

# CENTRESTAND

September 2009



## let those who ride decide

The journal of the Motorcycle Riders' Association of SA Inc. Printpost approved No. PP:530028/00014

**IN THIS ISSUE :** Hills Speed Limits, Good Gear Guide, Scooter Club, Steve's Epic Journey, Toy Run, M/C Safety Con Com, Maximoto



**M.R.A.**  
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**ASSOCIATION OF SA INC.**

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- Photographs welcome: colour or black-and-white
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**COVER PHOTO: The Kawasaki ZRX at  
 Uluru. Photo by Steve Smith (story on p.10)**

**MRASA Inc. is a member of the Australian  
 Motorcycle Council (AMC)**



## EDITORIAL

This magazine, through its articles and editorials, has spoken out against the Rann government's so-called 'Bikie Bill' - the Serious and Organised Crime (Control) Act on a number of occasions. The point has been made that this opposition is not simply based on the Rann government's argument that the Bill was intended to control the activities of outlaw motorcyclists. The Bill in itself does not have that focus - it is much broader.

The main focus of the contributors to this magazine has been opposition to the draconian elements of the Bill, the sections that would deny individuals a fair hearing in court and the sections that would deny individuals freedom of association without being convicted of a crime. There are elements of law that we take for granted - natural justice, innocent until proven guilty, fair treatment by the police and the courts and other civil liberties. Our main arguments have been about how these new laws could limit or disregard the civil liberties of all citizens, not just outlaw motorcyclists. If you happen to be in the wrong place at the wrong time and say the wrong thing, then look out!

Last week the South Australian Full Court of the Supreme Court agreed, at least in relation to the section of the Act dealing with Control Orders (Section 14). By a majority verdict the Court deemed the control orders issued against motorcycle gang members to be void on the grounds that people who have control orders issued against them would not be able to use the courts to hear the evidence against them or to challenge that evidence. The court found this requirement to be "incompatible with the proper discharge of judicial responsibility." In other words, the Act required the courts to act in a manner which was against the fundamental principles of justice which the court itself was required to uphold.

Attorney-General Michael Atkinson had been accused of sloppy law making when the Act was first proposed. He is now claiming that the government is "willing to test the constitutional boundaries" of their legislation. What this tells me is that the government is willing to make laws to do what they want to do and wait for them to be tested in court, instead of taking good advice and making sound laws in the first place.

Be aware that this only means that one part of the Act is invalid. The judgement itself is subject to appeal or the government will submit changes to the Act to try to get around the court's decision. Both motorcyclists and non-motorcyclists should continue to be aware what is done on their behalf by their government in the name of law and order.

Ride on, read on, and write in  
 Harald

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## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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### 80 kph speed blanket limit proposal for the Adelaide Hills

I attended a recent Community Forum meeting called by the Adelaide Hills Council at Piccadilly Community Hall. The council has been asked by the State Government to do the dirty work, the public consultation component, of an 80 kph speed limit within its area. I took this opportunity to ask the council for the reason for the initiative. The council surprised me with their frank admission they were not pushing or promoting the proposed blanket speed limit. The state government was driving the proposal. Before I left, a councillor asked for a bullet-point overview of the MRA SA position. This was tabled on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> Sept as inward correspondence at the Adelaide Hills Community Road Safety Group and forwarded to the Mt Barker Road Safety Group. An extract of our position, written by Neville Gray, the MRA SA Road Safety Officer, has been added to this edition of Centrestand. (see page 5) Your thoughts would be appreciated and can be emailed to [philipmcc@hotmail.com](mailto:philipmcc@hotmail.com). We will submit a formal comprehensive submission before the closing date of 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2009.

The MRA SA is developing closer ties with Rider Awareness Northern Territory (RANT). They have similar objectives to our association and we encourage the passion and enthusiasm they have for reducing trauma on the roads for riders of motorcycles in the top end. They are planning a Bike Awareness Week and Rider Safety Forum to be run in October. If you are planning a trip up that way, check out their web site at <http://riderawarenessnt.googlepages.com/home>

I watched with interest the 2009 Isle of Man TT race. This year heralded the first TTXGP (Time Trial eXtreme Grand Prix) – Zero Carbon Emission Motorcycle Race. Entry was open to motorcycles with a zero-carbon emission power source. All 16 entries were battery-powered. I was amazed at how far the technology has come. The race was won by Rob Barber, riding the Agni X01. The 2007 GSX-R600-based electric motorcycle uses two Agni 95 reinforced motors and a Kokam lithium polymer battery of 42 cells totalling around 12 kilowatt-hours of energy. According to the team, this gave around 40 or 50bhp for the entire 37¾ miles (60.75 kilometres) of the one lap race. Barber completed the lap in 25:53.50 averaging 87 mph and maxing out at 106mph (170kph).

Don't throw away the petrol engine yet, but the viability of an alternative power source for motorcycles has taken a step forward. The only problem with accepting them as the face of the future is they don't

sound right! We may have to play back a recording of a Ducati in our helmet speakers as we ride.

The FIM is creating a race series for electric motorcycles beginning next year. Details are slim beyond that, but it will be run "inside the Road Racing Grand Prix Commission" meaning it could be a support series for MotoGP at some races.

Phil McClelland  
President MRA SA Inc.  
0408 607788

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### **How cheap do you want to be and what will it really cost you?**

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On a recent SAMRATS ride a situation arose that raised, in my opinion, some serious questions for all riders. Put simply, a rider hit a stone with the front wheel of his bike which resulted in him and his machine being thrown into a paddock. This became a problem because the top of the paddock fence was not visible from the road. Hence the fallen rider and his machine lying on the ground were invisible to all who followed him.

Despite his injuries, he was able to telephone me and a successful rescue resulted. After he was dispatched to hospital in an ambulance his rescue became a source of discussion amongst the ride group at the scene.

His rescue was in no small way due to both he and I having a good phone system. It was a little stunning and somewhat amazing to see the looks on riders' faces as they checked their phones to see the coverage, or lack of coverage, they had in the spot where a rider had just gone down. Many riders were disappointed at the service they had! This was a location about 10 kilometers from Mt Compass - not Timbuktu! I do not want to promote one carrier over another, but could I suggest that the next time you go on a ride please take out your phone at smokos or rest breaks and check the signal strength of your phone service? Then consider what you would do if you needed to call for help.

It is worth mentioning that in an emergency a phone will use any available network to get you through to "000" or "112", but this doesn't mean that you can be put through to a number of your choosing. Sadly, a cheap service can be exactly that. If you regularly come on our rides, please consider programming my phone number (0411 273 184) into your phone whilst you're sitting comfortably and reading this - just in case you need me to turn around and search for you!

With great respect,  
Jock

## BIKE BITS

### ➤ Barossa's 80km/h speed limit

Here's a reminder for people who didn't know about it.

Speed limits on Barossa Valley roads were capped at 80km/h from June this year in an attempt to curb the region's road toll. Three fatal accidents have occurred on the region's roads since May 8. A male youth and a woman, aged 17 and 18 respectively, were killed in separate accidents near Tanunda and Gawler within 24 hours on May 8 and 9. A 36-year-old man died on May 24, near Nuriootpa. Speed limits had been capped at 110km/h on some roads in the Angaston, Tanunda and Nuriootpa districts and signs were progressively changed to show the new maximum 80km/h regional limit.

Barossa police Chief Inspector Alex Zimmermann said patrols would consider a grace period while motorists became used to the new speed limits but, ultimately, lower speeds were safer. "I would hope that it will result in a decrease in the number of serious road crashes, including fatalities," he said. Barossa Council chief executive David Morcom said it was not always possible to change the design of roads to make them safer, which had made a strong case for a lower speed limit.

*Thanks to the Advertiser 16/6/09 for the info.*

### ➤ Australia Driver/Rider Stats

Motorcycle registrations in Australia are growing at a far greater rate than any other vehicle according to the latest annual Motor Vehicle Census released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

As of 31 March 2008 the total number of motor vehicles registered in Australia rose 3.5% (over the past 12 months) to reach 15.3 million, with motorcycles up 10.8% in the last year and by over 50% in the last five years. The vehicle type with the next largest growth was articulated trucks with 6.3% growth between March 2007 and March 2008 and 23.1% growth in the past five years.

The 15.3 million registrations equates to 719 vehicles for every 1,000 Australian residents.

Australia's motor vehicle fleet continues to get younger with the average age of vehicles falling from a high of 10.7 years in 1998 to 9.9 years in 2008. Tasmania has the oldest vehicles, at 11.9 years on average, while the Northern Territory has the youngest at 8.9 years.

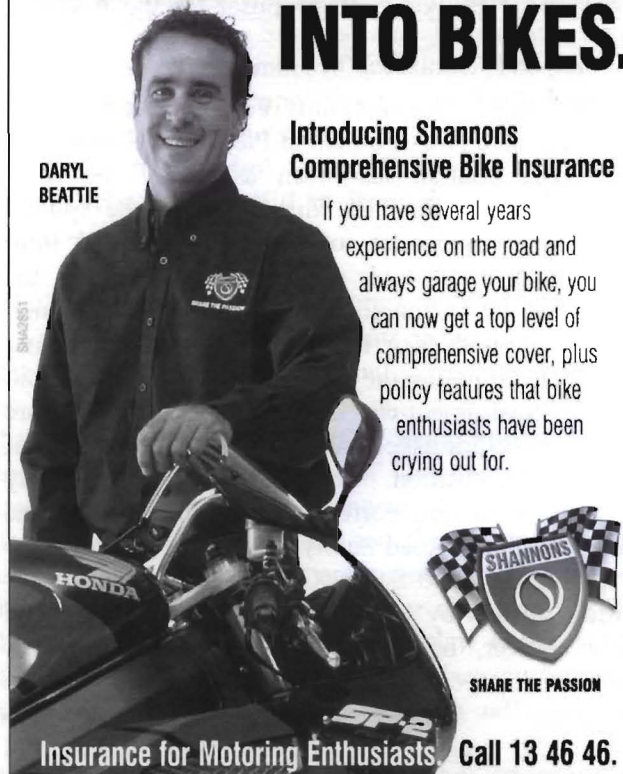
Further details are in *available Motor Vehicle Census* (cat. no. 9309.0).

# SHANNONS IS NOW INTO BIKES.

DARYL BEATTIE

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### ➤ London making motorcycling safer

A new plan to improve safety for motorcycles in UK capital London will see motorbikes allowed to use the majority of the city's bus lanes. An 18-month trial period commenced on 5/1/09. The move is intended to cut accident rates and traffic in the capital. The proposals have been criticised by some cyclists and cycling groups questioning its value. However, a comprehensive report based on experience gained from trials allowing motorcycles to use bus lanes on some key routes into London show that safety for motorcyclists can be improved greatly and at no cost to pedal cyclists. The earlier trials have also shown that allowing motorcycles into bus lanes helps reduce congestion at key traffic bottlenecks. The new rules will only apply to some bus lanes so motorcyclists are being advised to make sure they know which lanes are available to them.

The move is of considerably wider importance internationally as London's traffic issues have been monitored worldwide by other major cities. Allowing motorcycles to use bus lanes in London could result in similar moves being introduced in other major cities around the world, with a resulting boost for rider safety and an anticipated fall in serious injuries and fatalities as a result.

## **PROPOSED SPEED LIMIT CHANGES IN ADELAIDE HILLS** by Neville Gray

This review is partially based on the Centre for Automotive Safety Research's evaluation of a recent speed limit change in the Adelaide Hills entitled 'Evaluation of the Adelaide Hills speed limit change from 100 km/h to 80 km/h' by A D Long and T P Hutchinson published in March 2009. The review covers the 5 year periods before and after a similar speed limit change as the one currently proposed.

- The review showed an 8% reduction in casualty crashes over the 10 year period in the area. This result is acknowledged as being statistically within the expected standard deviation level of 10%, making the results inconclusive even when factoring in the natural rate of population increase in the target area.
- The difference in average speed fell by only 2.5 km/h as a result of the decreased speed limits. Obviously, the road users thought that the previous limits were basically in order and correct.
- The variance between crashes over the review years within the period shows no pattern and was entirely random.

Additional points not covered in the review are:

- The lowering of speed limits is an easy option when facing the task of improving the poor fatality numbers experienced so far in 2009. At the time of writing there has been an increase of 35% over the year-to-date figure for fatal crashes from 2008. The cry of 'we must do something, let's lower the speed limits' is overriding the real issues that are causing this disturbing trend in 2009. Installing new 80 km/h signs in relevant areas does not alleviate the Adelaide Hills Council's responsibilities for maintaining safe roads. Are the real reasons and issues avoided by this token low cost effort?
- Many Adelaide Hills roads are well designed to take 100 km/h traffic in complete safety with appropriate wide carriageways, excellent line marking, good sealed shoulders and guard rail installations where needed. To apply a blanket lower speed limit is to waste these valuable resources in planning, engineering and maintenance.
- This issue of increased travel times must be addressed. Many local Hills-based businesses rely on expeditious freighting of goods from the Adelaide environs. Lowering speed limits will increase travel times and time is money to many local business owners. Also closely allied with this increase travel time scenario is the possibility of increased fatigue

levels experienced by drivers and riders who suffer from the 'drone effect' when forced to travel well below the natural speed levels they perceive as right for the conditions. The need to constantly check vehicle speed can cause fatal inattention levels as eyes are diverted from the carriageway ahead in order to avoid a possible speeding fine. (There is no doubt that lowering speed limits will bring with it increased attention from SAPOL on the roads affected.)

- Local residents know the areas around them and use due caution based on experience when traversing roads – they know the potentially dangerous parts of the road network and travel at appropriate speeds accordingly. Casual users and tourists also use caution when traversing these roads as they do not know what is around the corner. Again the speeds travelled are at velocities with which they are comfortable and may be well under the existing posted speed limits. Of course, authorities always have to deal with the minority of 'thrill-seekers' who use the roads as their playgrounds. Unfortunately they are high profile news stories when they come to grief, giving a false impression of the extent of the 'speeding menace' in that particular area. (Recent events in the Barossa Valley where speed limits were reduced to 80 km/h highlighted this anomaly when two teenagers were fatally injured while travelling at very high speed. Decreased speed limits did nothing to deter these people.)
- Lowering speed limits is no excuse for not ameliorating poor road conditions when a road has been left to deteriorate, where previously it was safe for travel at 100 km/h and now is suitable only for 80 km/h. Constant road maintenance programs must be administered to keep these pavements in appropriate condition for the traffic numbers and the safe transit of users.
- The review recommended that increased enforcement be used to catch habitual speeders and to conduct licence checks in the Adelaide Hills area. This would have a more positive effect on the crash rate than any reduction of speed limits. This move would also not alienate the local inhabitants who see the potential reduction of speed limits as a retrograde step, impinging on their lifestyle and decreasing their spare time while increasing transport costs. The possibility of 'accidental speeding' and being caught is something they have to live with constantly.
- No doubt there may be some roads that would benefit from a speed limit reduction but these must be individually ascertained from an engineering perspective and not from an emotive blanket reaction to a problem that may not exist.

*There may be other constructive options for habitual speeders such as ride days at Mallala Raceway...Ed.*

## ADVERTORIAL - MAXIMOTO

Adelaideans have a long history of embracing the new, whether it be technology, the latest music or new brands. Retail superstores have also caught on here with the most notable newcomer being Maximoto.

Situated at the intersection of Anzac and South Roads it is an ideal midpoint for most Adelaide suburbs. "Our new store is a common weekend meeting place for clubs to start a run and with work on the underpass now coming to an end access is becoming more convenient," said staff.

The staff at Maximoto have years of experience in the motorcycle industry and racing and have a vision for Maximoto to be Adelaide's best value motorcycle accessories store. With thousands of products the range is as good as it gets anywhere. The first thing that strikes you when you enter the store is the huge range of racing leathers, riding jackets and helmets ranging in price and style to suite most needs.



*The new Maximoto Superstore*

This extends to leading tyre brands Dunlop, Continental, Pirelli and Michelin, with others on the way. Fitting is free including balancing and disposal and is only performed by trained staff so booking ahead can save a lot of time.

New products are constantly being added so there is always something new on offer. Staff commented that "It's our aim to be the first place that comes to mind whether you're looking for racing or touring gear, aftermarket replacement parts, lubricants, filters, tyres – anything".

Trading hours are Monday to Friday 9:00am to 7:00pm, Saturday 9:00am to 4:00pm and Sunday 9:00am to 3:00pm and the contact number is 8297 1034. *(See Ad on Back Page)*

## NAME THE MUGS Remember them?



April 1989 MRA Australia National Conference in Adelaide L to R: Jude Simondson MRAWA, Hal Caston, unknown, Peter Mount MRA/SA President, Mandy Wilkins, Brian Wilkins President MRAA.

## TOY RUN REPORT

At the time of writing the Toy Run Committee has only four more meetings before the Toy Run happens. So if you are thinking about going then remember it's Sunday the 13<sup>th</sup> of December. The ride leaves Glenelg at 11am on the dot, so get there early if you don't want to end up at the back. The lead bike group this year will be the Triumph Club.



On the left of this column you will see the design of the Toy Run badge for this year. This is approximately life size, with the bike colour yellow, pannier red and the bear, well, bear colour. We have

changed from the cartoon bear to something a bit more like a teddy to emphasise the day as being primarily for the children of families in need. Last year we struck 700 badges and sold out so get in quick if you want one to commemorate the day or to add to your collection.

We are still busy, organising things like sponsors, phones, signage, safety, stage, band, VIPs, Santa, rides, power, food and drink, marshals, badges, road closures, equipment, marquees, trucks, police and much more so that you can all have an enjoyable day.

If you have any queries or want to help, then call Phil on 0408 607 788 or Harald on 0421 289 714.

Harald Lindemann 2009 Toy Run Coordinator.

## FEDERAL MOTORCYCLE SAFETY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

By Neville Gray, MRA SA Road Safety Officer

The annual meeting of the Federal Government's Motorcycle Safety Consultative Committee was held in Canberra on August 17th. I was the Ulysses Club representative. Others present were the MRAQ, AMC, MRA(Vic), NSW MCC, the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries, Motorcycling Australia and a Women's rider rep. Of great interest was the release of a Draft Road Statistics paper.

The report shows that we are down in expected fatalities compared with the number of registrations. If you hear that things are getting worse, that is wrong, as the number of motorcycle fatalities is steady but the number of bikes on the road is still increasing steadily. The distance travelled per bike is increasing, meaning that the exposure rate is increasing. In other words the crash rate is getting lower. That is not true for cars at the moment. Qld and WA are the problem states. The numbers in Qld are horrendous and these are slanting the figures for the rest of Australia.

Moves are afoot to attack this problem with the Queensland Motorcycle Safety Advisory Group (QMSAG) having its very first meeting on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> August, mainly as a result of a submission to the TravelSafe Inquiry some time ago. LAMS has been implemented in Qld as from 31<sup>st</sup> July.

WA has had a series of three safety forums, the first of which I was privileged to attend to help get the ball rolling, and rolling it is. The formation of a similar group to that just started in Qld is firmly in the sights.

Nationally, 25.4% of all motorcycle fatalities are unlicensed riders. This is for 2000 – 2004 and it is now over 35%. This does not include the unregistered riders and these two combined (unriders) can be up to 45% (it was 62% last year in SA). Here lies a great challenge for the federal Motorcycle Safety Consultative Committee. Very little or no research has been done on these 'riders'. What makes them do it, what makes them tick? Is it a social, economic, location problem, an IQ problem, an unemployment problem? Is the compulsory rider training too costly, causing them to circumvent this training? It could be in SA.

After some lengthy debate on the subject, it was very apparent that the Federal Government shared our thoughts and concerns on this BIG issue. So much so that a special research program will be started *posthaste*. Money is the issue and the Department is about to get a funding cut. Maybe it will be done in-house or palmed off to MUARC or CARRSQ - we don't care as long as it is done. It could be the most important paper ever written on motorcycle safety in this country.

At the moment, enforcement and the roadside checking of licences is the only attack method and unfortunately this gives motorcyclists the feeling that they are being targeted. The message will have to get through that they will have to suffer this little inconvenience to save many lives of fellow riders that are unlicensed, therefore untrained and unskilled. They have hundreds of times more chance of being fatally injured than a legitimate rider.

The report also notes that drugs and alcohol combined is responsible for 45% of causes in single vehicle crashes – this is another huge problem. If only we can remove unlicensed, unregistered, drunk and drugged riders from the roads, we would be way down to near the same level as car fatalities, and they have all sorts of aids like airbags, seat belts, ABS brakes, traction control etc to help them. Bikes could then be actually almost as safe as cars!!!! Can you imagine that!!!!

Now the big one that is affecting mainly weekend social riders - Sunday is the worst day for motorcycle fatalities and the times between 3 and 5pm is the worst period. That is exactly the time we are on the roads enjoying ourselves and my experience tells me that yes, of all the crashes I have witnessed when on a organised club ride, (any club) all occurred at this time and day – nanny nap time after a nice lunch and the euphoria of a great day out. Also, most club rides are 'organised' on the way to the destination with Rides Leader, Tail End Charlie and ride protocols in place. Most return journeys are 'go for it, see you next week'.

Is there anything we can do? Hell yes. I intend writing an article titled '*Riding while under the influence of lunch*'. It will give the facts and stats and implore motorcyclists to be aware of this potentially dangerous time. Maybe we need to also encourage the home ride to be run under the same ride protocols as the run to the destination. It would be harder to organise as members would spear off in all directions to various home points but smaller geographically located home groups could make it work and look out for each other.

The new National Road Safety Council is about to be formed and named in the next few weeks. We (MSCC) will have direct access to this Council bypassing all the other sub committees. Letters of introduction will be forwarded asap to the appropriate members when they are named.

The National Road Safety Strategy is also about to be released. One of the reasons that the Motorcycle and Scooter Safety Forum was held last year was for input into this strategy. I can't wait to see if it actually contains some of our recommendations. All the recommendations from the Summit will be prioritised and actioning bodies identified. This will be our main focus in the next few months; we cannot let these outcomes die on the floor.

The 'Good Gear Guide' has been released by Federal Transport Minister Albanese during Motorcycle Awareness Week. It is a joint product of the AMC, MSCC and author and researcher Liz de Rome from Sydney. It describes what is available in Australia, the good reasons for wearing this protective clothing and the possible scenario for the future in getting some standards in place to ensure that what we buy will actually stand up in a crash and not melt away on impact. A star rating system will be advocated. Whether we adopt the EC standards or develop our own is the question. (See article page 8)

*We must never press for the compulsory wearing of protective clothing in Australia. We can promote the wearing of it but never consent to make it compulsory.*

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## THE GOOD GEAR GUIDE

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The Good Gear Guide has been released. The guide was developed by Liz de Rome of LdeR Consulting with a grant from the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government. It was developed in close consultation with the Motorcycle Safety Consultative Committee (MSCC) with input from key organisations including the Australian Motorcycle Council (AMC).

AMC Chairman, Shaun Lennard, explained the role of rider groups in the project. "The AMC, - through the peak rider organisations in each of the states and territories, - had recognised that lack of proper protective clothing was becoming more and more of a concern, as the number of motorcycles and scooters on Australian roads increased significantly over the past five years. The AMC developed a proposal which we took to the Australian Government for developing a resource to enable riders to make well-informed decisions about what riding gear to wear. We wanted to explain the value of protective gear in plain language. What works in Tasmania in winter isn't what you want to be wearing in Darwin or Townsville, but there are options for warmer climates these days too. It takes some knowledge to inspect riding gear - some gear looks to be 'protective', but is simply a style and no better than casual clothing. The guide is packed with information to assist riders to tell the difference." The guide can be found at [www.infrastructure.gov.au/roads/safety](http://www.infrastructure.gov.au/roads/safety).

A "star" rating system for motorcycle protective clothing has been proposed by de Rome and Haworth. The MRASA is working with the AMC to establish a star rating for all riding gear sold in Australia. Later this year, in November, a "workshop" will be held in Sydney as part of the annual Road Safety and Policing Conference.

In the words of Guy Stanford, Chairman of the Motorcycle Council of NSW, "The overall process to be "workshopped" is seeking to create a testing site in Australia that can perform the same tests (and any additional tests) that are used to assess the European Standard for motorcycle protective clothing AND that calibrates with the testing laboratories used in Europe."

The intent is to allow use of the laboratory to consumers and manufacturers as a means of advancing protective gear. Magazines such as Choice or motorcycle magazines may choose to conduct consumer tests to verify advertising claims. We are seeking to obtain agreement between the various State and Territory jurisdictions to establish a test laboratory, with all jurisdictions sharing in the establishment costs. We also hope to have a national approach in order to

allow for consumer protection legislation (ie. truth in advertising).

There is no hint of compulsion for anyone to purchase a particular product or type of product. These labelling systems allow the consumer to make an informed choice, based on verifiable claims through a calibrated testing process. It is stressed that any hint of a requirement for compulsory clothing or style of clothing would be rejected.

*Thanks to the AMC for the info.*

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## SENSE OF HUMOUR FAILURE?

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A UK driver using his hands-free phone was spotted laughing at a joke by a police traffic officer and pulled over. The driver was told that laughing while driving can be an offence and was then questioned by the officer for 30 minutes. During this questioning, the driver was asked the colour of his hair. The driver pointed out that he was bald due to alopecia, a condition that causes hair loss, and was then asked what colour his hair was, prior to the onset of the alopecia. The man was allowed to drive away without charge.

Drivers should take note from this incident however and refrain from laughing, as well as blinking excessively, sneezing or coughing, while at the wheel. Smiling while at the wheel is permissible but drivers should check the width of their smile and ensure that this does not exceed guidelines regarding field of vision. Bald drivers may be required to carry hair samples. *(Story courtesy World Highways June 2009)*

*What does this mean for Motorcyclists? Will officers know we are laughing by the jiggling of our head and shoulders? Ed*

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## LUNACY IN THE UK

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Learner motorcyclists face losing the right to ride unaccompanied under Government plans, according to the Motorcycle Industry Association (MCI). Plans to scrap the right are likely to be revealed later this month, the Association fears. It would leave learners only allowed to ride while accompanied by an instructor and deny thousands of daily transport.

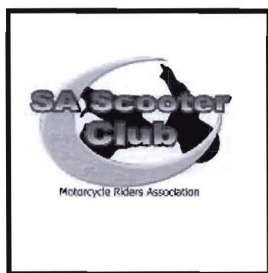
The proposals are expected to be included in a consultation on new Europe-wide laws set to make it more difficult to gain a motorcycle licence from 2013. ***The new rules will raise the minimum age for Direct Access – a single practical riding test for access to unrestricted bikes – to 24.***

Riders who take the standard route will be subject to power limits for four years, two at 15bhp and 125cc and two at 47bh. *More at:*

<http://www.motorcyclenews.com/MCN/News/newsresults/General-news/2009/June/jun3009-learners-to-lose-right-to-ride-alone/>



## SA Scooter Club – An Overview



To those not in the know, the MRASA's SA Scooter Club exists to cater for those of us who prefer scooters to motorcycles but have the same level of enthusiasm for riding in groups on a social basis.

As there has been scant information about scooters in Centrestand I thought it would be appropriate to change that and start off by informing our readers about their usage within the MRASA community.

This year marks the third year of the SA Scooter Club, originally started up by Anthony Chan in June 2006. The club has come a long way since those early days, with a steady increase in membership, and currently has 48 members. It's early philosophy of being **the** scooter club (in SA) that genuinely caters for **all** types of scooters still holds true today.

It is mainly due to Anthony's selfless dedication in those early days in establishing and shaping the club that has helped set the foundation for its future.



*Club founder Anthony Chan and his Peugeot Blaster (50cc)*

The club merged with the MRASA in 2007 and through the MRASA website and forum quickly established itself as the scooter equivalent of SAMRATS. Club rides are held on the third Sunday of the month with details posted on both the forum and the main MRASA website. The online forum is the primary communication tool for members and enthusiasts.

Being part of the MRASA structure has brought some formality to the club, which comprises a group coordinator (principal) and four ride coordinators, all

elected annually by club members. The group coordinator also serves on the main MRASA committee to represent the scooter club. The current group coordinator is Rene Borst and the ride coordinators are Marrie Jongeneel, Phil Creer, Kimberley O'Brien and Wayne Paterson.

The coordinators work well together and devote valuable time to planning rides suitable for all capacities.

Ad hoc rides such as weekend getaways or near country runs are also available. Two of our members have taken runs to Queensland towing trailers behind their maxi scooters and toured the east coast of Australia, vouching for their durability and adaptability.

The makeup of the club's rides varies considerably and has changed for a number of its members, several of whom started on 50cc units and have since progressed to larger scooters.

The 50cc scooters have continued to surprise people with their ability to travel far and wide. Club rides have covered most of Adelaide from Gawler down to McLaren Vale and from the coast to Mt Lofty. You will also find them participating in the annual Toy Run.

Likewise they are also impressed by the performance of the large maxi scooters on both suburban and country runs.



*Club coordinator Rene Borst and his Yamaha TMax (500cc)*

So, for those wishing to explore the world of scooters, you can visit the forum, visit our pages on the website and come and join us on a run. All welcome (including motorcycles☺).

Rene Borst [scooter@mrasa.asn.au](mailto:scooter@mrasa.asn.au) 0407 505 506

Go to <http://acem.eu/cartoon/> for Lucky 13's latest adventure 'Decreasing Radius Bends'.

## STEVE'S MOTORCYCLE TRIP TO KINGS CANYON by Steve Smith

I had been planning this trip for about 6 months after my daughter said that she would like to see Coober Pedy as I had taken my son up there some 8 years ago. I also decided to take her to climb Ayers Rock, the Olgas and Kings Canyon.

Well, the day of reckoning came on Monday July 13 at 6am when we left home, with the ZRX fully loaded with 2 bags of clothes on the Ventura rack and 8 days supply of breakfast and lunch meals in the saddle bags and tank bag along with my daughter on the back seat and a 5 litre jerry can of petrol. It was a cold morning but luckily not wet. We rode for about 2 hours before our first stop for fuel at Warnertown. I noticed that with the estimated 200kg of weight that the fuel consumption was suffering. My usual 360-400k range around town had been diminished to around 280km so straight away I knew we would be making extra stops.

Our next stop was a morning coffee break in Port Augusta where we arrived just before 9am and spent about half an hour refuelling our stomachs and a topping up the tank again for the 177k road to Pimba, arriving there around 11.45am. This is where the fuel price started to climb – from 123.9 in Pt. Augusta to 152.9 [unleaded]. We left Pimba at 1pm and highailed it to Glendambo some 110k away. We refuelled in Glendambo ready for the 260k run to Coober Pedy. Even though I had 25 litres of fuel on board I still had to conserve fuel. About 50k out of Glendambo the black clouds starting rolling across the sky on the horizon. I carried on for around another 20k or so before I decided to pull the bike over on the side of the highway where we could put our wet weather gear on. We had no sooner put it on when it just dumped on us – in the middle of absolutely nowhere. We just stood there and waited for the storm to pass over rather than ride through it. After it had passed I climbed back on the bike just as the road under the stand collapsed sending my bike on its side with both of us unable to pick it up – we had to wait about 15 mins for someone to come along and help us lift the bike up onto the road. We continued on to Coober Pedy with one more rest stop, arriving there around 5.15pm – over 11 hours after leaving home.

On Tuesday July 14 we had a bike free day – we walked every where in Coober Pedy to see all the tourist things – underground hotels, homes, churches, art galleries and museums. Fuel here was more reasonably priced at 134.9. Weather was blowing a gale with 90kmh winds along with regular dust storms for almost 24 hours. Luckily on Wednesday morning the wind had died down for us to continue our journey up to Curtin Springs in the NT, about 80k before Yulara Village. We travelled the 650k in a little over 8 hours without any incidents. Stops were made at Cadney Homestead, Marla, Kulgera and Erldunda. Fuel prices hovered around the \$1.60. We booked into Curtin Springs for 3 nights allowing us to do 1 day at Ayers Rock and the following day at the Olgas. The cost of fuel here was at 181.9 for unleaded – no premium available.

On Thursday July 16 we did the trip to Ayers Rock – about an hour trip. We arrived at the rock before 9am, paid the \$25 fee for the park pass and then proceeded around the base of the rock to the climbing area. There were already a few

hundred people there clambering over the rock, mostly foreign tourists. The climb starts at the base where you walk up unaided for about 100m then there is a chain anchored into the rock so you can pull yourself up the steep incline – this chain goes up probably about 200m to a flat resting area about 2/3 the way up the rock. From here you follow a dotted line up to the summit. The climb took us just over an hour which included a few stops to catch our breath and chat with the tourists. We spent about an hour at the summit before our descent to go and have lunch in the Yulara village. During the afternoon we spent time relaxing in the village or the cultural centre until sunset when everybody congregate at the sunset viewing area for a barrage of photos of the rock changing colour as the sun set. We then had the scariest ride back to Curtin Springs after sunset with animals like kangaroos and rabbits running all over the place in front of me. I only sat on 60-80kmh for the trip back. There is also the danger of wild cattle, camels and emus that roam about as well.

Friday saw us travel back to the park and visit the Olgas where we did an 8km walk through the Valley of the Winds followed by a 1km walk through the Walpa gorge.

Saturday July 18 we left Curtin Springs and travelled 200k north to Kings Canyon. This was the best road I had encountered in 6 days as it was very windy with long sweeping corners and hills and bends. I was going to stop half way for a break but I enjoyed the road so much I went non-stop until we reached Kings Canyon. The campground was huge with a large deep in-ground pool and play park for the kiddies. At night time dingoes would come around scavenging food from the campsite. After arriving we went off and did the canyon river and rim walk. The creek walk is short at 1km return but the rim walk was a 6km gruelling climb up, down and over rocks and crevices that was truly unbelievable and magnificent

On Sunday morning we left Kings Canyon at 8am for our trip back to Coober Pedy. We arrived back in Coober Pedy just after 5pm – this was a 750k ride done with ease. This time we stayed in Radeka's Inn in an underground motel room. The room was located some 6m under the ground with the backpacker rooms another 3m lower.

Monday July 20 was our last day on the road. We left Coober Pedy at 7am. On our way down to Glendambo as the sun rose the desert turned bright red followed by a glow of orange before adopting its normal bland colours. We saw a few groups of up to 8 eagles standing by the roadside near roadkill as we travelled. We made it into Pt. Augusta before 1pm so we did the trip home via the Clare Valley arriving home just after 5pm covering nearly 900km for the day.

The bike performed exceptionally well averaging almost 16km per litre for the 4,000 km we travelled. We had to oil the chain every night after being on the road. On arriving home it took me the entire next day to clean all the melted oil and grease off the bike along with all the dust over the bike. The weather for the entire trip was good – it was actually really good in the NT with cloudless skies and 23 degree days. The mornings were around 1-2 degrees. This was an amazing trip that I would do again and I recommend doing if you get the chance. This was an awesome trip with a lot of fun.

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