all Committees for postal voting and secret ballots.
- (i) Only a majority vote of all State Committee persons representing all States to the National Body of the Motorcycle Riders' Association will allow the removal of a National Committee person.

FORMATION OF REGIONAL SUB-BRANCHES

- (a) On the description of the State Committee a Register or Regional Sub-Branch can be established if the occasion warrants such action.
- (b) The State Committee, by a majority vote, shall appoint three (3) regional representatives whose task will be to organise a Register for the local members, and a Committee to manage its affairs.
- (c) The regional Sub-Branch shall collect all fees and monies from sale of M.R.A. material and forward monies to the main State Branch of the M.R.A.
- (d) See proposal 4. Pages

FORMATION OF OTHER BRANCHES

- (a) The Committee of the National Body shall, on majority vote, authorise individuals who have shown interest, to form a Branch of the M.R.A.. The duties of these individuals shall be similar to other Branch Committees.
- (b) When the Branch has a membership of thirty (30) members, a general meeting will be organised to elect an interim Committee for that State Main Branch.
- (c) The duties of the interim Committee shall be the same as other Branch Committees.
- (d) A copy of the constitution shall be sent to a Branch as soon as the Branch is established.
- (e) When the Branch is established, or before the passing of twelve (12) months, the interim Committee will arrange an election of a Committee in accordance with this constitution.
- (f) When an Interstate Regional Sub-Branch is in operation, and there is no Main Branch in that State, the Regional Sub-Branch will operate directly under the orders of the National Body until such time as a State Main Branch is established.
- (g) See proposal 4. Pages

ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION

The National Body shall have the sole power to alter the Constitution of the Motorcycle Riders' Association.

RESIGNATION

Any Committee member may resign his position at any time by writing to the Secretary at least fourteen (14) days prior to relinquishing his position.

MANAGEMENT OF THE AFFAIRS OF THE M.R.A.

The government of the M.R.A. rests within the members in the general meeting. Subject thereto, the management of its affairs shall be vested in the Committees.

POWERS OF THE COMMITTEE

The Committee may exercise all such powers of the M.R.A. as are not by these rules required to be exercised by the members in general meeting, and without derogation from the generality of the foregoing, shall have the following specific powers in addition to such others as are specified elsewhere in these rules:-

- (a) To adopt such measures as from time to time it appears proper for the purposes of giving effect to the purposes, aims or objects of the M.R.A.
- (b) To consider, and where necessary, authorise expenditure and payment of accounts properly incurred by the M.R.A.
- (c) To compromise, settle and resolve claims and demands made on the M.R.A.
- (d) The National Body only has the power to make, alter, vary or rescind such constitution rules as may be required for the purpose of carrying out these rules and for regulating the conduct and proceedings of meetings of the Committee and of the M.R.A. These changes shall not however be binding unless confirmed by the next general meeting or extraordinary general meeting called for that purpose.
- (e) To have the power to fill a casual vacancy occurring on the Committee during its year of office.
- (f) To have the power to create and dissolve Sub-Committees and power to co-opt members in such Sub-Committees.

OFFICE BEARERS

The office bearers shall be called:-

- (a) President
- (b) Vice President
- (c) Secretary
- (d) Treasurer
- (e) Membership Secretary

The immediate past President shall be ex-officio member of this Committee with the right of participating fully in the proceedings of meeting of the Committee. Except for any President which may have been expelled from the Committee.

(1) PRESIDENT

(2) VICE PRESIDENT

(3) TREASURER

The Treasurer shall keep account of the funds and the properties of the M.R.A. and all receipts and payments on account of the M.R.A.. He shall in each year, prepare a balance sheet and statement of accounts, and shall submit the same, duly audited, to the annual general meeting each year. He shall attend all meetings at which matters of finance are to be discussed.

4. SECRETARY

The Secretary shall, subject to the provision of this constitution, convene all meetings and M.R.A. conferences, and take proper minutes of the proceedings thereat and shall circulate a copy thereof to the Registers, the Main State Branches and the office bearers. The Secretary shall conduct the correspondence of the M.R.A. He shall be an ex-officio member of all Committees. He shall maintain contact with the bodies with which the M.R.A. recognises and shall inform the M.R.A. of all matters relating to such bodies.

5. MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

6. APPOINTED COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Where the need arises the Executive Committee shall appoint by majority vote a person to handle specific functions, e.g. the President of the 4B's Sub Committee. Appointed Committee members shall have voting rights at Committee meetings.

Appointed Committee persons shall not be obliged to attend Committee meetings.

Executive Committee members who fail to attend 2 consecutive Committee meetings and fail to make an apology in writing shall lose their position on the Committee.

Apologies may be phoned in but a written apology must be given within fourteen (14) days of the meeting.

ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS AND COMMITTEE

- (a) The President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Membership Secretary, except the immediate past President, shall be elected at each annual general meeting.
- (b) Nominations for the Committee shall be made in writing to the Secretary sixty (60) days prior to the annual general meeting.
- (c) Persons nominating and being nominated for the position of Committeeman must be a financial member of the M.R.A.
- (d) Voting for Executive Committeeman shall be done by secret ballot by the members present at the annual general meeting and by postal votes on approved ballot forms.
- (e) Executive Officers of the M.R.A. shall be elected for a twelve (12) month period at the annual general meeting, which will be held in August each year, and shall be convened in writing with at least fourteen (14) days notice given to every member.

4B'S

- (a) No Register of the M.R.A. shall raise a Committee known as the Bent and Buckled Bikies (Bikers) Bureau (4B's) without the prior consultation with and concurrence of the State Branch Committee person delegated as 4B Committee member.
- (b) Furthermore, no person or persons will claim to be a member of 4B's without written authority of the Committee person delegated to handle 4B's affairs.
- (c) Any unauthorised use of the 4B's patch, logo, name or badge is to be cause for immediate expulsion from the M.R.A as provided for in paragraph 4, sections (d) and (e), of the M.R.A. Constitution.
- (d) Supplies of 4B;s patches will be provided by State M.R.A. 4B's Committee person and only upon receipt of a written request from 4B's Committee person at Register level.

POWERS OF THE COMMITTEE

12(g)

The Committee shall empower three members to sign a Declaration of Trust which shall provide that they be the Trustees of the Association and wherein in the said declaration the powers of the Trustees will be contained.