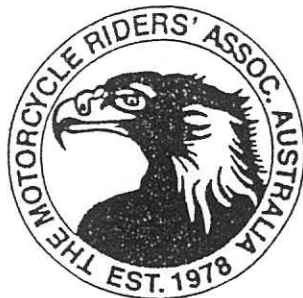


FILE



THE MOTORCYCLE RIDERS' ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA INC.

18 October 1994

Ms Elaine Canty
Radio 3LO
Cnr Lonsdale & William Sts
MELBOURNE 3000

Dear Elaine,

further to our conversation re motorcyclists on the Boulevarde.

There is a small group of riders, usually male under 25 years, who have an irresponsible attitude to motorcycling. These riders are commonly known as "boy-racers" or "two-percenters" as they are probably less than 2% of the motorcycling community.

Boy-racers are highly visible with their racing colors and hard-wired lights. Boy-racers are also crash-prone. Most motorcycle casualties are male less than 25 years old. Boy-racers do enormous damage to the law-abiding reputation of the Australian motorcycle community. There are about 1.2 million motorcycle licence holders in this country.

This dangerous road racer image is promoted by an irresponsible few (mainly retailers) in the motorcycle industry. There is a double negative in this. Firstly, it encourages gullible young men to ride with their egos rather than with their brains. Secondly, it scares away potential motorcyclists who may choose to ride for work or pleasure.

Commuting by motorcycle or scooter benefits the wider community. It can make public transport terminals more accessible, particularly in outer suburbs. It helps reduce air pollution, road damage, and parking shortages. It reduces traffic congestion and on a transport strike day like Friday the commutercycle is a positive boom to Melbourne. Parliamentary Inquiry, May 1993 (Pg xi).

"The Committee is unequivocal in its belief that motorcycling is a legitimate form of transport and that it is incumbent upon Government and the community to make motorcycling as safe as possible."

Commuter scooters and cycles will never take over from the car-with-just-one-person-in-it but a few more scooters would really help. Victorian Transport Strategy supports high occupancy vehicles.

It isn't all boy-racers and gung-ho salesmen that are preventing the growth of the positive aspects of motorcycling.

PTO/...2

THE N.M.C Shop, 380 ELIZABETH ST, MELBOURNE 3001.
G.P.O Box 1933R, MELBOURNE 3001.
TEL: (03) 663 2164. FAX: (03) 563 5248.

Parliamentary Inquiry, May 1993..(Pg 119)

"The Committee is of the view that the composition of all relevant consultative bodies in Victoria, including those which deal with road and vehicle design and traffic management, should be changed to ensure that motorcycle riders are represented and have an effective voice. This will not be easy to achieve because motorcycle riders are not usually in occupations which allow them to participate freely in government consultation mechanisms, Some consideration needs to be given to remuneration. Further, the balance may be easier to achieve by taking people who are antagonistic to motorcycles off some committees."

VicRoads told Minister Baxter to reject recommendation 16 of the Parliamentary Inquiry Report, May 1993 on "philosophical" grounds. Great way to make road law eh?? No. 16 says small auto scooters should be available for use on a car licence. The MUARC agrees with MRAA. In August the year MUARC released report No.56 (Pg 68)

"Training to decrease crash rates by educational measures may be valuable. There is evidence that car drivers who have motorcycling experience have a lower chance of being involved in a crash with a motorcyclist than drivers without such experience. This may be because drivers who ride know where to expect motorcyclists and are better at anticipating their behaviour. Since most multi-vehicle motorcycle crashes result from an automobile driver violating the motorcyclists right of way (Potter, 1973: Hancock et al, 1990), efforts to increase the awareness of the car drivers may result in the reduction of these crashes."

The MRAA is under-resourced and has great difficulty in promoting the middle-ground benefits that motorcycling offers with boy-racers on one side and anti-motorcycling authorities on the other. However, we do our best.

Enclosed please find an audio tape of a community service announcement we made. Also, there is material on the annual Rider Training Expo.

All the best

Damien Codognotto
MRA Australia
PRESIDENT