



# Annual General Meeting 2011 MINUTES

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Location: Galway Arms Bistro, Keilor Hotel 670 Old Calder Highway, Keilor VIC 3036

Date: March 18<sup>th</sup> 2011, 7.17 pm

Minute taker: Wendy Taylor

## **1 First items of business:**

Board and officers present: Kerry Walton – President  
Grant Delahoy – Vice President  
Kim Davies – Treasurer  
Mick Doedee – Membership Secretary  
Tony Ellis – Board member  
Wendy Taylor – Board member  
Alan Zimmer – 4Bs co-ordinator  
Detlef Lamp – Constitutional advisor

Absent with apologies: Grace Placencio (Public Officer)

## **2 Welcome:**

MRA(Vic) President, Kerry Walton made his report (as follows) to the meeting:

Greetings and thanks to everyone for coming tonight.

A year ago I was asked to take on the role as President for the MRA(Vic) and was told this would be the “make or break” year. Little did I know how much effort this was going to be and how much personal sacrifice the role would take. Many members knew, the MRA(Vic) had been in decline for some time which was a tragedy considering the many good things the organization had achieved over the years. So a plan had been made to see what could be done to reverse the MRA, Victorian brand name’s slide into oblivion.

With the help of our dedicated, elected team we made progress which saw the membership climb from 467 in 2009 to 654 today. But this has not been easy. Part of the plan had us meeting with government authorities, ministers and industry figures along with many riders out there and members alike. There were HIGH’S as we made the news for our awareness ride, Cranbourne G/P Ride, Myer’s Christmas Parade, and our very successful Toyrun where we returned to the streets of Melbourne and made the National news. We’ve made substantial inroads in credibility with the TAC and Victoria Police. Reports and articles about what your board has been doing have been chronicled in the Newsletters and the website. The hardest part however was the LOWs. This was when issues became personal and my own integrity was questioned.

I'm sure you've all read the article in the newsletter and on the website about why we're putting a proposal to the members tonight to restructure the advocacy and lobby effort for all riders in Victoria. Some here may be very opposed to this idea but we are not here to go over in detail all the many disreputable incidents that have marred the MRA(Vic) in the last decade. We are here tonight to look at where that combination of events has NOW put the "Motorcycle Riders Association" today and decide "what are we going to do about it?" It cannot be left the way it is.

The team elected as the board in 2010 has found a colossal problem with attracting funding from both the motorcycle community and the motorcycle industry itself. This is a major problem because without extensive sponsorship and funding we cannot perform the tasks that the MRA(Vic) was founded for in the first place. It really saddens me to say this but the reputation of the MRA(Vic) has lost a mountain of respect in the motorcycle industry in the last 10 years.

Add to this the problem of our single membership structure which means we actually only represent a tiny percentage of the riders in Victoria which now works against us. We also have found that there is a significant difference in the political landscape today to what it was back in the 1980s. Numbers are what counts, funded and professional lobbying and national co-operation is absolutely essential as the road rules are all going to be nationally based soon.

As the members had charged the board members to do, we have therefore been seeking advice from many stakeholders both in and outside of the organization. We wish to congratulate those who have helped us for the outstanding efforts they have made towards bringing to the members a plan to improve the lobbying efforts for all Victorian riders. They know who they are. Tonight we will discuss the alternatives; we will discuss the issues and we again will be fair. Everyone will have a chance to make their point. But it is our intent that tonight will be the start of a united effort to stand up to those in authority who would wish to take away our freedom to choose to ride. Thank you for coming.

### **3      *Hand over to Chairman:***

Kerry Walton introduced and welcomed David Heasley as the Independent Chairman for the MRA(Vic) 2011 AGM.

Mr Heasley explained that he would chair the MRA(Vic) AGM, and outlined the meeting protocols and the conduct he expected of the people present. He requested Mr. D. Codognotto to cease filming the members, Mr. Codognotto refused, no action was taken.

Member Michael Czajka said that the MRAV had been refusing memberships, and if those people were attending the AGM they could not vote.

Grant Delahoy said only one ex member had been denied as per the constitution and prospective members advised on the circumstances but not denied. If anyone had a problem they could join up now if they wanted.

Michael Czajka said an application from Damian Codognotto was denied.

Grant Delahoy said that Mr. Codognotto was an ex member, therefore the only denied application.

Dale Maggs said that the special resolution should be attended to after the election of the new Board, and that there should be no new business until after the election.

The Chairman said that the special resolution is on the agenda for members to vote on, and this needs to be done, regardless of whether it is an old board or a new board. Some people attempted to register with the membership Secretary but after a short while the Chair declared it was taking too long and it was too late anyway as the board had been dissolved.

Dale Maggs declared that members are not informed.

#### **4 Membership Report:**

The Membership Secretary advised the membership as:

608 members, plus 46 life members. Total at as March 18, 2011 is 654.

The Chairman checked the Constitution for the requirements for the meeting to proceed as the AGM, with not less than 2 per cent of members needing to be present. It was determined that 34 members were in attendance, and a quorum existed.

#### **5 Proxy Voting Declarations:**

The chairperson called for all proxy votes to be declared, and given to him to check. He sought a volunteer from the membership as scrutineer. The Chairman noted proxies, and the scrutineer confirmed.

#### **6 Quorum declaration:**

The Chairman declared the meeting to be formal.

#### **7 Previous AGM minutes:**

The Chairman read the minutes of the 2010 MRAV AGM. He called for a motion for acceptance. Move: Detlef Lamp. Seconded John Karmouche.

#### **8 Treasurer's Report:**

(i) Summary tabled as at 31/12/2010.

\$16,489.97	Income
\$20,410.04	Expenditure
\$14395.25	Assets/bank accounts
\$0	Liabilities

Moved to Accept financial report: Detlef Lamp. Seconded member 26668.

Members were reminded of the Brick (building fund), which has a balance of \$12,950, and 4Bs account with a balance of \$1641.

## **9 Special Resolution:**

The Chairperson read the special resolution to the meeting:

*As tabled at the 2010 QGM3 The MRA(Vic) is to be formally wound up and all assets including intellectual property be packaged and transferred to the Victorian Motorcycle Council to carry on protecting and promoting rider's rights.*

*If the special resolution is carried then the MRA(Vic) will close down immediately following this meeting and all assets handed to the public officer for sale to the VMC. The current executive will assist in this procedure over the next 30 days.*

The Chairman welcomed Shaun Lennard, AMC Chairman, and Rob Smith, MA Riders Division manager, and advised the members that Shaun and Rob would speak about their view of motorcycle lobbying, with regard to the proposal about the future of the MRAV.

Dale Maggs said he is opposed to the motion. He said the MRAV members had not been informed about the Victorian Motorcycle Council (VMC), and he is uneasy about handing over membership funds to an organisation that has not provided a business plan, information about its composition, minutes of meetings, etc.

Rodney Brown stated that he is opposed to motion as he needs to know more about the proposal.

Michael Czajka said he is opposed as memberships have been refused, so it is not right to proceed.

The Chairman reiterated that Michael Czajka's objection is already noted, and to move on.

The Chairman invited guest speaker Shaun Lennard, Chair of the Tasmanian Motorcycle Council and Chair of the Australian Motorcycle Council to speak.

Shaun stated the need to focus on the future: it is difficult to continue as is at the state and national level with only volunteers. AUSTROADS leads the agenda for roads and road safety. Cyclists lobbying has been very successful compared to motorcycling. The different motorcycling lobbying structures in place in each State makes it difficult as most of these currently only represent a very small percentage of total riders.

He said the AMC had created a sub-committee to review current models, and benchmark motorcycling community best practice (such as Norway and Canada). This sub-committees feedback to AMC included model structures. Tasmania and NSW operate in this way, with a State council.

The Chair invited the second guest Rob Smith to speak:

Rob Smith is the Manager, Riders' Division, Motorcycling Australia. Rob provided members with a brief summary of his extensive history as a motorcyclist, and consultant. Rob indicated that unity is important. He said that AUSTROADS drives the agenda, and that road safety driven at the national level is a reality.

Rob said that while the MA is not a lobby group, it would support the body that takes on the lobbying. He said the MA was not a political organisation, but is cognisant of the need for advocacy.

Rob said that the lobbying effort needed strategic thinkers, fair representation and a decent voice.

Rob asked the members to think about who we want to represent us, to decide, and to stick with this decision.

Rodney Brown said he agreed with Rob, but the current concept is nothing new. He stated that he is willing to work with the VMC, but not to destroy the MRAV. He said that the Ulysses club is already strong.

Mark Sutcliffe said he was opposed as riders need to represent own interests with the likes of the MRA(Vic). He said to not destroy this, as it represents members. He suggested that tired MRA(Vic) members (who are active in the organisation) retire. He said others would be willing to step up.

Rik Van Zuylekom: Rik said he has been involved in the MRA since the 1980s, and that he does not view the organisation as a club. He said he is a member because it is a lobby group. He said that there is a need to be certain to have a representative group otherwise the effort won't improve. Rik asked in what way will the proposal change the lobbying movement? And what will the VMC achieve?

Brian Eade said he was a past member and that there are lots of individual clubs, and a need for these voices. He said he will support the motion.

John Karmouche said that in his discussions with the TAC the TAC advised him that the MRA(Vic) does not have enough members, and their need is to talk only to the biggest group. He said that the TAC said that they regard the MRA(Vic) as unimportant.

Rik Van Zuylekom asked how the motion will change this?

John Karmouche responded that the VMC will provide the numbers (from clubs).

Dale Maggs said he disagrees with John Karmouche. He said that he has met ministers who accepted the MRA(Vic) as representative, and that the MRA(Vic) has more runs on the board than any other group. He enjoyed a great relationship with the TAC, and the (then) TAC Minister Rob Hulls. Dale quoted the Minister as saying that the MRA(Vic) is iconic

Paul Viney stated that he is a recent member. He said he joined the MRA(Vic) as they have made a difference in the past, including with the levy and being vocally anti WRB. He said the MRA(Vic) is ineffectual now, both current and previous boards.

Grant Delahoy asked Dale Maggs what legislation has been changed (directly due to MRA(Vic) lobbying efforts) in the last ten years.

Dale Maggs responded that the MRA(Vic) had had a good open response from the TAC. The government helped the "Ride for the Hills" ride when VicPol would not. He said that the MRA(Vic) was and still is effective as a lobbyist.

David Heasley (Chair) asked what will the VMC do?

Detlef Lamp (VMC Chair) said that the VMC was formed in 1996, as the then MRAA initiative, it is incorporated, and that a draft constitution was developed. He said there had been regular meetings. Detlef stated that the VMC had taken on a stewardship role for the time being, and representation on various groups such as VMAC.

Detlef stated that the MRAV Futures Committee was created to discuss the future at a strategic level. Detlef said he would like the MRA(Vic) to continue, as it has good aims, and was effective at times. He indicated that he thought the MRA(Vic) would be effective to continue to lobby other groups, as part of a ripple effect, rather than lobby direct to government (as in the past). He said that recent boards inherit a poison chalice, challenging credibility.

Dale Maggs said there is no information available about the VMC, such as structure, board and finances.

Grant Delahoy asked Detlef how many members comprise the VMC?

Detlef said that there are currently 15 member clubs.

Heather Ellis asked how are individuals represented who are not members of a club?

Detlef said there is a need to consider a club within the VMC for individuals not in a club to join.

Grant Delahoy said the concept of the VMC is as a “club of clubs”, and that the MRA(Vic) is the largest MRA in Australia. Grant continued that Victoria Police Deputy Commissioner Ken Lay would not speak to the MRA(Vic) about hoons, and instead approached the Ulysses Club, as they have 5,000 members in Victoria.

Grant asked again what legislation has changed in the past ten years because of the MRA(Vic) efforts? Grant Delahoy responded to his question: nothing then?

Grant said that he and Kerry Walton (MRA(Vic) President) had approached the motorcycling industry, but they will not have anything to do with the MRA(Vic) because of the last ten years history with the, at times, despicable behaviour.

Shaun Lennard (TMC) said that the MRAT is small and not representative. The Tasmanian Government suggested the TMC and this idea went ahead, and now every club in Tasmania is a member of the TMC. In Tasmania the introduction of the safety levy was effectively waged, and it did not go ahead.

Shaun stated that in Tasmania the TMC is effective.

Brian Eade said world-wide there is difficulty in communication between governments and motorcyclists and lobbyists. He asked what happens to the MRA(Vic) members if the MRA(Vic) ceases.

Neil Relph suggested that individuals join a club if they enjoy it. He stated that motorcyclists should learn from the cyclists lobbying, and asked “where is the vision”?

Grant responded again that it was difficult to get funds as the MRA(Vic) is considered to have no credibility. He stated that as an example the NSW MCC is a “club of clubs” and was looking at individual associate membership so that would be a possibility. Grant emphasised that the VMC is a

new name, and carries no baggage. In NSW Rob Colligan, NSW MCC Chairman, is on the NSW equivalent of the TAC. Grant asked where the motorcyclist representative is on the TAC Board? Grant stated that several members of MRA(Vic) boards over the past decade have given up in disgust because of the baggage.

Dale Maggs said that baggage is okay, and that there is 33 years of motorcycling history and lobbying and it should not go to an unknown entity (the VMC).

Tony Ellis also said that some organisations will not deal with the MRA(Vic) because of the history, and that industry and groups still refer to baggage and will not support the MRA(Vic).

Rik Van Zuylekom said he was still not sold on the proposal. He asked: "what's in it for us? Will the MRA(Vic) fit into the new model? Will the MRAV be disbanded? What is the plan?"

At this point the Chairman called a break. Discussion continued when the meeting resumed.

Mick Dabbs said he liked the current structure of the MRA(Vic), as he knows who to talk to, where to go on the website. He asked who he would go to at the VMC?

Grant Delahoy said today's MRA(Vic) versus the future. Is it a social group? No it is a lobby group. It is good to see so many people at the AGM, and he asked people to volunteer to help. He said lobbying today needs professionals and resources. The VMC was not active as the MRA(Vic) has never stepped back from being the peak lobby group. The NSW MCC model has 50 clubs representing 65,000 members. Every club has three delegates and two votes regardless of its size. Grant said that there is lots of good stuff happening in NSW, and that the MRA(Vic) is stagnant and has no funds. Grant said the MRA(Vic) has been a faithful jalopy, but we needed to get a new vehicle, we need to modernise.

He continued that the current board had looked at possibilities, but it kept running into brick walls due to baggage. Grant said he would like to propose a model similar to that in place in Tasmania and NSW.

Rik Van Zuylekom asked what Grant was proposing.

Grant clarified that he meant that the VMC and MRA(Vic) need to be separate entities, because of the MRA(Vic) baggage but it should be the VMC that takes on the lobbying and advocacy. That then leaves the MRA(Vic) members to decide on what happens with that organisation.

Detlef suggested that the MRA(Vic) continues and joins the VMC along with other clubs. (Note – MRA(Vic) is already a member club of the VMC).

Paul Viney said that the MRA(Vic) is no longer effective, and it is not working. The MRA(Vic) Toy Run is the heart of the MRAV and this works. Paul asked about the Toy run and the Christmas parade?

Grant Delahoy responded that the MRA Cranbourne GP Run would continue as the City of Casey actually funds and runs the event. The Toyrun would also continue but would be run by another club or committee of the VMC. It wasn't the intent to disband those events.

Jim Little asked the chair to check whether the meeting still maintained a quorum as there seemed less people than before the break.

The Chairman advised that 34 people were present, and that this constitutes a quorum. The meeting continued.

Paul Murphy said he was the Eureka run manager and a toy run helper. He asked what the MRA(Vic) role is in history? Did it start as a social club and become lobbying, and that it would be nice to have as a social club. He asked how did TMC and NSW MCC come into being?

Shaun Lennard said the NSW history is lengthy, and that the MRAT decided to become a TMC member and then decided to split into three branches of MRA in Tasmania: two are social clubs, and one is a lobbying group. However, Shaun emphasised that Tasmania has a united and single voice through the TMC.

Grant Delahoy explained that the MRA was originally founded as a lobby group for riders, that is its' primary function. The political infighting is what has ruined its founding principle and has brought us to this point today.

Paul Murphy replied, "well can't the MRA(Vic) exist as a social club and let the VMC do the lobby work?"

John Karmouche said he had talked to the MRA(Vic) Strategic Planning Committee, and he believes in the plan, and he wants it to succeed, and that it needs to be done properly.

David Heasley (Chair) said the VMC was responsible for doing what it chooses.

Dale Maggs said that the MRA(Vic) has succeeded in footpath parking, and only one tolled road (Eastlink), and he said that the MRA(Vic) baggage means that we will never be part of the VMC.

Paul Viney said the Citylink tolls are not charged because of the forward facing cameras, and Citylink has committed to not charge for a specific period. Dale Maggs suggested that CityLink tolls for motorcycles were not enforced because of MRA efforts but several members including the Chair pointed out that this most certainly was not so. Transurban cameras at the time could not read the registration plates and Mr. Heasley was involved in the contracts for them at the time.

Mick Dabbs said that a ballot is needed.

Peter Baulch (Chairman of the MRA(Vic) Strategic Planning Committee) said that everyone should take a cold shower. He said the real issue is motorcyclists and scooters for the next four years to confront what he termed as draconian legislation. He said that western governments wanted to reduce motorcyclist statistics by doing everything they can to reduce rider numbers. Peter said that we need to unite, and that there are too many voices now, meaning our message is diluted. He said there is a need to unify motorcycle advocacy.

Peter said a business plan is in development, and funding is being organised along with professional researchers.

Peter finished by saying that the MRA(Vic) does have runs on the board, that separation is "such sweet sorrow", that the current structure is not working, and a change is needed.

The Chair called for a secret ballot to be conducted. The members present were checked to a current membership list and issued a ballot paper. These were subsequently collected and scrutineers assisted in and checked the votes. The Chairman checked the votes.

The Chair advised the result of the proposal as:

- 35 for
- 12 against
- 1 abstain

The Chair advised that the proposal needed 75 per cent vote to be carried, and this had failed by one vote.

## **10 Elections:**

The Chairperson sought nominations submitted according to the Constitution (prior to the AGM). The results of the elections are noted below.

- (i) Election of President – 1 nomination received prior to AGM - Grant Delahoy appointed unopposed
- (ii) Election of Vice President – No nominations received prior to the AGM. The Chair called for nominations from the members. Member Rodney Brown nominated. Seconded: Detlef Lamp.
- (iii) Election of Secretary – 1 nomination received prior to the AGM - Wendy Taylor appointed unopposed
- (iv) Election of Treasurer – 1 nomination received prior to the AGM - Kim Davies appointed unopposed
- (v) Election of Membership Secretary – No nominations received prior to the AGM. The Chair called for nominations from the members. Member Gavin Stilgoe nominated. Seconded: Tony Ellis (applause by all)
- (vi) Election of Ordinary board members – 2 nominations received prior to the AGM - Kerry Walton appointed unopposed. Tony Ellis appointed unopposed.

## **11 Closing remarks and handover to the new board.**

David Heasley relinquished the Chair position to the MRV President, Grant Delahoy.

Grant thanked everyone for attending and giving the new board its mandate. He then asked the question: Where to from here for the MRV?

Grant reminded members of the earlier suggestion for the MRA(Vic) to become a social club and let the VMC carry on the lobby and Advocacy effort and so put it to the members as a formal motion. This motion was put to the members. Seconded: Paul Viney. Vote: 23 for and 4 against. The motion was carried.

Grant advised that the history of the MRA(Vic) will be preserved. The MRA(Vic) would promote riding, and organise social and charity events. Lobbying would be passed to the VMC with the best wishes and support of the MRA(Vic),

David Heasley commented that the new MRA(Vic) should continue to generate ideas and pass these on (to the VMC).

Grant recommended a motion for the MRA(Vic) to provide delegates to the VMC.  
Seconded: Mick Doedee

Kerry Walton, Ordinary Board member was appointed as the MRA(Vic) Toy Run Coordinator  
Kim Davies was appointed as the MRA(Vic) Merchandising Officer.

Grant advised the meeting that VOLUNTEERS are needed to step up to out with social events, including the Eureka Run, MRA Toy Run, Cranbourne Run, and to organise and lead social rides.

Paul Viney volunteered to help organise social rides.

Michael Czajka said that we have to ask for help.

Mick Doedee said he was membership secretary for 2 ½ years, and often wrote in the Riders Advocate seeking help, and rarely received a response.

Jim Little suggested allocating specific tasks to be done, and get help this way.

Micheal Czajka said Mick Doedee has done a terrific job.

Meeting Close: 10:17 pm.