

MOTORCYCLE ACTION GROUP (MAG UK)
The Great European Union Stitch Up
(or How to Make Friends and Influence People)

Last week on 22nd November, the EU Transport Committee met to vote on the 3rd European Driving Licence Directive (the Directive that will kill motorcycling in this country). The ONLY UK politician voting against the proposed amendments for motorcycling and FOR the submitted motorcycle friendly amendments (i.e. to stop the madness of the legislation) was our, champion, Philip Bradbourn Conservative MEP from the West Midlands.

The proposed motorcycle amendments include increasing Direct Access of category A from 21 to 24 years of age, increasing the age of access to the different categories, as well as introducing a new category AM; testing and training between categories A2 and A1 and extending the time scale between these categories. In this country where everything is Gold Plated, this new legislation will be implemented while in countries in Southern Europe they will ignore it like they always do.

MAG UK has continually made the point that the reason we have been fighting an uphill battle to stop the amendments on motorcycles in the EU Driving Licence Directive and Daytime Running Lights, is because the car lobby is so strong in Europe.

The Third European Driving Licence Directive is a brilliant representation of the complete and utter shamble that is the European Union. It is a litany of compromises, confusion and collusion between politicians and interest groups.

We have argued that within the 3rd European Driving Licence Directive there is no mention of training and/or testing for car drivers – who are overwhelmingly responsible for deaths on Europe’s roads. There is no mention of stepped access for cars for young car drivers. There is no mention of the implementation of road awareness training or testing for car drivers. All these measures have been foisted on motorcyclists – in spite of the fact that car drivers are the greatest cause of the death of motorcyclists. According to reports on motorcycle casualties, up to 80% of all motorcycle accidents are due to collisions with cars. Up to 50% of deaths of motorcyclists are due to collisions with cars. Yet motorcyclists will pay the price and car drivers will be allowed to continue to kill.

MAG UK believes that there is a very good reason why these issues have not been mentioned in the Directive.

The following table is a list of MEPs who are members of a forum called Auto and Society. This forum includes car manufacturers and interest groups that are corporate members. They pay and the politicians listen. The names of MEPs highlighted sit on the Transport Committee.

Members of the European Parliament who are political members of the Auto and Society Forum

Ivo Belet (Belgium)	Chris Heaton-Harris (UK)	Joseph Muscat (Malta)
Martin Callanan (UK)	Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert (NL)	John Purvis (UK)
Mogens N.J. Camre (Denmark)	Anne E. Jensen (Denmark)	Luís Queiró (Portugal)
Jorgo Chatzimarkakis (Germany)	Wolf Klinz (Germany)	Dagmar Roth-Behrendt (Germany)
Ryszard Czarnecki (Poland)	Dieter-Lebrecht Koch (Germany)	Zuzana Roithová (Czech Rep.)
Gérard Deprez (Belgium)	Holger Kraemer (Germany)	Andreas Schwab (Germany)
Gintaras Didžiokas (Lithuania)	Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (Greece)	Gary Titley (Lab. UK)
Den Dover (UK)	Alexander Graf Lambsdorff (Germany)	Thomas Ulmer (Germany)
Petr Duchoň (Czech Republic)	Erika Mann (Germany)	Ari Vatanen (France)
Markus Ferber (Germany)	Boguslaw Marian Liberadzki (Poland)	Barbara Weiler (Germany)
Bogdan Golik (Poland)	Astrid Lulling (Luxembourg)	Jan Marinus Wiersma (NL)
Bruno Gollnisch (France)	Albert Jan Maat (Netherlands)	Terry Wynn (UK)
Ignasi Guardans (Spain)	Hans-Peter Mayer (Germany)	Jaroslav Zverina (Czech Rep)
Malcolm Harbour (UK)	Pierre Moscovici (France)	

Corporate members of the Auto and Society Forum

(ACEA) European Automobile Manufacturers Association	Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile	Michelin
BMW	FIA (Foundation for the Automobile and Society)	PSA Peugeot Citroën
European Association of Automotive Suppliers	Fiat	Renault
DaimlerChrysler (Mercedes Benz - Chrysler)	Ford of Europe	Scania
Intelligent Transport Systems and Services - Europe	General Motors	Toyota
European Tyre & Rubber Manufacturers' Association	Honda	Volkswagen AG
European Car Transport Group of Interest	Japan Automobile Manufacturers Association	Volvo Group

According to information from their website

- The Forum for the Automobile and Society encourages "Politicians and senior policymakers with an interest in automotive and mobility issues may become political members of the Forum.
- Political members have no financial obligations to the Forum, whereas Corporate members cover the operating costs of the Forum.
- The forum brings together "decision makers from the motor industry and motoring organisations together with key policymakers from major legislative institutions (...). Relating discussion topics closely to current legislative issues and the concerns of legislators, meetings of the Forum offer a highly relevant agenda for Members of the European Parliament and other policymakers".

The Auto and Society forum has encouraged and developed close relationships between manufacturers and politicians. Accordingly, the car industry has had the opportunity to influence policy making and decisions by the EU legislators including areas of road safety.

Lobbying is an effective way to get the desired message through to legislators. But there are conflicts of interest due to the roles that certain actors play. This forum highlights the potential for conflicts of interest of the European politicians. As highlighted previously, there are politicians who are actively involved in the Transport Committee and are also members of this forum.

In MAG UK's view, the politicians that participate in this forum are in a position to express opinions that are supportive of policies favouring the car industry. MAG UK is concerned that this influence may have affected the outcome of the voting for the Third European Driving Licence Directive in the Transport Committee and may affect the final vote when the Directive goes to Parliament.

Concerns about transparency in government fill newspapers, but the line in the sand between working for the service of the community or for the interests of industry can easily be blurred even without intent. Such close proximity between legislators and the private sector raises concerns about these actors and the consequential legislation that could ensue as a result of their shared interests and loyalties.

For this reason, MAG UK demands that the politicians listed above, refrain from voting on the 3rd European Driving Licence Directive on 13th December in the European Parliament.

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