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## Open Letter to all MRAA Members

As a long-time MRAA member and more recently publisher of *The Deciding Factor*, I have been involved with the MRAA for many years. I have watched it grow and mature, and I have also seen it rocked by internal turmoil and political strife. But in recent times, under the presidency of Damien Codognotto, the organisation has regrouped, membership has grown and the MRAA is now this country's most formidable and effective motorcycle user group.

Unfortunately, due to the actions of a select group of people, all of this good work has now been placed in jeopardy. They have forced the membership to participate in an extraordinary election for the office of president - this after the recent AGM on August 1, at which Damien was re-elected to that post. I was present at this meeting and witnessed a blatant attempt to stack the meeting in favour of a rival candidate. Interestingly, most of these rival supporters only signed up as members on the day, and then spent most of the meeting drinking alcohol out in the carpark. I am happy to report that, despite the poorly organised and executed challenge, Damien was re-elected, albeit by the narrowest of margins. But the issue has now re-emerged and I feel that it is crucial that it is settled as soon as possible so that Damien and his team can continue to professionally represent the organisation.

As publisher of the *Factor*, and also *Heavy Duty Magazine*, I have undertaken membership drives in both publications to boost the MRAA. This has been done at no cost to the organisation and I am proud of the fact that membership numbers have grown considerably as a result. But I would like it known that if Damien is defeated in this latest attempt to destabilize the MRAA, I will have absolutely no confidence in the organisation or its leadership and will withdraw all support for it, including continuing to publish the *Factor*. Having seen first-hand the quality of his opponents and their antics at the AGM, I am alarmed at the prospect of their gaining control of the MRAA and destroying the many years of effort that Damien and others have put into the organisation.

I therefore urge all members to support Damien Codognotto and his team in the ballot. He is a professional and experienced lobbyist who, through his own tireless efforts, has built the MRAA into this country's most credible motorcycle political group. I believe the motives of his opposition are suspect, based more on personal animosity than a desire to improve the MRAA, and certainly their credentials lack authenticity. I strongly believe all members stand to lose if Damien is defeated, especially country and interstate members, who will be denied regular information on the organisation through *The Deciding Factor*.

For the sake of stability and the future fortunes of the MRAA, vote for Damien Codognotto.

Chris Beattie  
Publisher - The Deciding Factor



FAX 348 1270  
 ATT<sup>n</sup> Dean Mighell

THE MOTORCYCLE RIDERS' ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA INC.

**MRAA SPECIAL MEETING**

10 am Sunday, October 10, 1993.  
 Princes Avenue, Caulfield  
 (Near Caulfield Station)

**AGENDA**

Chairman - ~~Chris Swallow~~

- Item a) The legal status of the 1993 Annual General Meeting of the Motorcycle Riders' Association Inc.  
 b) A motion of no confidence in MRAA President, Damien Codognotto.

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|---|--------|
| 1) The Chairman's introduction.   | 2 mins |
| 2) 1st speaker - Dean Mighell.  | 5 mins |
| 3) 2nd speaker - Damien Codognotto.   | 5 mins |
| 4) Questions from the floor.<br>(Answers to be no more than 2 minutes unless directed by the chairman). |        |
| 5) Vote on the issues.  |        |

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Only current, financial members can vote at this special meeting. Members attending must be sure to carry their current membership card.

Proxy vote forms available from MRAA Head Office. Phone 03 571 5127  
 Fax 03 563 5248.

Proxy votes must be received by the Secretary at GPO Box 1933R, Melbourne by 9am October 1993, or Head Office (Fax 03 563 5248).

Should the AGM be voted illegal by this meeting, the current Board of Management of the MRAA will become a "Caretaker" Board and will organise another election by Secret Postal Ballot of ALL members with the results announced at the MRAA General Meeting in February 1994.

Should this meeting vote for a motion of no confidence in the MRAA President, Damien Codognotto, the motion will be voted on by Secret Postal Ballot of ALL the members.

Dear MRA Australia Member,

I was a founder of the MRA and have been President 3 times since 1978. Each time the MRAA has grown. In '89 the MRAA was debt ridden, had no magazine and just 500 members. My team has paid the bills, given you a glossy mag and the membership is now 2258 across Australia and growing. MRAA again has a positive image and political muscle to represent you to the Federal Government and internationally. In August alone I represented riders in more than 30 hours of meetings with government and industry. Most of these were in business hours. MRAA has a bright future as a national organisation. It can give the motorcycle community national services and benefits never seen in Australia before. BUT, only with good policies and strong management.

The past Vice President, Chris Lamblin 03 736 3059, ran for President at the August AGM. There was a UNANIMOUS vote to accept the rulings of the Returning Officer, Detlef Lamp 03 367 1271. Now that meeting and the election are questioned. Chris heads a local faction that wants control of your MRAA. But this small Melbourne group has minimal experience in business or politics. They are unlikely to give up jobs to represent you at all the meetings MRAA is committed to in Melbourne, Canberra and elsewhere. If they take over my team will retire permanently. Head Office and its staff will resign as members and your glossy magazine will not be produced. This decision should properly be made by MRAA members across Australia. But, don't take my word, call Chris, Detlef and Dean and get their side of the story. Its your future. You decide.

*Damien*

Damien Codognotto - MRAA President.

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**NEWS**

**CODIGNOTTO RE-ELECTED IN MRAA AGM SHAMBLES**

Long-time president of the MRAA, Damien Codognotto, was re-elected for another year at the organisation's August 1 annual general meeting. The meeting, however, was a shambles, which highlighted some weak points in what many MRAA members regard as an outdated constitution.

In an initial ballot for the presidency, Codognotto was not allowed to run thanks to a clause in the constitution which forbids an incumbent (of two or more years standing) to run if there are two or more other candidates who can each net better than 20 percent of the vote. This is the first time in the organisation's 15-year history that this clause has been called into operation.

The two other candidates were former Vice-President Chris Lamblin and a previously 'unknown' member, Duane Cox. The latter gave every appearance of running as a 'dummy' candidate who had no intention of being elected. He was there simply to force Codognotto out of the running and in fact exhorted people to vote not for himself, but for Lamblin.

Such was the resentment at Cox's move that the majority of people abstained from the first ballot.

Technically Lamblin was elected and, when he spoke to *Motorcycle News*, he denied any involvement with Cox's decision to run. In fact he requested a second ballot, "for the good of the organisation", in which he ran against Codognotto. The result was 51 to 50 in Codognotto's favour. Attended by 106 members, plus a few observers, the meeting raised some other problems with the MRAA constitution such as there being no age limit on voting. A five-year-old was allowed to join the ballot.

Other officers elected on the day were: Vice President — Lloyd Williams; Treasurer — Gus Cummings; Secretary — Linda Rosier; and Membership Secretary — Jerry Hall.

According to Codognotto, the MRAA is "Looking forward to a pretty hard year so far as workload is concerned, but a positive one". MRAA has revived its magazine. The Deciding Factor, and currently has around 2100 financial members. Apparently the current trend is that most of the new and renewed memberships are coming from outside the organisation's home state, Victoria.

Guy Allen

Dear Friend,

the acting President Damien Codognotto, was not elected in accordance with the Constitution of the MRAA and further that in the opinion of many members of the MRAA, he is not a workable President who can unite motorcyclists to advance our interests, we therefore believe that he should step down.

*Dean Mitchell*

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THE MOTORCYCLE RIDERS' ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA INC.  
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PROXY VOTE FORM

MRAA SPECIAL MEETING - OCTOBER 10, 1993.  
10am Sunday. The Stage, Princes Ave, Caulfield, Vic.

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MRAA CONSTITUTION RULE No. 17.1.

"A member is entitled to appoint another member as his proxy by notice given to the Secretary no later than 24 hours before the time of the meeting for which the proxy is required."

MRAA Member No. 634, Martin Shelton of Bendigo 03 359 2784, will act as proxy for members who can't attend the meeting and who do not have a member to act as their proxy.

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss and resolve concerns that the 1993 Annual General Meeting was not "legal" and that the President, Damien Codognotto, should stand down.

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I/We ..... (Full name of member or, in the case of  
..... a family membership, two members.)

MRAA Membership No. .... Expiry date ..... Type .... (Single or family.)

Of ..... (Full Address.)

Being a financial member of The Motorcycle Riders' Association of Australia Inc.

Hereby appoint ..... MRAA No. ....

Of .....

Being a member of the Association, as my proxy to vote for me on my behalf at

The Special General Meeting of the Association to be held on OCTOBER 10, 1993

and at any adjournment of that meeting.

My proxy is authorised to vote as follows:

(To vote strike out the sentence you do NOT support leaving the one you support.)

ITEM a) This MRAA Special General Meeting, October 10, declares the MRAA 1993 Annual General Meeting to be legal.

This MRAA Special General Meeting, October 10, declares the MRAA 1993 Annual General Meeting to be illegal.

ITEM b) This MRAA Special General Meeting, October 10, supports a motion of no confidence in the President, Damien Codognotto.

This MRAA Special General Meeting, October 10, does not support a motion of no confidence in President, Damien Codognotto.

NB The meeting will be recorded on audio tape. Members may obtain a dub by supplying an appropriate cassette and paying for postage.

PLEASE PHOTO COPY THIS FORM IF YOU NEED EXTRA COPIES.



THE MOTORCYCLE RIDERS' ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA INC.

MRAA SPECIAL MEETING

10 am Sunday, October 10, 1993.  
Princes Avenue, Caulfield  
(Near Caulfield Station)

AGENDA

Chairman - ~~Chris Swalwell~~

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THE MOTORCYCLE RIDERS' ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA INC.

**SPECIAL MEETING**

The Board of the Motorcycle Riders' Association of Australia Inc. has called a Special Meeting of the MRAA for **10.00 am, Sunday, October 10 at The Stage, Princes Avenue near Caulfield Station. Melways ref Map 68, F 1.**

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss and resolve concerns that the recent AGM was not constitutional and that the President should step down.

Members are urged to attend. **Proxy vote forms 03-571 5127, Fax 03-563 5248.**