



# Riders' Advocate

## Contact the MRAA

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Treasurer: DJ McCarthy

Membership Secretary: Kerry  
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Ordinary Board Members:

Gavin Stilgoe, Rik van Zuylekom

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Michael Czajka

4Bs Co-ordinator:  
Kerry McKinnon

Road Safety Reference Group Rep:  
Wendy Taylor

Blood Challenge Co-ordinator:  
DJ McCarthy

Newsletter Editor: Martin Taylor

Events Co-ordinator: Dale Maggs

Office Hours:

Tuesday - 7pm to 9pm

Saturday - 10am to 3pm

Email: [mraa@mraa.org.au](mailto:mraa@mraa.org.au)

## The Doctor John Pigot Memorial Poker Run



Riders and guests watch on as prizes are awarded and speeches given. The Poker Run is in memory of former President, Dr. John Pigot who died from a brain aneurism. Funds raised to to the Stroke Foundation

## ARE YOU INJURED?

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**GRACE PLACENCIO DAVIES & COMPANY LAWYERS**

## May 06 QGM

The May 06 Quarterly General Meeting (QGM) will be held at MRA HQ, Quist Court in Dandenong. on Saturday, 27th May, commencing at 1 pm sharp. Please check the MRA website (listed below) for updates.

## MRA Website

<http://www.mraa.org.au>

## MRA Forums

The MRA has an online web based forum where you can get involved in policy discussion, hear what's happening, and so on. Surf to:

<http://www.mraa.org.au/forum/>

The MRAA also has an email mailing list via the Yahoogroup lists.

<http://go.to/mraa>

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## From the Editor's Desk

In NSW recently, known V8 touring car racer Richard Mork buried his son. He was killed while riding a brand new Kawasaki ZX-12R. His riding/driving record was poor and had little roadcraft skills or experience. Mr. Mork questioned the ease that anyone has of buying and riding a high performance motorcycle.

It seems that it was a tragedy waiting to happen. Unfortunately, it is an all too common occurrence.

As the law stands, anyone can go out and purchase a motor vehicle, whether it be your dear Aunt Tilly who has never held a licence or a 18 yo still on L plates. And there are no restrictions on the type of vehicle, either. Just a line in the sand as to what capacity that you're allowed to ride while on L or P plates.

Perhaps they could consider changes to this - that in order to be able to purchase a vehicle for private use, that the person should require a suitably endorsed licence. The endorsement scheme could be based on a structured training program that's endorsed and ran nation-wide.

It might stop the younger guys going out and buying R1s the minute that they're off their probationary licence - require them to undergo further training before being allowed on a bigger bike. The good riders will pass, while those who shouldn't be on a more powerful bike will be told to either stick with what they've got for a while longer, or be discouraged from motorcycling if they are really that bad.

I'm fairly sure that all of you know people who really shouldn't be riding bikes.

Also, introduce a nation-wide LAMS that includes riders off P plates for say a year or so. Ensure that they get at least 2 years under their belt before being allowed to buy an R1, ZX12 or whatever.

It may also address the returning rider problem. People who've held a bike licence for years but have had no experience in the past 10-20 years who go out and buy something big right off. By requiring their dormant licence to be endorsed it'll force them back into some sort of rider training before being let loose on the roads again.

I know that the civil libertarians amongst us would probably disagree, or that it'd mean people spending more to get back on the roads, etc.. But surely it's better than having an inexperienced rider wiping himself out and the resultant public outcry of hyperbikes in the hands of incompetent riders, etc. In the end, that only hurts us, the general motorcycling community as it places more pressure on us via more restrictive motorcycle specific laws, cops who target us more rather than the general motoring public, and so on.

The MRA hasn't been quiet on the road safety front, either. Dale Maggs and Tony Ellis spoke at the Two Wheels to the Future symposium organised by the VACC that had over 80 attendees from the MRAA, Industry, Vicroads and other interested groups. Notably absent was TAC. One has to wonder about its commitment to motorcycle safety, given that it has the overall responsibility for road safety. Also, Tony visited Canberra to attend meeting of the Motorcycle Safety Consultative Committee of the Australian Transport Safety Bureau. His reports are elsewhere in this issue.

## Membership Discounts

If you know of someone who might be willing to offer an MRA discount, feel free to approach them on behalf of the MRA to see if they would like to be a part of the list of goods and service providers who offer MRA members discounts.

If they agree, then please send me the details for inclusion in the newsletter.

Please note. We now have 51 suppliers and service providers who offer discounts to paid up MRAA members. From bike parts and accessories to food and accommodation, there's sure to be something that will be of use to members. We hope to produce a list of discounters for the next issue.

## Coloured Newsletter

Prefer your newsletter in colour? We looked at getting it printed in colour and the cost was prohibitive, ie it basically doubled the cost of the magazine. Having said that, those that receive their copy via email get it in glorious full colour.

Should you desire the newsletter as a pdf rather than as a hard copy, please send an email to:

[membershipsecretary@mraa.org.au](mailto:membershipsecretary@mraa.org.au)

and I'll get that sorted for the next issue.

*Kerry McKinnon*

*Membership Secretary*

**Motorcycle injury?**

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Speak with Tim Connor, an Accredited Specialist in Personal Injury with 15 years experience dealing with transport accidents.

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## Dr John Pigot Memorial Run.

It was my first poker run and it was for a worthy cause. Brian "Unemployed" and myself, both from Traralgon enjoyed a pleasant if cold (for Brian) run to Melbourne via Noojee, Powelltown and Yarra Junction. I met up with Brian at Lilydale, where together we headed off for Greensborough.

We only got lost twice on the way there, and yes, we weren't too proud to actually stop and ask for directions. I guess that blows away that myth, doesn't it?

When we got to Greensborough we couldn't find the Caltex servo where the ride was to start off from. We probably rode around the town enough to be able to map it for Melway. We also could not believe that none of the locals that we stopped and asked for directions didn't know where the servo was. Suffice it to say, we eventually stumbled across it.



Bikes gathered outside the Gembrook Hotel, the destination of the Poker Run

There were already about 20 bikes there, with some having already left. We registered and drew our first card. 3 clubs for me. We then headed off for Whittlesea. I followed "Moike", a Beemer rider, as I'm not familiar with the district. It was a nice pleasant ride through some beautiful country, nice sweepers, good roads. Our next stop was at Kinglake where we drew our next cards (4 spades for me). Oh well, maybe I can hope for a straight. Onto Healesville and down some nice twisty roads. We overshot the next stop as there was only one person there and no bikes. A quick turnaround to collect our next card. 7 diamonds.

The ride out to Gembrook was nice. A fair bit of 4 wheeled traffic had to be dealt with, but that was done with no incidents.

When we arrived at Gembrook, they had a Sunday Market going across the road from the pub. There were plenty of bikes already at the pub, so it promised to be a reasonable turnout. My last card drawn was a 10 hearts. Drat, nothing for me. But then I do suck at cards, although I'm not too bad playing 500.

Gembrook Hotel puts on a nice counter meal and we all enjoyed a nice meal. Dale, after everyone had eaten got proceedings under way and introduced DJ McCarthy to the crowd. He in turn introduced Rosie McGrath to the crowd. Rosie is the direct marketing and events manager for the National Stroke Foundation, the beneficiary of the Poker Run. She gave a rundown on the effects that a stroke can have on us. It was followed by a talk by John Harris, a stroke victim, who despite being a fit and healthy living guy was struck down 10 years ago, when at 44 years a stroke disabled the left side of his body. He suffers from short term memory loss (Dale M tried to test this by asking for a lend of \$20!) problems with figures and numbers and a left hand that's virtually paralysed.



John Harris, a stroke victim sharing his experiences with the attendees. A rather sobering speech it was too.

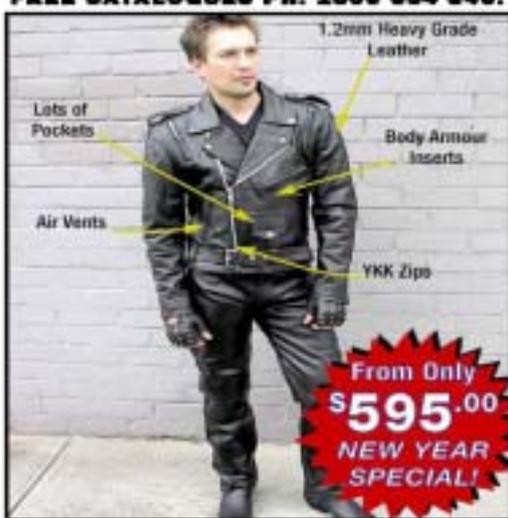
Following the speeches, the winners of the Poker Run was announced. Then the raffle was held, with DJ McCarthy being the winner.

About 50 bikes turned out for what was a great day for riding. We would like to see more of you folks out there for next year's run. However, you can still help with donations to the Stroke Foundation. Surf to [www.strokefoundation.com.au](http://www.strokefoundation.com.au) for more details on how you can help.

Martin Taylor

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## Stroke Foundation thanks MRAA

Thank you again for organising the Dr John Pigot Memorial Poker Run fundraising for the National Stroke Foundation. It was very well-organised, and certainly all of the participants had a great time.

Thank you also for giving John Harris the opportunity to share his experiences and message - Don't have a stroke. Look after yourselves.

Many of the riders were extremely interested and took the Strokesafe information brochures with them.

I am pleased to advise that the raffle alone raised \$120 to support the National Stroke Foundation's public awareness campaign. I look forward to hearing the final fundraising amount from yesterday, but am equally pleased that so many people received the Strokesafe message. Thank you to the MRA for your support of this important message.



*DJ accepts his raffle prize while Rosie McGrath, Dale Maggs and John Harris look on*

I look forward to working with the MRA again in the future and wish you all the best.

*Rosie McGrath*

*Direct Marketing and Events Manager, National Stroke Foundation  
Ph. (03) 9670-1000  
Fax. (03) 9670-9300  
Rosie@strokefoundation.com.au*

## Stroke Symptoms – what to look for:

A stroke is always a medical emergency. Call 000 immediately if you think that one has occurred.

- Weakness, numbness or paralysis of face, arm or leg on one or both sides of the body.
- Difficulty speaking or understanding.
- Dizziness, loss of balance or an unexplained fall.
- Loss of vision, sudden blurred vision in one or both eyes.
- Headache, usually severe and abrupt onset, unexplained change in headache pattern.
- Difficulty swallowing.

## What to do:

- Lay patient on side, support head.
- Don't give food or drink. Loosen restrictive clothing.
- Check for breathing and pulse. If either absent commence CPR or AIR as required. If not familiar with first aid procedures, ask 000 operator for assistance.

## Canberra Australia Day Ride

It was well organised and well attended. The local Canberra paper, just a little optimistic, reported 15,000 riders in attendance.

The main proceedings were two separate events. The main public event was on the lawn between the old and new Parliament houses, with club tents, trade stalls, a stage, a good band and drinks on sale. It was hot, with a huuuuuge black rain cloud hovering over towards Cooma, threatening to come our way. The perimeter trees were the only shelters from the sun.

The band played on, hosted by Jonesy from 2WS, stopping for speeches from Federal MP Luke Hartsuyker (National Party), member for Cowper (Macksville-Dorrigo-Yamba up the North Coast of NSW), who rode his Ducati 999 down from Coff's Harbour for the day. Some of you may have met him at Superbike School when Keith Code was taking class a few weeks ago. Out there, he was just "Luke". Nice bloke, a real rider. He's listening. He can keep items alive in the Federal area, only if they are relevant to the Federal area.

[www.aph.gov.au/house/members/member.asp?id=AMM](http://www.aph.gov.au/house/members/member.asp?id=AMM)

He looks after aged care stuff, so think to the future, lads.

Also speaking was Federal MP, Dr. Brendan Nelson (Liberal Party), member for Bradfield (Chatswood to Wahroonga along the Pacific Hwy in Sydney's northside). He rode his Triumph Speedmaster down from Sydney. I've ridden with him and he knows how to have fun. Brendan Nelson is now our Minister for Defence. He is very direct, no crap. He pointed out the limited powers of the Federal Govt in terms of road safety issues - that these are in the hands of the States, so the need is for local action there. Although like Luke Hartsuyker, he can be of real value in keeping issues alive in debates and speaking up for motorcycle issues when it's relevant to the Federal sphere. We can't expect more; it's as good as we can get. But WE need to keep them informed.

[www.aph.gov.au/house/members/member.asp?id=RW5](http://www.aph.gov.au/house/members/member.asp?id=RW5)



*Minister for Defence, Dr. Brendan Nelson, addresses the crowd.*

Rider representatives spoke on various aspects of politics. Noel Andrew spoke for Bikers Australia on the event and the significance of a national agenda for motorcycle awareness. Robyn Major (MRA ACT and Chair of AMC) spoke on the Australian Motorcycle Council and how it now allows the

various States to align their agendas for unified political effort. Sean Lennard (Tasmanian Motorcycle Council) spoke on their outstanding success in the recent overthrow of the Tasmanian bike tax. Guy Stanford (MCC of NSW) spoke on the proposed anti-lane splitting laws and other laws in the bundle. (See <http://www.mccofnsw.org.au/a/166.html> for more). Damien Codognotto (Vic) spoke on the need to keep ourselves “present” in the public and political agendas of the day by keeping our own local politicians informed of what concerns us - this is excellent advice, take note and act locally.

There were T-shirt giveaways, prize showbags and some lucky soul won a 4 burner barbeque! (delivery included). In fact, the barbeque people were pretty entertaining, lobbying rolled up T-shirts into the crowd with a muzzle-loading gas-powered bazooka that packs a wallop, enough to belt the shirts about 70 meters before smacking into the inattentive. For a moment it looked like an Aussie Rules match with packs of players going up for the mark!

The second event was a much quieter affair, an “afternoon tea” at Parliament house for rider representatives with Federal Minister for Transport, Warren Truss (National Party, member for Wide Bay – around Maryborough, Qld).

This was all very nice, with excellent biscuits and surprisingly good coffee. Warren Truss has only recently taken over the Transport portfolio since John Anderson retired, so he was not fully up to speed on a few items. His previous portfolio was Agriculture. He had no idea about the

proposed changes to road rules or on how these would affect the rural sector.

A small group of rider reps devoted their attention to Warren Truss. We had questions that needed answers.

We asked him “WHY?” the Federal government in its response to “Eyes on the Road Ahead”, (Federal Road Safety Parliamentary Committee) had rejected Recommendation 36, for the development of a National Motorcycle Safety Strategy. The answer is very revealing. “Oh, we had a ring around and didn’t get a warm reception on this from most of the States”.

Here’s the rub. The Federal government only has such powers as the States have been prepared to give up. For a National Motorcycle Safety Strategy, it requires agreement from a majority of States. This is done through the ATC, or Australian Transport Council. The Federal govt. only has one vote on this Council and is outvoted by the sheer number of States and Territories (and New Zealand). In other words, the Feds thought it a waste of effort, on a hiding to nothing, as there would be no support from the States.

We spoke generally for a while and discovered that Warren Truss has an interest in trucks due to his agricultural background in broadacre grain farming. He has never ridden a motorcycle, as they are of little value in grain growing.

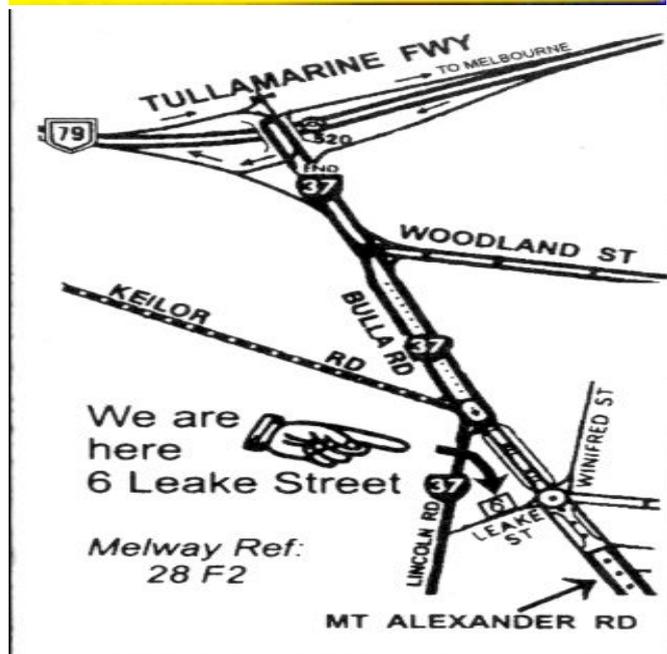


Minister for Transport, Warren Truss, with motorcycling delegates from around Australia

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I pointed out that there are rules for motorcycles, but no national strategy unlike that for other motorised transport. I suggested that in the car-centric culture of the Labor States, it appears that any other form of vehicle is regarded as an interloper to be marginalised or shunned. That this form of car-centric culture no longer has a place, as congestion increases in cities and truck routes are combined with passenger car routes.

That the problem is the same - the road system is set up for cars and while motorcycles are inappropriately treated as “small cars”, equally, trucks are considered to be “big cars”. That this analysis is too simplistic and inadequate to meet the needs of mobility or safety. That motorcycles are even worse off than trucks, there is no classification for them, hence are systematically overlooked.

While we are here in Canberra asking for cars to look out for motorcycles, we are inside the big house, pointing out that not only are motorcycles invisible to cars on the road, but motorcycles are also invisible to public policy. That not until

within the last year were motorcycles even counted in traffic studies.

So we placed our request firmly and repeatedly, for a National Motorcycle Safety Strategy, to provide a core of knowledge as a reference for all States and the Federal Govt in developing policy that affected motorcycles.

We have asked Warren Truss, as Federal Minister for Transport, to use his position on the ATC to place this item on the National Agenda and that we will write it for him if necessary. It is a complex process. However, we have come to Canberra to ask for his help in this matter, in which it is possible for the Federal Government to demonstrate leadership in moving Australia off the bottom rungs of the list for our poor record in motorcycle safety.

In side discussions with his advisers, it appears that we may not call it a "strategy". But that the objective remains the same - to develop a document with a broad and deep pool of knowledge that encompasses motorcycle issues, to be drawn upon as an initial start point for transport and road safety policy formation. In this way we can hope to avoid the sort of unreality that has emerged from the review of Road Rules, where opinion has overruled evidence.

We opened the door, but need to continue our efforts to follow through on this. It's all good and congratulations to the organisers for making the opportunity happen.

Rider representatives conducted themselves well, networked their heads off, drank all the fresh orange juice and devoured plateloads of excellent biscuits and average sandwiches.

*Guy Stanford  
MCC of NSW*

## How to Lane Split/Filter

The British publication "Motorcycle Roadcraft" (The Police Riders Handbook to Better Motorcycling), notes the following under the topic of "overtaking":-

When traffic is stationary or moving slowly in queues, motorcyclists can use their manoeuvrability and limited space requirements to make progress. The advantages of filtering along or between stopped or slow moving traffic have to be weighed against the increased vulnerability while filtering.

If you decide to filter:

- Take extreme care
- Keep your speed low- you need to be able to stop suddenly if circumstances change
- Always identify a place where you can rejoin the traffic flow before you move out
- Make yourself visible – consider using dipped headlight

- Be ready to brake and/or use the horn
- Use the opportunity to make progress but be courteous and avoid conflict with other road users

Watch out for and anticipate:

- Pedestrians crossing between vehicles
- Vehicles emerging from junctions
- Vehicles changing lanes or U-turning without warning
- Doors opening
- Reflective paint and studs which could throw the bike off line
- Traffic islands
- Other bikes also filtering

## Feb 2006 AGM Election Results

MRAA Board Members

President Dale Maggs  
president@mraa.org.au

Vice President Austin Webb  
vicepresident@mraa.org.au

Secretary Tony Ellis  
secretary@mraa.org.au

Treasurer Don "DJ" McCarthy  
treasurer@mraa.org.au

Membership Secretary Kerry Mckinnon  
membershipsecretary@mraa.org.au

Ordinary Board Member Gavin Stilgoe  
ausgnome@mraa.org.au

Ordinary Board Member Rik van Zuylenkom  
rik@mraa.org.au

The position of Treasurer was open for the board to fill as there were no nominations. However, DJ McCarthy has boldly stepped up to the plate. Congratulations to you all!



*L-R Austin Webb, Kerry McKinnon, Tony Ellis, Rik van Zuylenkom, Don "DJ" McCarthy and Dale Maggs*

## Motorcycle Safety Consultative Committee Report

I went to Canberra for the Motorcycle Safety Consultative Committee at the Australian Transport Safety Board over the weekend of March 25-26<sup>th</sup>. We also had an informal AMC (Australian Motorcycle Council) meeting on Sunday.

Some of the things to come out of the MSCC meeting...

1. Mandatory lights on is not a high priority and it is not in the plans to reintroduce it. In any event it would need to wait on the results of European studies and the cost/benefit ratio is very low.

2. FNPs. Nothing has been reported back to the National Road Safety Panel (NRSS) Other states are losing interest and as the chief driver of this at VicRoads has now gone then it may fade into the background. It probably won't go away completely but it is not on the immediate horizon.

3. AMC has asked for funding to produce a protective clothing booklet (project will be managed by the MCCNSW) and it looks as if we'll get it. Lots of good comment from people about our "squids" campaign.

4. As far as lane filtering goes (151 b) the NTC appear to be holding their ground. It looks like the recommendations will go through and then it's up to the individual jurisdictions to decide on them. We need to lobby hard locally to make sure it doesn't happen.

5. ATSB is developing a new website which will have a major motorcycle safety section on it.

I'm drafting up a letter from the Australian Motorcycle Council which the Australian Transport Safety Board have offered to forward on our behalf to the NTC. The letter will request the withdrawal of 151 unless suitable evidence for it is able to be put forward.

6. The National Road Safety Strategy is to be reviewed - 5 consultants are being appointed to advise and at least 2 of these have some motorcycle experience - one was employed in developing the UK Motorcycle Strategy.

*Tony Ellis*

### VACC Motorcycle Forum

The forum was really successful. The only major player who didn't front was the TAC and it did not score any brownie points for that - VicRoads had several people, several councils were represented and a sprinkling of people from interstate as well.

All the Japanese manufacturers were represented by their senior people as well as BMW Motorad and several scooter people.

Speakers were the VACC Executive Director David Purchase, Neil O'Keefe (VMAC), Prof Marcus Wigan, Dale Maggs and myself.

About 80 people fronted. Jon Faine (774 ABC) was moderator and did an excellent job.

The communique grew out of the afternoon workshop and panel discussion and was pretty well unanimous.

There was a unanimous agreement on the lane filtering issue.



*Dale Maggs addressing the symposium*

The licence age suggested for mopeds and <50cc scooters is along European lines - about 14 or 15.

VicRoads took a lot of notes and I was talking to one of its people who said that VicRoads would be taking the outcome seriously.



*MRA Secretary, Tony Ellis addressing the symposium*

I've been asked to speak to the BMW Motorcycle Club about the MRAA as a result of the forum, our presentations and the work we've been doing. Tony Weare (the President) wants to get members more involved in issues and would like them to be aware of what we do as a first step.

As the biggest single make club in Australia with about 900 members it will be a good opportunity.

*Tony Ellis*

**Victorian Motorcycle Symposium****Recommendations**

Outcomes and recommendations from the VACC Motorcycle Industry Symposium held on Sat March 18th.

It is the opinion of the Motorcycle Industry Forum “Two Wheels To the Future” held on Saturday 18th March, for the purpose of examining issues related to motorcycle licensing, legislation, polices and practices;

That:

**Learner Approved Motorcycle Scheme**

Victoria adopts the NSW and SA model of the Learner Approved Motorcycle Scheme: that power to weight ratio calculated at 150kW per tonne (capped at 660cc) be the basis for such a scheme.

Victoria adopts a new licensing system to allow learners to ride at an earlier age, with research undertaken to establish the appropriate age.

**Congestion**

Victoria allows filtering to the left or right side of stationary or slow moving vehicles.

Motorcycles and scooters be promoted as a viable transport alternative that can assist in the reduction of traffic congestion, travel times and air quality.

There be appreciation and consideration of powered two-wheeled transport in road design and infrastructure.

**Rider Safety**

Improved rider training through low-cost or subsidised competency-based rider training be implemented.

There be improved safety gear and better promotion of its adoption.

**Taxes**

The motorcycle levy be removed

Or

The motorcycle levy be replaced by a non-discriminatory levy on all registered motor vehicles and there be full transparency as to the application of levy funds, that more of motorcycling registration fees be dedicated to improving road conditions and improving safety training for motorcyclists

**Infrastructure**

Motorcycle and scooter safety boxes at traffic lights and intersections be implemented

The Great Ocean Road initiative be used as a model for reporting dangers and hazards for implementing road improvements

The Forum, convened by VACC, peak industry body in Victoria for the automotive industry, included over 80 delegates and key motorcycle industry figures.

**NSW Sticker Tax Repealed**

NSW motorcyclists have finally been relieved of a stupid NSW Regulation.

In July 2000, the Environmental Protection Authority (now part of the Dept of Environment and Conservation) introduced a retrospective law demanding that aftermarket replacement motorcycle exhausts be specially labelled and then authorised the Police to issue fines of \$200 to riders who didn't have this label.

In it's justification, the then EPA claimed this labelling requirement allowed the Police and EPA officers to readily identify less effective mufflers that may exceed the prescribed noise limits

EPA made no provision by which riders could obtain such a label. Riders referred to this law as “the sticker tax”.

However, after 6 years of protest by the Motorcycle Council of NSW, Clause 19 from the Protection of the Environment Operations Regulation has now been repealed.

The regulation was published in the Government Gazette No. 35, (11/2006) pp 1379 & 1380 on Friday 17, March 2006. It does not appear in any Parliamentary Hansard or Notices, as it seems our State government would prefer to see this change go unnoticed.

Exhaust labels required under Clause 19 will remain on many motorcycles as a reminder to riders to remain vigilant and how, by uniting through their Motorcycle Council in NSW, they can address serious issues.

Mr. Chris Turner, Chair of the Noise Committee of the Motorcycle Council of NSW said today “Yes, the misused sticker law allowed enforcement agencies to easily identify mufflers which may or may not be illegal and give you a \$200 fine in either case!”

The repeal of this law is great news for motorcycle riders from any State travelling in NSW, as all motorcycles had been subjected to this NSW law despite the uniqueness of the regulation.

The Motorcycle Council wishes to acknowledge assistance from the NSW Democrats, in an initial Motion of Disallowance and also acknowledge support granted to this Motion from members of the NSW Upper House. It reinforces the value of an independent Upper House.

Guy Stanford, Chairman of the MCC of NSW said “I'd like to thank the persistence and skill of the Noise Committee, particularly Chris Coote and Chris Turner. We still have to resolve the issue of margin for error in roadside exhaust tests and the Noise Committee is well up to the task.”

**VICTORIAN MOTORCYCLE WRECKERS**  
 52-54 Mologa Road,  
 Heidelberg West,  
 Vic. 3081 Australia  
 Ph: 61 3 9457 1733  
 Fax: 61 3 9457 1866  
 Email: vicwreck@inet.net.au

**Keith Braddock**  
 Melways 19 - 010

## MRA 2006 Calendar

### 2006 Quarterly General Meetings

27th May  
26th August  
25th November

### Monday Nights

Advocacy meetings, normally on the 1st Monday of the month are on hold for this year. Due to a lack of attendees and that Michael Czajka will be undergoing full time study this year, there aren't the resources for this year.

Michael's involvement in the MRA and associated committees such as VMAC, ATSB, AMC, CARS & other ad hoc committees will also be reduced or cease. We will be looking for volunteers to take over from Michael where possible. You can put your hands up at the AGM if you're interested.

### Tuesday Nights

Board Meetings, 1st Tuesday of the month, 7.30pm at Quist Crt. All members welcome.

Events Committee, 2nd Tuesday of the month, 7.30pm at Quist Crt.

4Bs, 3rd Tuesday of the month, 7.30pm at Quist Crt.

MRA HQ in Quist Crt, Dandenong for coffee and nibbles, while we watch our own local home grown bike show Two Wheel Torque on Channel 31.

Trivia nights are held at the Quiet Man Irish pub at 271 Racecourse Rd, Flemington. Our team usually meets at the pub around 7:50pm. Just look for the helmets.

### Friday Nights

Riders meet for coffee at around 6pm at the Bear Brass Cafe, Southbank and usually finishes up around 9pm. It's not an MRA specific event. All riders are welcome.



MRA HQ at Quist Crt, where you can drop in for a cuppa and pizza and watch Ch. 31's Two Wheel Torque bike TV show.

### Advocacy Committee

A meeting was held at Quist Crt on Tuesday 28th March to discuss the future of the Advocacy Committee. If anyone wishes to become involved you can email Gavin Stilgoe or Tony Ellis. This is an important job and some level of commitment will be required. So, please give careful consideration to this job.

Tony Ellis will be taking over Michael Czajka's role in the Committee for the time being.

Due to the differences in locations we are attempting to use an electronic blog site to help ease the need for frequent meetings.

### First Aid for Motorcyclists

The MRAA ran a successful first aid course for motorcyclists (level 1). 14 riders attended and all passed. Of concern was Shane (Roundman) who was trying to spoon patients who were unconscious...

We hope to run future discounted courses

### VMAC Forums

The Victorian Motorcycle Advisory Committee is holding a series of forums and workshops across the state. I recently attended the first one in Traralgon.

Attended by about 50 people, a lot of issues concerning riders were raised, not the least, the \$50 Levy. However, this was not the main reason for the forum. Rather to try and get ideas on how that money should be better spent.

The group was given a presentation on how and where the monies raised from the Levy was being spent. It included road improvements on roads such as the Great Ocean Road, The Korumburra-Warragul Road and some suburban roads.

Representatives from TAC, Vicroads, VMAC, various riding groups such as Ulysses, MRAA were present.

The next meetings are to be held on the following dates:

Horsham - Wed, 10th May, Horsham Sport and Community Club, 179 Baillie St, Horsham

Melbourne - Wed, 24th May, Albert by the Lake, Aughtie Drive, Albert Park.

More information can be gotten from the VMAC website. Attendance is free and bookings for catering purposes are essential. You can download a brochure and expression of interest form from:

[http://www.mraa.org.au/downloads/VMAC\\_Forum.pdf](http://www.mraa.org.au/downloads/VMAC_Forum.pdf)

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## Your Say

### Lane Splitting from a cyclist's perspective

Regarding the lane splitting laws, I believe the best way to deal with it would be to create a 1 metre wide lane between 2 car lanes that extends for approximately 50m either side of an intersection.

This would apply to all major 2 and 3 laned roads.

It would prevent drivers being annoyed by motorcyclists that "push in" and then take off slowly, prevent lane splitting incidents that cause damage to cars, eliminate lane splitting on the left hand side, provide motorcyclists with the safest place to stand and increase motorcycle awareness.

It worked for pedal cyclists, there's no reason it wouldn't work for motorcyclists.

I don't personally ride a motorcycle but from my cycling I know just how scary some drivers can be. The only safe place is as far away from their path as possible.

*Miles, via the Internet*

### Motorcycle Lane Splitting - A Question of Safety

As the Victorian Government contemplates changes to road laws governing motorcyclists, particularly laws relating to "lane splitting", I would like to, as an experienced and responsible motorcyclist, point out certain myths and realities about rider safety and lane splitting.

It is my contention that motorcyclists, for reasons of personal safety and practicality, are compelled to undertake such techniques as lane splitting. Riders are often forced to react in a manner which strays outside of the established road laws by positioning our vehicles on public roads just to be seen by other road users. Lane splitting is a matter of personal safety. Riders will lane split to the front of traffic lights to be able to avoid the all too common occurrence of vehicles in front taking off slower than vehicles behind prefer with the motorcyclist being the "meat in the sandwich". A motorcycle can accelerate to the posted speed limit much quicker than other vehicles thus creating a "space cushion" between itself and other vehicles.

When peak hour traffic grinds to a stop, start halt and vehicles move forward only metres at a time, it is far too dangerous for motorcyclists to sit behind a vehicle having to constantly check their mirrors for frustrated and irritated drivers creeping too far forward and colliding with them. In situations such as the ubiquitous peak hour standstill I often witness drivers engaging in all manner of activities at the expense of their road awareness. These activities include eating, drinking, smoking, applying makeup, shaving, using a laptop computer, chatting on a mobile phone, sending text messages, perusing the street directory, chatting to passengers, dealing with recalcitrant children, sifting through

a CD collection or adjusting the dials on a radio. I often witness drivers stuck in the monotonous drudgery of peak hour traffic succumbing to many of these distractions and quite disconcertingly, often in multiples of the above at the same time.

I lane split at a safe speed in an attempt to avoid the relative obscurity of being directly behind a larger vehicle and also in an attempt to avoid being swamped by drivers who indulge in the myriad distractions available to them. Of course, whilst lane splitting, motorcyclists have to be weary of a vehicle changing lanes or swerving suddenly. However, two decades of road riding experience have taught me that whilst commuting to work each morning it is far safer to lane split than to slot myself into the ranks of bored and frustrated drivers. In such situations the motorcyclist always comes off second best.

I am not advocating that motorcyclists be given carte blanche to do as we please on public roads. I am simply asking that the Victorian Government, when determining road laws effecting motorcyclists, understand that necessary manoeuvres such as lane splitting contribute far more to rider safety than they do otherwise. Passing laws that jeopardise rider safety is not in the interests of anyone concerned. For motorcyclists these are not points for debate or contemplation. They are realities that determine our safety and protect our lives.

*Glen Kelly, via the Internet*

### Thanks from VACC

I would like to thank you for your attendance at the VACC Motorcycle Industry Forum - Two Wheels to the Future. The forum was very productive and resulted in a communiqué that was representative of the attendees.

If you require any specific information, or have any other queries, do not hesitate to contact me.

*Susan Green  
Division Assistant  
VACC  
Phone: 9829 1150  
Fax: 9867 1795  
Email: sgreen@vacc.com.au*

### Future MRA President?

Hello all.

I am proud to let you all in on our good fortune! MRA membership on the rise! The new kid on the block is MRA's finest new recruit, Sebastian Dale Maggs.

He arrived on Valentines Day at 5pm, weighing at 6lb14oz at Frankston Hospital. Mum and baby are doing well

*Dale Maggs  
President  
MRAA*

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## MRAA AGM Minutes 25/2/2006

MRAA HQ, Quist Court, Dandenong

**Meeting started** 1.30

**Present:** 25 members

**Apologies:** Damien Codognotto, Barbara Harrison, Mark Ewart, Maggie Ellis

### **President's Report**

The past 12 months has been an excellent year for the MRAA. Our profile has been raised on both political and safety issues, we have been involved in numerous events and assisted other organisations. Membership has risen and we have developed an excellent website ([www.mraa.org.au](http://www.mraa.org.au)) and on-line forum.

A letter went to the Transport Minister regarding setting up a Road Hazards website. Unfortunately a negative response was received stating that VicRoads already had a reporting line and that this was doing a good job and a website would only duplicate VicRoads work.

However over the past couple of weeks there have been several incidents caused by road hazards. Three bikes crashed on a Netrider ride and three riders were injured – primarily because of unmarked work and new gravel on the road. VMAC is looking at taking this case to the Shire concerned. Thompson's road near DECA (Driver Education Centre Australia – a major motorcycle training complex) has had significant quantities of gravel deposited on it. This is a matter of some concern as this stretch of road caters to a lot of L and P plate riders attending the training centre. Assurances have been given that the road will be sealed completely by Friday.

A road report on Phillip Island has been put in prior to the Superbikes. Six spots have been identified that require fixing prior to the event.

We have begun an anti-squid campaign working in conjunction with Victoria Police in order to persuade riders to wear the right gear – it is especially targeted at riders travelling to Phillip Island.

Finally a thank you to Martin for his work on the newsletter. He has done a good job on this and hopefully he will continue this year. It is an important part of our communications. *(Aw, shucks. And yes, I'll continue with it, Ed)*

### **Treasurers Report:**

Refer to the attached report for full details, however the MRAA is currently in the black to the tune of over \$7,000. A thank you must go to Gavin, Rose and Mark Ewart for the work they have done on the merchandising side. The Webmasters have done an excellent job in setting up on-line payments. The gain in new members has far exceeded the costs of setting up the Internet payments.

### **Secretary's Report:**

While we have done well, we do need a better method of recording correspondence and ensuring all incoming mail is filed. Electronic communications are rapidly becoming the norm and most of the inward communication is by email. A significant number of media releases on political and safety issues have been released throughout the year and have received a good reception from the media. John Karmouche

volunteered to lead the lane-splitting campaign and mention must be made of the excellent job he is doing in this regard.

Submissions have been made to the Victorian Government Inquiry into Congestion and to the national Transport Commission regarding the proposed changes to the Australian Road Rules. The MRAA will be presenting to the VACC Motorcycle Forum on 18 March – topics to be addressed will be Roadside Barriers and Congestion issues (including Lane Splitting).

### **Toy Run**

Derek Clarkson made a brief report on the outcome of the successful 2005 Toy Run. Williamstown Motorcycle Club counted 17,964 motorcycles making it the most successful run for many years. The Salvation Army took 80 boxes of toys in 2004 – in 2005 they took in 120 boxes and 3 pallet loads of non-perishable food.

We have had excellent support from sponsors such as [bikesales.com.au](http://bikesales.com.au), QBE as well as Melbourne City Council who waived over \$5000 worth of fees.

### **Membership Secretary**

We have had 209 new single memberships and 21 new family memberships. There are now 46 organisations offering benefits or discounts to MRAA members and this number continues to grow. A First Aid course designed for motorcyclists will be held at Quist Court on 18 March.

### **Merchandising**

Rose McCarthy reported on merchandising issues. The online shop has made a big difference and we have received a lot of requests for stickers, t-shirts, patches etc. We are now looking to expand the variety of merchandise on offer and suggestions as to what could be included are welcome. Examples given were stubby holders, scarves etc.

Dale reported on first-aid kits. A motorcycle specific kit is available for import at a cost of \$25 for the MRAA. The local value of the contents alone is \$59. We will need to order 1000 at a time to get this pricing however it is possible that Western QBE may support us in this as part of a 2006 sponsorship proposal. These could be available by November.

### **Events Report**

DJ McCarthy spoke briefly regarding the Ride to Remember (Police Blue Ribbon Foundation). This was spectacularly successful despite the extreme heat. The inaugural 2004 ride raised \$4,500 while the 2005 ride raised \$12,500.

Dale Maggs spoke on the support that the MRAA gave to the City of Casey for their Australia Day celebrations. The MRAA provided the Barbecue and refreshments on the day. We received a Certificate of Appreciation from the City of Casey and also \$200 in donations (The Mayor of the City of Casey and Steve Beardon – brother of former President Brian). We will be looking for people to assist at the Cranbourne Car and Bike show where we will have a presence.

We had a very successful presence at the Motorcycle Expo this year and picked up several new members. We will be looking for someone to coordinate the presence there. The Secretary has all the necessary information.

Paul Murphy spoke on the inaugural Eureka Ride and presented photos. I will become an annual event. Both Peter Lalor and Paul have joined the MRAA and Paul has volunteered to organise this ride. Paul presented the MRAA a large Eureka Flag signed by the descendants of the original Eureka Committee and rubbed in the soil of the stockade site.

### **Elections:**

Detlef Lamp was appointed returning officer and nominations for the board were received. No position received more than one nomination and no nomination was received for Treasurer. Nominees were deemed to be elected.

The Board for 2006 will be:

President – Dale Maggs

Vice President – Austin Webb

Secretary - Tony Ellis

Treasurer - Rik Van Zuylekom agreed to carry out duties until a new treasurer could be appointed.

Membership Secretary – Kerry McKinnon

Ordinary Board Members - Rik Van Zuylekom and DJ McCarthy.

Dale thanked the outgoing board for their contribution and wished the incoming board every success.

### **General Business**

Kerry McKinnon (4B's Co-ordinator) reported on the revival of the 4Bs.

To date \$617 has been raised to support the 4Bs. A Meeting is held at Quist Court every 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday.

Discussion took place around the name of the 4Bs (Bikers/Bikies) and a motion regarding the name was put:

### **Motion:**

*That the 4Bs be the Bent and Buckled Bikers Bureau.*

*Moved Kerry McKinnon, Seconded Austin Webb.*

The motion was narrowly lost and the name will remain the Bent and Buckled **Bikies** Bureau.

### **Motion**

*That a Board of Management be established for the 4Bs*

*Moved Kerry, seconded Josie*

Motion was passed

### **Family Memberships:**

Discussion took place on the subject of Family Memberships. Detlef Lamp pointed out that the MRAA Constitution does not allow for this category. After considerable discussion the following motion was put:

### **Motion:**

*That the Board directs the Membership Secretary to redo the paperwork and delete the category of family membership but that subsequent memberships for the same address be reduced by the sum of \$8.*

*Moved DJ, seconded Dale*

The motion was carried.

Further discussion around memberships took place.

### **Motion**

*That the joining fee for the MRAA be removed immediately and that membership fees be increased to \$45 per year from 1 July 2006.*

*Moved Rik, seconded DJ*

The motion was carried.

### **Constitution:**

Michael Czajka spoke on the Constitutional Changes foreshadowed in the newsletter. Much discussion took place around this.

### **Motion**

*That the Constitutional Changes as detailed in the newsletter be carried out.*

*Moved Michael Czajka*

The motion was lost.

Following this a new motion was put

*That bylaws be amended to clarify rule 16.1 & 16.2 so that "in writing" included fax, email and any other form of verifiable communication.*

*That 16.2 indicate that the approval of the MRAA is generally implied and that specific approval must only be required by resolution of the Committee to be considered at the next General meeting*

*Moved Detlef Lamp, Seconded Shane*

Motion was carried.

Members to be notified of changes through the website and the newsletter.

### **Positions Required**

Numerous positions require to be filled. These include newsletter advertising co-ordinator, events chair, etc. etc.

These positions will be advertised on the website and in the newsletter however the advertising coordinator position is critical.

### **Premises**

The Treasurer brought up the subject of premises. Currently we pay \$12,500 per year. There are several directions we can go in:

- Move to cheaper premises;
- Move to be an organisation without a central address; or
- Buy premises of our own.

Dale presented some future possibilities regarding shared premises and possible sponsorship.

### **Motion**

*That the Treasure endeavour to put aside \$1000 per month for the next 3 years with the aim of raising a deposit for the purchase of the MRAA's own premises.*

*Moved Rik Van Zuylekom, Seconded Dale Maggs*

The motion was carried.

### **Advocacy**

Michael gave a short report on activities such as VMAC etc. and pointed out that since he was returning to full time study he would not be able to continue with these positions.

**Motion**

*That the MRAA policy on lane splitting as advertised in the newsletter be accepted.*

*Moved Michael C Seconded Tony Ellis*

The motion was carried.

**Recognition of Members**

Discussion took place around the recognition of outstanding service by members. There was a feeling that life membership criteria needed to be addressed but that there needed to be some additional form of recognition for outstanding service

**Motion**

*That an annual Member of the Year Award be established by the Board and that an Honour Board showing Committee Members and Award Winners be hung in the club rooms*

*Moved Tony Ellis Seconded Shane*

Motion was carried

*That the Board be given permission to look at Life membership criteria and the duties of Life Members and their ongoing responsibilities*

*Moved Rik Seconded Derek*

The motion was carried

**Housekeeping**

Rose spoke about the general housekeeping of Quist Court. She will draw up a roster for cleaning etc.

**Meeting closed 4.pm**

**MRA Blood Challenge – The Winners**

The final results for the blood challenge were no great surprise. The Country Fire Authority won by a country mile [1.6 km] with the combined motorcyclists second, Scouts third and Victoria Police fourth.

Nice glass awards were given out yesterday to:

- the CFA for most donors
- The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints for most new donors
- the Harley Owners Group for most enthusiastic promoter

We also met Isabelle, the poster girl for the challenge and heard her touching story.

Details of the final scores can be seen at:  
[www.mraa.org.au/downloads/BloodChallenge27.pdf](http://www.mraa.org.au/downloads/BloodChallenge27.pdf)  
 - DJ, MRA Summer Blood Challenge Coordinator



**Thanks from the Red Cross Blood Bank**

“Congratulations to all of those who generously gave up their time to donate blood and generate an amazing 3,607 blood donations.

These blood donations will help people like Isabelle Fisher, the face of the 2006 Summer Blood Challenge, who was diagnosed with leukaemia one month before her 5th birthday.

To help Isabelle’s body fight the disease and recover from the chemotherapy, she was given countless units of blood and platelets. Isabelle will celebrate her 9th birthday this year, and thanks to donors like you recipients like Isabelle have much to smile about!

The 27th Summer Blood Challenge involved 55 organisations across Victoria. This included over 5 new organisations. Together you have generated 3,607 donations and recruited over 120 new donors. These donations have saved or improved the lives of more than 10,821 people.

Thank you for all of your support during the 2005 - 2006 Summer Blood Challenge.

*Ben Scales*

*ARCBS Summer Blood Challenge Coordinator”*



*Hey folks. We’re going to have to do better next year if we want to wrest the crown back off the CFA and get the MRA’s name back onto the Honor Board.*

# Motorcycle Rider's Association Membership Form



ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE      \$35.00

-OR-    \$27.00  If this is an additional membership from same address as a current member (member no: \_\_\_\_\_) who has paid the full fee.  
(NB: Newsletters & other mail outs not included.)

MEMBER NO: \_\_\_\_\_ (IF RENEWAL)

**PAYMENT METHOD:**

Cheque       Money Order

VISA       MasterCard

Please make cheques and money orders payable to: **MRA Australia**

Name on Credit card:

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Full Name:</b>                    |  |
| <b>Address:</b><br>[Number & Street] |  |
| [Suburb]                             |  |
| [State, Postcode]                    |  |
| <b>AH Phone:</b>                     |  |
| <b>BH Phone:</b>                     |  |
| <b>Mobile:</b>                       |  |
| <b>Email:</b>                        |  |
| <b>D.O.B:</b><br>[dd/mm/yyyy]        |  |
| <b>Occupation:</b>                   |  |
| <b>Bike/s Make:</b>                  |  |
| <b>Bike/s Model:</b>                 |  |

Credit Card Number:  
[4 digits per column –20 digits max]

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Expiry Date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Signature:

*We'd like to know whether members would use the following service:*

**Do you have access to the Internet?**

Yes       No

**What's your internet connection speed?**

Dialup       Broadband

**Would you prefer to receive your member newsletter by e-mail instead of post?**

Yes       No

**Thank you for your support!**

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