BIKES TO FACE CONGESTION CHARGE

The Motorcycle Action Group (MAG UK) says that proposals contained in Manchester’s congestion charging scheme to charge motorcycles are the thin end of the wedge as cities in the UK wait in line to implement future national road pricing plans.

MAG is amazed that the authorities in Manchester have even considered charging motorcycles, when the London congestion charging scheme has proved successful and beneficial to congestion busting motorcycles.

The proposal for a traffic charging scheme by the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) is aimed to overcome the increasing problems of congestion in this city.

Motorcycles offer a solution to the problem of congestion. Congestion charging schemes currently exist in Central London and Durham. In both schemes motorcycles are exempt from the charge because it has been recognised that this form of transport reduces congestion.

MAG believes that motorcycles fulfil a significant role as part of an integrated transport policy by not only relieving traffic congestion but also pollution, whilst enhancing commercial efficiency by cutting the length of journey times to work.

MAG’s Public Affairs Director Trevor Baird, said, “We have a change of Transport Ministers in Gordon Brown’s new cabinet. Stephen Ladyman is replaced by Rosie Winterton, Ruth Kelly has been appointed as the Secretary of State for Transport with the responsibility of rolling out the congestion charge across Greater Manchester, and perhaps she will give Manchester direction in exempting motorcycles in their proposed scheme.”

MAG calls on the authorities in Manchester to recognise the positive contribution that motorcycles make to congestion problems by excluding motorcycles from the Congestion Charging proposals and recognise motorcycling as a legitimate and increasingly popular mode of transport.

Lobby

If Manchester introduces charges for motorcycles, in what is being seen as a National "pilot" scheme then we will possibly have a "fight" with each city on exemption.

We need Manchester to follow the lead of London and the Historic City of Durham.

You can also sign the on line petition and take part in the poll on congestion on the campaigns website.

*The petition is available for printing.*

Whether you ride a Scooter, Tourer, Custom or Sportsbike, if it has two wheels this issue affects you!

Don’t let Manchester be the first to charge motorcycles for the congestion that they do not cause!

REPS – ACTIVISTS - RIDERS

MAG’s Campaign website against Congestion Charging for motorcycles at [http://tinyurl.com/2ezvav](http://tinyurl.com/2ezvav)

The website includes a full lobby document with contact details for the Manchester Authority, Transport and Shadow Transport Ministers.

For Local MAG Groups in the Northwest details are also included of MP’s, MEP’s and Councillors.

You may want to print out the petition and place these in local motorcycle dealers etc [http://tinyurl.com/24x3q7](http://tinyurl.com/24x3q7)

MAG response to Manchester Authorities [http://tinyurl.com/2gtur2](http://tinyurl.com/2gtur2) 161kb

Lobby Document as a word document [http://tinyurl.com/ysymly](http://tinyurl.com/ysymly)

Trevor Baird Public Affairs Director

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FRONT TYRE RECALL

Thanks to Midnight runner from North UK Bikers - [www.northukbikers.co.uk](http://www.northukbikers.co.uk) for this recall information :-

Michelin Pilot Power 2ct and Pilot Power 120/70 zr17 front tyres.

There is more info on the Michelin website and an advice hotline you can ring.

Michelin are saying it’s down to a manufacturing irregularity but that there have been no cases of loss of pressure or accidents.

Its not all tyres of this type that are affected only those that are marked on the sidewall with the following markings

- a “Made in France” label
- DOT 6UCW 980T or DOT 6UCW 979T
- Pilot Power: week numbers 2704 to 0406 inclusive
- Pilot Power 2CT: week numbers 4505 to 1807 inclusive

Apologies if you don’t have these tyres and this seems pointless.

But you may know other bikers that do.
SAFE WITH MAG AT THE MOTO GP

Dear All,

You may have heard of the difficulties that we are experiencing in getting the licence for the SAFE WITH MAG at the MOTO GP. Unfortunately I now have the sad task of informing you that we have today received a date for the licensing sub-committee meeting and that date is Tuesday 19th June - just 3 days before the event and 1 day before we were due to set up.

Besides you the customer we also have a duty of care to our suppliers - marquee bar toilet hire etc and we must give them enough notice if we think the event might not take place. The date we have for the hearing is too close to the event for us to afford to take the chance and therefore we have no choice but to cancel and give our suppliers enough time to find alternative work for that weekend.

We will refund your tickets and booking fee in full. I would appreciate a reply so that I know who has been informed and who I need to phone or write to instead.

We can assure you that we have battled with this unfounded resistance to this event offering all possible assurance to residents but unfortunately to no avail.

We have become victim of nothing more than time ultimately because of the date of the hearing and the other commitments with our premier event the week before (Farmyard Party) otherwise we would have taken this to the highest level possible.

Once again we offer our apologies for your disappointment and inconvenience. We hope you can still enjoy the weekend of the GP.

Kind Regards

Anji Sewell

iMAGe Incentives

PO Box 247, Beverley, HU17 6BB
0870 774 3568, 07793 207 119

GOVERNMENT RESPONDS AND LISTENS TO MOTORCYCLING

The Motorcycle Action Group welcomes the Governments response to the Parliamentary Transport Select Committee, report on their scrutiny of the Governments Motorcycling Strategy. The Government reaffirmed its commitment to mainstream motorcycling, recognising it to be a modern and practical way of getting around.

Whilst agreeing with the Committee that motorcycle casualty rates were too high the Government pointed out that overall casualty rates were now 26% lower than the 1994/98 baseline and that measures within the strategy were tackling motorcycle safety effectively.

Whilst the Committee recommended that work should be carried out to explore the fitting of speed control systems the Government has stated that there are no plans for speed limiter trials or speed limiters of any type being made compulsory.

In respect of driver training the Government reaffirmed its commitment to mainstream road safety into schools and to continue to develop better training for riders and drivers.

The Committee was critical of the levels of emissions from motorcycles, particularly larger capacity machines, however the Government pointed out that the Committee was basing its findings on historic data which bore no resemblance to the current levels of emissions being achieved by the Euro 3 standard which makes bikes much less polluting than cars.

The Committee focussed heavily on the nuisance caused by mini motos and recommended that a compulsory registration scheme should be introduced, (there is a private members off road registration bill currently going through the parliamentary process). In response the Government reaffirmed its opposition to a mandatory registration scheme, outlining the options already available to address such nuisance. The Government also recognised the stated position by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) who are opposed to a registration scheme.

MAG Campaigns Manager, David Short said, ‘The Governments response to the Transport Select Committees recommendations is an excellent result for motorcycling. It vindicates the contributions made by everyone who gave evidence at the Transport Select Committee hearings. Whilst the Committee recommendations caused us concerns, in particular on issues such as speed limiters I am delighted that the Government has listened to our concerns, taken notice and responded in such a positive way. This is a good report for motorcycling and demonstrates the level of commitment that MAG and the motorcycling lobby have in delivering with Government the UK’s Motorcycle Strategy.’

1. Governments Response to Transport Select Committee http://tinyurl.com/yvt6kj
2. David Short - MAG Campaigns Manager can be contacted on Tel: 01347 822214 Mobile: 077389 48080 or email campaigns-manager@mag-uk.org

Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety

PACTS 25th Anniversary

PACTS was established in 1982, largely to campaign for compulsory seatbelts. Twenty-five years on, PACTS still campaigns for evidence-based decision making in transport safety to protect human life. To celebrate this auspicious occasion, we held a reception in the House of Commons last month.

Co-founder and Chair, Barry Sheerman MP spoke about the early days of PACTS before receiving an award from AIRSO for his enthusiasm and pioneering work on introducing compulsory seatbelt wearing. Peter Bottomley MP, another long-time supporter of PACTS and Minister responsible for the first round of road safety targets also spoke. Professor Richard Allsop, another founding member, completed the evening, outlining some of the future challenges for the transport safety
profession and for PACTS in particular. You can read Prof Allsop's comments. http://tinyurl.com/2f2hbr

Motor Insurance Bureau Police helpline

The Motor Insurance Bureau last year ran a pilot helpline to assist Police with difficult roadside situations where there may be doubt over the validity of insurance cover for a suspect vehicle. The scheme is now rolling out to additional Police Forces. Read the full press release on the MIB website http://tinyurl.com/2x47m7

IHT collision avoidance guidelines launched

New guidelines to prevent and reduce the number of accidents on UK roads will be launched on 10 July at Church House Conference Centre in London. The IHT's Collision, Prevention & Reduction Guidelines will replace the Highway Safety Accident Reduction & Prevention Guidelines published by IHT in 1986.

The conference will give details of the guidelines and include case studies and presentations on road safety monitoring.

The winner of the IHT Road Safety Award 2007 will also give a speech. The guidelines have been designed to bring together best practice within the road safety community. It has been built around a framework of five elements – data, structure, systems, finance and monitoring.

The new document builds on the foundations provided in the original guidelines, which set the agenda for collision reduction over the last two decades. It will enable local authorities and trunk road agents to apply a systematic and inclusive approach to road safety.

Please see the IHT website http://www.iht.org.uk for further details or Simon Hawkins, Events Organiser on 020 7391 9956 or by email conferences@iht.org

Road Safety Grant Projects

The Government announced last month that twenty-five local highway authorities and their partners across England will share the first award of a new £4 million road safety grant.

A wide range of projects are funded, across engineering, publicity, pedestrian training and programmes for young people.

Climate Change Bill

The Government recently introduced the draft Climate Change Bill. The Bill seeks to establish a target for reducing climate changing emissions, support trading to reduce emissions and establish an independent commission to oversee policy and strategy. You can read the Bill and associated consultation documents on the DEFRA website http://tinyurl.com/3cm4uh

PACTS believes that neither the role of transport nor the safety implications of some emission-reducing strategies have received sufficient attention in the Bill. You can read our response on the consultations page at http://tinyurl.com/yysyt3q

New DfT research

The DfT recently published several new research reportson pre-driver education and one on the effectiveness of roads policing "Road Policing Activity and Casualty Reduction"

All are available on the DfT website at http://tinyurl.com/2fr4qx

New Parliamentary Questions

The Parliamentary Questions http://tinyurl.com/237bor table has been updated. Recent questions cover retro reflective tape, cost of road accidents and a street design Bill.

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IMPROVE ROADS TO IMPROVE BIKE SAFETY SAY MOTORCYCLE RETAILERS

'Improving road design and conditions would greatly reduce the number of motorcycle accidents in the UK, as these factors cause far more crashes than inappropriate speed,' said Mike Owen, Head of the Motorcycle Retailers Association (MRA), part of the Retail Motor Industry Federation (RMIF).

Owen was commenting on the Government's response to a report published today (Tuesday 19 June 2007), by the House of Commons Transport Committee on the Motorcycling Strategy.

The Committee had recommended that limiting the speed of motorbikes could greatly reduce the number of motorcycle accidents. However the Government's response highlights research indicating that only 9 per cent of motorcycle crashes are the result of inappropriate speed.

Owen continues: Most motorcycle crashes are the result of poor road design, non-motorcycle road furniture, or poor conditions, including fuel spillages. The focus should be on these areas. Continuing to improve overall road conditions would have a far more meaningful effect.'

Road conditions can be improved through:

- Tightening of bends
- Decreased road surface sloping on roundabouts
- Improved manhole placement
- Improved sightlines and signage on junctions

The Report also emphasises the Government's opposition to the Off Road Vehicles (Registration) Bill. Its intention is to regulate the sale and use of mini-bikes. However trials bikes, motor cross bikes, circuit bikes, and quads, which do not need number plates if only used off road, could be forced to carry number plates as well.

Despite the lack of Government support, the bill has passed its first and second reading in the House of Commons, and will next pass to the committee stage.

Owen said: 'we are facing an unnecessary extra level of regulation that could cause problems for the already law-abiding motorcycle retailers, and riders. What is required is robust enforcement.'

Owen adds: 'The Government is on the right track in this instance, and the MRA supports its intentions.'

084/AW/N/19 June 2007
The New Motorcycle Test

The new motorcycle test - which is being introduced next year by the Driving Standards Agency - will be promoted at a unique event organised by the Motorcycle Rider Training Association at Stoke-on-Trent on 1 July 2007.

The Motorcycle Rider Training Association will be supported by Driving Standards Agency motorcycle experts, National BikeSafe, Road Safety Organisations and European stunt riding champion Craig Jones to help demonstrate the new test, which is being introduced in October 2008 as a road safety initiative.

The event - at Britannia Stadium, Stanley Matthews Way - will bring together the public, the training and the testing industry.

It will be a unique opportunity for people to ask the experts questions about the new test and the new register being set up to provide riders with approved training after they have passed their test. Craig will perform a show as well as help demonstrate the new test.

Graham Shaw, Assistant Chief Driving Examiner for DSA said:

"The new motorcycle test will help to improve motorbike riding skills and produce better, safer riders.

This is one of a number of initiatives being introduced to help in reducing the number of casualties amongst motorcyclists."

The test will involve an 'off road element' conducted in a safe environment at purpose built Test Centres.

The rider will have to successfully complete a number of exercises designed to test competence in machine control and observation, including an exercise designed to test the rider's ability to avoid a collision.

Once the rider has passed this element they will then be taken out on road to complete the remainder of the test.

The experts will also be joined by Devitt Insurance Services Ltd., specialists in motorcycle & motorcycle training insurances. Instructors at the event will be able to test bikes for their suitability in the industry.

"The event in July will be a perfect opportunity for trainers and the public alike to understand and adapt to the new test," said Graham.

DSA is one of the first Government Agencies to introduce an 'online' booking service. Candidates can book and manage their theory & practical test appointments on line http://tinyurl.com/2mpufc

Further information

Driving Standards Agency (DSA) http://www.dsa.gov.uk
Motorcycle Rider Training Association http://tinyurl.com/3d74pm
National BikeSafe http://www.bikesafe.co.uk

Related articles

New Safety Barrier Helps Bikers http://tinyurl.com/2mvdx6
Safe Biking http://tinyurl.com/37s8az
National Motorcycling Strategy http://tinyurl.com/2v49
IHT website http://www.iht.org.uk

Public Affairs Director Report

MAG UK National Committee Meeting

9th June 2007

A comprehensive report for June some of the items are duplicates from previous reports but there are some updates to report and a reminder of where the issues are located.

The report includes items from FEMA (Federation of European Motorcyclists Associations).

I attended a stakeholder event on the 3rd European Driving Licence Directive, National Motor Vehicle Crime Conference, KillSpills Rally at Donington Park, Into The Valley Rally – worked on the MAG stand, an Ebike Track Day at Rockingham building up contacts with California Superbike School and a FEMA meeting in Spain.

Apart from the usual nitty gritty day to day requests to the office on everything from, how the smoking ban effects MAG Rallys to advice to councils on secure parking, a lot of my time has been taken up with the "relaunch" of MAG, especially regarding the various MAG websites, rather than being seen as the font of all knowledge, my thanks to all those that have the answer to hand or are only a phone call or email away.

I was able to send a draft document I am preparing on motorcycle filtering to a crash investigator which assisted a rider in winning his case.

I am continuing work on the idea of a “Handbook” for politicians.

There has been lots of liaising with the Campaigns Manager David Short, regarding campaigns and press releases and using the “mechanics” of our external communications to get the issues out.

Finally a request, if you have pictures, or on your travels can take pictures of the good and bad regarding the road infrastructure would you forward them to myself. This could be a pot hole, cracks in the road, badly positioned street furniture, lampposts or signs for example. It could be a motorcycle friendly crash barrier, motorcycle parking bay, a bike in a bus lane etc. Digital high resolution pictures are better, these are to be used as a library for MAG/FEMA to use in reports and documents.

Congestion Charging Manchester

As I write this piece I am looking at the consultation regarding Road Price Charging in Manchester which
according to the motorcycle press initially includes the charging of motorcycles. Recent reports in the motorcycle press and local papers that the proposed congestion charging scheme for Manchester, to be submitted to Government later this year, has initial plans to charge motorcycles.

One quote from the above mentioned publications is, "A spokesman for the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) and the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority said today: “Motorbikes will be charged. It will be less than cars but it’s still to be decided how much less.”

A quote from the, Manchester City News June 4th 2007 says, "Manchester will become the first city to charge motorcyclists for using the city's roads under initial plans proposed to the government by transport chiefs.

Motorbikes have been exempt from London’s congestion charge scheme since it was introduced in 2003 due to their low carbon emissions and also because they are not blamed for causing traffic jams.

Other city congestion charging proposals have generally made an exception for two-wheeled vehicles because they do not contribute to jams.

The Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority confirmed that motorbikes would be charged under the initial plans for a pay-as-you-drive system submitted to the government.

Chairman Coun Roger Jones said: "Over the past few days, I have received many emails from people who are not happy about the prospect of motorbikes being charged.

"We are currently in the process of carrying out a consultation about the proposed congestion charging scheme and now is the time for people who drive motorbikes or low emission vehicles to lobby us.

"A firm decision about whether to charge these two categories of motorists has still to be finalised and personally I think that they have a good case not to be charged."

It would appear that Manchester is against the norm, not only in the UK but in the rest of Europe.

I have written to the Greater Manchester Authorities preparing the consultation for confirmation of the charges as motorcycles are not referenced in their documents.

Tony Cox North West Regional Rep is aware and as soon as we get any further details we let you know. Also thanks to those who forward the details and press reports.

In the meantime some details are at http://www.gmfuturetransport.co.uk

**3rd Driving Licence Directive**

In May I attended a stakeholder event regarding the implementation of the directive in 2013.

The event was intended to “kick off” a process of informal discussions over a period of 15 to 18 months before a formal consultation on options on implementing the directive in the UK.

The event was split into three sessions, an overview with questions and answers, “Break Out” Groups, - Motorcycles and Mopeds – Cars and Light Vans – Licence Security and Entitlements – Driving Examiner Qualifications and Training and a closing session of a summary of the issues raised in the break out groups.

Although the first session was chaired by a Helen Morris from the Driver and Vehicle Licence Operators (DVO) and attended by Driving Standards Agency (DSA) and Department of Vehicle Licencing Agency (DVLA), Fred Hackman from the Department of Transport (DfT) appeared to be leading the discussion.

Attending from the European Commission was Alexander Von Campenhausen.

I was able to ask a question during the first session outlining MAG UK’s concerns and although receiving, in my opinion some defensive answers, the Commission representative, on the issue of assessment or testing between licencing categories, commented that the Commission was not concerned on what format the training or “instruction” took. However, as discussed later in the second section workshop the stakeholders made it clear that the training for testing or assessments should be of a certain standard.

Also worrying was the Commission’s representative comment that the power of bigger motorcycles made them more dangerous.

The second session within the break out group on Motorcycling and Mopeds naturally raised more questions that answers.

Suggestions from the Motorcycle and Training Industry where made on two routes to take.

Either to implement the Directive in the UK starting in the Stepped Access regime of AM at 16 years and A1 Licence Light Motorcycle at 16 years. Although still raising the present UK access to an A2 licence to 18years and not the present 17years.

Or if a rider takes the direct access to A1 or A2 this would qualify the rider for a “provisional” licence for the next category. E.g. Take an A1 licence test the rider could ride an A2 category motorcycle. Provisional licence would mean that the rider could not take a passenger.

This was seen as complementing the commissions stepped access regime, giving young riders an incentive to move through the categories to a full A licence.

It was commented that only a 100 people take a full moped test in the UK and that in today's traffic riding a moped can be “ Risky” because of their small size and power. Letting young riders have access to slightly larger machines would be an advantage, with the correct training, bearing in mind that riders in the UK must take a Compulsory Basic Training Course (CBT) (practical test) before further training or testing.
The UK will be reviewing its CBT for a more comprehensive course which perhaps include a better understanding of the Highway Code. Comment was made that the Highway Code should be “taught” in schools before young people are the age to ride /drive a vehicle.

The DSA who will lead on the implementation of the Directive would be looking for training/assessment between the licence categories and NOT a test. As the requirements in the directive are for a minimum of 7 hours the DSA would look for a specific training course perhaps over a two day period.

Regarding the minimum test vehicles that driving schools would have to use the motorcycle and training industry raised concerns as the directive as it stands would suggest that the training schools would have to equip (buy) a new fleet of motorcycles.

The reply was that annex regarding this and the comitology process would not take place until 2009. From my understanding the two industries would like to see a simple change on the engine sizes (CC) to reflect current models available.

With the complexities of the directive regarding vehicles and riders outside the “common” range of the directive questions were raised on disabled access to the implementation of the directive including testing required in the 2nd Licence Directive, categories and testing for Trikes – Quads.

It was commented that the implementation of the directive in 2013 and thus the understanding by the general public of what licence they require for what vehicle will not be easy, never mind law enforcement agencies (police).

MAG UK flow chart on Licence categories is still available http://tinyurl.com/fjzel pdf

2nd European Driving Licence

To highlight the introduction of the new testing procedures in 2008 Motorcycle rider trainers will get their first opportunity to try out the new bike test for themselves ahead of its introduction in October 2008, as the Motorcycle Rider Trainers Association (MRTA) puts on a special trial event this summer.

Organised in conjunction with the Driving Standards Agency (DSA), the day will enable rider trainers to use an officially laid out test circuit to try out the off-road manoeuvres that will be included in the new two-part test:

- slalom
- figure of eight
- slow ride
- swerve and stop
- emergency stop
- wheeling the bike

This will be the first Event Day to be open to the public as well as the trade. More than 4,000 people are expected to attend.

Meanwhile the Motorcycle Industry has launched its campaign ‘Now’s The Time To Get Your Motorcycle Licence’ to encourage people to take up motorcycling and get their full licence.

“Over the coming months, we plan to raise awareness about the 2DLD legislation and promote the benefits of getting on two wheels in order to motivate those who don't have a full motorcycle licence to get one now.”

For more information www.takeyourbiketestnow.co.uk

Driving Standards Agency website on the New 2008 Test: http://tinyurl.com/2svymu

Link to Test Diagrams http://tinyurl.com/2ma736 pdf

"Safe Motorcycling Through Work" RoSPA

A Guide for employers on how to encourage staff who ride motorcycles (for work, commuting or leisure) to take part in rider assessment and training.

It highlights the scope and business case for employers to promote and/or help to deliver motorcycle safety initiatives.

It is a practical resource designed which is probably most suitable for someone who can act as a 'safer motorcycling champion' within an organisation.

This person may be at any level within the company, but will probably be a keen motorcyclist.

The Guide provides:

- facts and arguments to motivate key decision makers;
- ideas and suggestions on how to engage riders;
- options for promoting the safer motorcycling message;
- useful website links, both locally and nationally;
- information on safer motorcycling schemes;
- advice on how to get started and how to evaluate success; and
- case studies demonstrating 'what works'.

Download the Document http://tinyurl.com/2pl9po 819kb pdf

Brunstrom - Should He Stay Or Should He Go - Now!

MAG UK has fully supported the family of Mark Gibney, the motorcyclist fatally injured in a tragic accident, whose images were disclosed to journalists by North Wales Chief Constable Richard Brunstrom.

Such a crass and insensitive tactic to sensationalise a 'road safety' message without the consent and support of
the family can never be justified under any circumstances.

The public have become used to a certain degree of shock tactics where the police, with full consent of families disclose images to the press to demonstrate the potential consequences of some accidents, drug abuse and other social ills. However, to do so without any consideration of the feelings of the families and loved ones demonstrates a catastrophic lack of judgment and ethical conduct.

MAG UK have been inundated with telephone calls and e-mails from MAG members expressing disgust at the Chief Constables actions, demanding that action should be taken. This abhorrence is also reflected in the wider motorcycling community.

The campaign is managed by David Short - MAG UK Campaigns Manager.

MAG UK set up a poll for motorcyclists to vote Brunstrom and to email MAG using the Feedback Form to register your concerns. MAG UK has written to HMIC, Police Authority and IPCC.

The “family” of Mark Gibney organised a protest ride which took place on Saturday 2nd June at Llandudno.

Campaign website is http://tinyurl.com/2q2ssm

The Good and The Bad - Transport Select Committee Report on the Governments Motorcycle Strategy

MAG UK gave a cautious welcome to the Parliamentary Transport Select Committee’s report on the Governments Motorcycle Strategy published on Thursday 29th March 2007.

Although the report endorses various aspects of the Governments Motorcycle Strategy, MAG UK has severe reservations about the ill informed proposals to review speed limits and power outputs for larger motorcycles in a vain effort to reduce casualties.

MAG UK says that there is no hard evidence to support the notion that curbing power outputs will impact casualty rates. MAG UK will continue to engage with reasoned debate, on this issue to ensure motorcyclists are not disadvantaged in having their choice of machine limited by ill informed policy.

The committee were clearly swayed by ill informed elements of the more strident road safety lobby on casualty rates, curbing power, motorcycle engine sizes and levels of motorcycle engine emissions.

The recommendation by the committee that Government should commission research to, in their words, stimulate a sensible debate, will ensure that we have a proper opportunity to debunk a lot of the myths peddled by some elements of the road safety lobby."

Critical of the levels of emissions from larger motorcycles, the report urges the industry to work with government to reduce levels of pollution. However the committee did not take into account the congestion beating benefits of motorcycles over cars. No matter how economical a car is, when it is stuck or crawling along in a traffic queue it is doing no miles to the gallon with modern motorcycles meeting the latest European standards.

MAG will continue to promote motorcycling and defend the rights of riders to choose motorcycles as their preferred choice of transport. Motorcycles are the answer to social mobility, traffic congestion, and reducing damage to the environment.

Managed by David Short – MAG UK Campaigns Manager who gave evidence at the Select Committee.

The MAG “Hands Off Our Bikes” Campaign is http://tinyurl.com/e5ijgt and the Transport Committee Report http://tinyurl.com/2x5yhb

Bus Lanes - Motorcycling in the Right Lane

MAG UK has welcomed the Government’s Traffic Advisory Leaflet in which it expresses support for facilitating motorcycling as a choice of travel within a safe and sustainable transport framework.

The document lists all the positive points that MAG UK has repeatedly made about the advantages of motorcycling to society in general and now revises former guidance that was biased against the principle of access to bus lanes by motorcyclists.

While final responsibility for bus lane access remains with local authorities, the shift in Central Government advice could prove critical in opening all bus lanes to motorcycles.

View Traffic Advisory Leaflet 2/07 The Use of Bus Lanes by Motorcycles http://tinyurl.com/2pm6sn (PDF 542kb)

Off Road Vehicles (Registration) – Bill

On Friday 3rd March parliament debated the Off Road Vehicles,(Registration) Bill. This is a private members bill brought by Graham Stringer MP for Manchester Blackley. The Bill passed its second reading and has been passed to committee stage.

The Bill has been brought in specifically to tackle the nuisance caused by the irresponsible, anti social and dangerous use of mini-moto motorcycles.

This activity is already illegal and there are sufficient powers to deal with the problem which is highly localised and usually in areas of social deprivation. It is not a nationwide problem; it does not affect all communities.

However, this legislation would adversely affect all off road activities which are properly managed by governing bodies such as the Auto Cycle Union.

It would place bureaucratic burdens on law abiding people who have a social responsibility and yet it would make no difference whatsoever on those who currently flaunt the law. It is a very blunt instrument, ill thought through, put forward to deal with a very specific problem.

MAG UK are concerned that this bill will fail miserably to achieve its objectives and at the same time create a nightmare for bone fide motorcyclists engaged in off road events.
The Bill received its second reading on Friday 2nd March 2007. The bill was voted through to the committee stage by a significant majority.

A wide ranging group of organisations from all walks of life, which includes the Motor Cycle Industry Association, the National Farmers Union, the Agricultural Engineers Association, the RAC Foundation, the Land Access and Recreational Association, the riders groups MAG and BMF and the Auto Cycle Union have come together in a coalition to lobby against a Parliamentary Private Members Bill.

The MAG UK campaign against this bill is being managed by David Short – MAG UK Campaigns Manager.

You can view the campaign [http://tinyurl.com/35y98u](http://tinyurl.com/35y98u)

**SpillsKill**

MAG UK continues its full support of the Kill Spills campaign and KillSpills is sponsored by our colleagues in the BMF.

For 2007 KillSpills held a completely different event on the 26th May at Donington Park race circuit which coincided with Future Publishing's Bikefest UK event.

In summary, the KillSpills 2007 rally at Donington Park involved the following:

- KillSpills dedicated area with sponsors, supporters, and the manufacturers of diesel spill products;
- The annual KillSpills / BMF Award for “Achievement in reducing diesel spills”
- A world record attempt for the most bikes riding around Donington Park
- Police escorted ride from Number 10 Downing Street TV news stations Fleet Street up the M1 to Donington Race Track

**New KillSpills Diesel Leaflet a Great Success!**

200,000 copies of our diesel safety leaflet (funded and supported by the Department of Transport) have been printed and will be distributed across the UK in the next few weeks.

The leaflet was launched successfully at this year's KS event the 617Ride at BikeFest UK 2007.

Download the leaflet and the KilSpills Annual Report to Government [http://tinyurl.com/3btrgk](http://tinyurl.com/3btrgk)

**Award**

The Highways Agency won the KillSpills / BMF Award for Achievement in Reducing Diesel Spills 2007 in recognition of the work they are undertaking to promote the dangers of diesel spills and motorcycle road safety.

KillSpills said, “Their Heavy Good vehicle video is an inspiration, the anti diesel spill stickers they have distributed to the road haulage community through various police forces is a welcome and very important strategy. Their Great Rides Great Roads video promotes responsible riding and their work with the likes of Handle It or Loose It and the Shiney Side Up partnership does the same. These reasons alone, make the Highways Agency very worthy winners of our award.”

[www.heavygoodvehicle.com](http://www.heavygoodvehicle.com)

There were several awards and acknowledgements at the KillSpills event and none better to Harold Ross who distributes high quality materials that have been thoroughly tested, resulting in products that provide the most cost effective way to clean, absorb, treat and dispose of used oil, gas, grease and other petroleum based products.

Harold promotes the use of “Oil Sponge” and has developed a “Spill Station”. In MAG’s opinion all garage forecourts should have a “Spill Station” which cleans up spillage with a minimum of fuss and is superior in every aspect to any amount of sand thrown down.

View “Oil Sponge” at [www.rossenvironmental.co.uk](http://www.rossenvironmental.co.uk)

After this years rally and the inclusion of the KillSpill team on the relevant sub groups of the National Motorcycle Council delivering the Government’s National Motorcycling Strategy.

The team are now seen as the legitimate voice of riders on diesel spills.

Further information - up-to-date news - information - latest report to government go to [www.killspills.org.uk](http://www.killspills.org.uk)

**Invincible or Invisible?**

MAG UK has involved in the delivery of the Department for Transports (DfT) latest Think! road safety campaign.

The campaign DfT makes a good pictorial point about the limits of a car’s mirrors, but goes on to make some worrying noises about what we should be wearing.

“The second thing is something you should take into account before you start your engine – your clothing. Wearing helmet to heel in black might suit your style, but it makes it much harder for other drivers to spot you. Headlights, reflective gear or a vibrantly coloured helmet could make all of the difference to when other road users see you.”

However the overall message to motorcyclists is favourable, “First up, make safety your primary concern and ride with the expectation that you won’t be seen – the majority of motorcycle incidents happen at road junctions, 65% of these often fatal incidents occur when a driver fails to notice a bike, so if you’re unsure that another motorist hasn’t spotted you, steer on the side of caution.”

“Decent gear and awareness at junctions are clear signs of a good rider. Other road users may be a lot less impressed by speeding and overtaking.”

The campaign also advises to take further training or rider assessment programmes.

Download the poster [http://tinyurl.com/2w879q](http://tinyurl.com/2w879q) pdf

**MAG Comment**

MAG UK policy has always been opposed to the idea of compulsion on clothing standards, not that is being
proposed here of course but historically, the success of voluntary use campaigns has been followed by legislation.

Few things are more dangerous than feeling safe, yet anecdotal evidence suggests that riders do feel they are safer when using headlights in daytime and wearing bright clothes.

Believing you’re invisible seems like the most realistic attitude to adopt.

The empty mirror would still be empty if the out of shot rider was dressed like a clown.

The Perpetual Learners

MAG UK’s Regional Rep in Scotland, Steve Wykes gives a perspective on the “peak” of Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) that are presented especially in the press at the start of the biking season.

What can be done to reduce this problem?

Part of the solution has to be to ensure that those that are perpetual learners, due to laying off their bikes, use their bikes more frequently minimising the time that they are off the road.

This requires positive measures to encourage use though out the year for commuting and other trips, rather than just for a sunny Sunday blast.

Perhaps a little controversial here, but a possible solution for those who continue to lay their bikes up might be a refresher course at the start of the season.

If this could be encouraged on a voluntary basis with help from the training industry i.e. free or heavily subsidised so that cost is minimal then this could reduce the early season “carnage”.

Think! Motorcycle Academy

MAG UK has been involved through the National Motorcycle Council (NMC) with the ideas and setting up of this years Think! Motorcycle Academy.

The Academy attends at the British Superbike rounds with an interactive mobile road safety unit which motorcycling fans can visit to meet their racing heroes and receive advice about road safety from experts.

The academy website offers advice to riders and has a video section including a video on “Hazard awareness urban hazards highlighted LIVE ACTION”.

The website is at www.thinkmotorcycleacademy.co.uk

Fill It In

As reported in MAG UK’s Februarys report to FEMA, MAG UK has launched its report a road hazard website http://fill-it-in.mag-uk.org

The website pulls together all the reporting facilities in the UK on Road Faults.

The Highways Agency and Local Councils have signed up to take part in the “Handle It Or Lose It -Report a Road” facility

From their website;

Do you ever come across a situation where you feel that the road is particularly hazardous to you as a motorcyclist?

Perhaps you’ve had a crash, near-miss, or scary moment where you feel that, even riding carefully and sensibly, there was an issue with the road that you felt was a factor in your incident.

Ever felt that no-one in the Highways Authorities is listening to you as a rider?

Well, now’s your chance to make a difference.

The Highways Agency and local Councils have signed up to take part in our “Report a Road” facility.

They want to hear from you, as a rider, about roads where you feel there is a design or maintenance issue that particularly affects motorcyclists.

Why?

Because two-wheelers have specific needs that many other vehicles don’t have, and the information-base for highways engineers about how bikes are affected by road conditions is fairly small.

They want you to tell them exactly where there is a problem, and exactly why it may be a problem for riders. Your information could make for a speedier response and solution, and it could also make for a cleverer solution

Report a road http://tinyurl.com/2uuev

30th Brum Demo

MAG UK’s West Midlands Region is organising its 30th Brum Demo and MAG National Demo on 7th July 2007.

In association with “The Heart Of England Rally” MAG UK is asking riders to:

Join us in campaigning against the monumental threat of road pricing and all it stands for.

New schemes such as EVSC and Driving Licences, Traffic measures, Congestion charges in most cities, the lack of secure parking, Stalling on bus lane usage, Multi occupancy car lanes.

These and more are all proposed for the very near future.

The message is to make Councils and Government see that motorcycling is a viable alternative.

West Midlands Eddie Lowe is looking for volunteer marshals. If you can help give Eddie a call on 07970 303528

Federation of European Motorcyclists Associations (FEMA)

Since my last report regarding FEMA I have attended a FEMA Executive Committee meeting in Brussels and the FEMA “spring” meeting hosted by our colleagues Asociacion Mutua Motera www.mutuamotera.com at Granada in Spain.
MAG UK is planning to host the FEMA "spring" in 2007. Next year will be the 20th Anniversary of FEM/FEMA and some special events are being planned to celebrate.

The FEMA secretariat or to be more precise FEMA’s General Secretary – Aline Delhalye, Campaigns Officer – Virginie Peters, Administration Officer - Christina Gesios continue to represent riders’ interests to the fullest extent in Europe and providing knowledge on the issues that ultimately affects motorcycling in the UK.

Joining the “team” is Elaine Hardy as FEMA’s Research Officer, Elaine was until recently MAG UK’s Research Officer. As FEMA’s Research Officer, her task is to actively involve FEMA in EU (European Union) research projects. The aim of this involvement is to strategically place FEMA within these EU projects to ensure that the views of riders are considered and respected. The objective is to position FEMA as a leader of the motorcycle research community and as a point of reference within the EU institutions.

Perhaps part of this involvement should be to “educate” individuals regarding motorcycles within these research projects, for example did you know that a motorcycle has a “steering wheel”?

The FEMA General Secretary has moved forward regarding an issue that I brought up at meetings several times, that is FEMA’s external communications to politicians and EU Institutions, this will include the relaunch of FEMA’s newsletter.

Aline has also started an internal communication document to FEMA’s National Organisations (NO’s) called “Newswire”, I have inserted some of items below and added MAG UK comments, which are for the public domain and includes links to FEMA documents and some issues that NO’s are facing.

NOTE: Regional Reps if you require a copy, to view the more detailed aspects of the work that FEMA is preparing the groundwork, please email me.

As they say in Spain - muchas cervezas por favor

Directive Infrastructure - Lobby at the Parliament to support the Directive

A strong opposition was raised in the TRAN Committee against the Directive on Road Infrastructure Safety Management, particularly from the Group of the EPP (conservatives) which simply wanted to reject it all together.

FEMA representatives and NOs contacted several MEPs and lobbied at the European Parliament to support the Directive. A FEMA position paper has been developed and sent to MEPs. FEMA (together with other stakeholders) managed to delay the decision to beginning of June.

Swedish MEP Inger Segelström (Rapporteur for the Committee of Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs), proposed a series of amendments underlying the importance of the Directive, especially for more vulnerable road users. Unfortunately, they were not accepted.

The lobbying platform Mobility for Prosperity in Europe (MPE) set up by Ari Vatanen, organised an event on the issue in the European Parliament on 14 May. FEMA was invited to present motorcyclists’ views. FEMA hopes that the Directive will be accepted, even with a revised and least satisfactory text.

White Paper on Transport - Lost cause for Motorcyclists

The Mid-Term Review of the White Paper on Transport was adopted in the TRAN Committee on 8th May: 31 votes to 4 with no abstention.

FEMA disapproves that the Review does not take motorcycling into account.

The deadline for proposing amendments was 1st March 2007. Positive contacts had been established with MEP Inés Ayala Senders (Socialist) in order to propose an amendment mentioning motorcycles.

MEP Dieter-Lebrecht Koch (PPE) proposed an amendment mentioning motorcycles. FEMA office got in touch with him in order to show its support. However, the amendment was not accepted.

Green Paper on Urban Transport: Better integration for PTW’s in cities?

The fourth and last Technical Workshop which took place on 16th May in Brussels marked the end of the preparation phase of the Green Paper (GP) on Urban Transport. FEMA actively took part to the consultation.

A position statement underlying the many advantages of PTW’s (Powered Two Wheelers) has been developed and sent to the European Commission. FEMA regards the preparation of the GP as an opportunity to integrate PTW’s and to recognize their role and importance in European cities.

The Commission will be writing up the Green Paper in June-July 2007, for adoption in autumn. It will be followed by a new consultation phase during winter 2007/08-spring 2008. FEMA will ensure that motorcycling is taken into account.

Blind Spot Mirrors: TRAN Committee adopts retrofitting of mirrors to HGVs

The Directive covers heavy lorries in operation since 2000. Light goods vehicles and buses are not covered by the directive but MEPs called for this question to be reviewed in future.

The deadline for retrofitting is set to 31st March 2009.

FEMA welcomes the directive of the Commission which is aimed at improving the safety of all road users and specifically the most vulnerable ones

Third Driving Licence Directive (3DLD): Time to act at national level

Following the adoption of the 3DLD end of last year, Member States have already started preparing the implementation of the directive at national level. FEMA NO’s – SMC (Sweden), MAG NL (Netherlands) and MAG

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UK informed the FEMA secretariat about preliminary contacts with road authorities and parliaments. The EC is still supposed to provide MS (Member States) with guidelines on how to best implement the directive. Negotiations with national road authorities’ experts under the comitology procedure are supposed to start soon. FEMA will try to adapt the training scheme based on the results of the IRT project (Initial Rider Training).

Guardrails: A complex issue and ways forward still to be defined

From recent contacts with LIER’s General Director (INRETS Road Equipment Test Laboratory of France uses state-of-the-art technology to accredit road-safety devices), FEMA’s Secretary General learnt that both Spanish standard and French protocol were complementary rather than opposite. Aline was also told that a second important aspect of the problem was lying in the fact that the dummy (Crash Test) used by both (and any other) tests did not comply with motorcyclist characteristics.

Conclusion to be drawn: whatever the test, as long as the dummy used does not represent a motorcyclist, no sound resolution should be supported as being the solution for motorcyclist protective guardrails.

Several research projects and research proposals are working on various aspects of the motorcycle guardrail problem. FEMA is trying to coordinate the work undertaken in order to have useful data to be introduced at CEN level (CEN, the European Committee for Standardization – http://www.cen.eu).

FEMA will attend first CEN/TC226 in June.

Noise: Time for the whole motorcycle community to get involved

Motorcycle riding, whether in everyday use or in sports, is under increasing pressure in many countries, especially in areas with a high population density. The sound produced by some motorcycles is perceived as noise by a lot of people, among whom legislators who are calling for stricter type-approval regulation, which will affect both the design and the cost of future motorcycles. In addition, because of PTW noise, motorcycling progressively becomes socially unacceptable.

The noise problem raises once more law makers’ attention towards motorcycling “problems”, generating even more negative messages towards the general public.

Stricter type-approval regulation will not provide a solution. The motorcycle community therefore agrees about the need to address the motorcycle noise problem as soon as possible and raise awareness about the real challenges to reduce noise levels and not motorcycle sound.

Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS): Better with us than without

New intelligent transport technologies are being developed and will be applied to all motorised vehicles in the future.

It is therefore vital for motorcyclists to be part as soon as possible and closely follow these developments in order to provide data and ensure that the views of riders are considered and respected.

To this end, FEMA is following the e-safety forum and monitoring its main conclusions. Besides this, FEMA is actively involved in research projects where FEMA will be able to define riders’ needs and ensure that new ITS developments for motorcycles correspond to FEMA’s main principles.

INTELLIGENT TRANSPORT SYSTEMS

FEMA calls for the needs of motorcyclists to be taken into account during the design, development and implementation of ITS-based traffic management systems to ensure that motorcycles are not excluded by default.

We oppose any ITS which takes control from the rider.

We support the development of ITS-based information systems suitable for motorcycling applications.

We oppose the use of ITS for the purpose of unwarranted surveillance.

http://www.fema.ridersrights.org/mission.htm

MAG UK Campaign “EVSC - ISA - No To Throttle Control - No To Control” - http://tinyurl.com/e5jgt

Tunnel Safety: Not at the expense of motorcyclists’ right to use them!

FEMA was alerted by FFMC (French NO) about the A86 tunnel to be prohibited to motorcyclists. A conference organized at the European Parliament by EuroTAP to promote tunnel safety was a unique occasion for FEMA GS to “feel the temperature” and make sure that tunnel safety key contacts were aware of the fact that, if this was to become common practice, this would not be tolerated by FEMA.

Most of them found the idea rather illogical and did not understand the arguments provided as justifications by French tunnel authorities. ASECAP (European professional Association of operators of toll road infrastructures – http://www.asecap.com) promised to introduce its French member to FEMA at their next conference to further discuss the issue.

More info on:
http://www.eurotestmobility.com/eurotappub.php

Research

After receiving the approval from its Member Associations (February Committee Meeting), FEMA actively looked for practical solutions to ensure FEMA’s strategic involvement in motorcycle-related EU Research Projects (7th Framework Programme).
The aim of this participation is to place the organisation within these projects to ensure that the views of riders are considered and respected.

The objective is to position FEMA as a leader of the motorcycle research community and as a point of reference within the EU institutions.

The EU 7th research framework programme was launched early February 2007. With this framework, the EU gives new guidelines for the research work to be undertaken by the whole research community – comprising not only research institutes and academics, but also the private sector and civil society organizations, such as FEMA.

Framework programmes are major milestones in EU policies as they define priorities to the research sector according to the various objectives the EU tries to reach.

As far as transport is concerned, it is clear that the EU is financing more and more research towards intelligent systems which would help them to fight congestion, improve road safety and reduce all environmental costs (emissions, noise, and other nuisances).

Aware of the challenges and the general trend to either include motorcycles in what’s being designed for 4-wheelers or to develop new technologies that do not take motorcycle characteristics and motorcyclists’ needs into account, the FEMA committee agreed that it was of political interest to be part of as many motorcycle-related research projects as possible to try to influence at best their outcomes.

To this end, FEMA has been participating to the preparation of 5 proposals

**Mobility for Prosperity in Europe event**

Focusing on Road Safety: “The Integrated Approach to Road Safety”, the event expanded participants’ knowledge about issues of road safety and tried to offer solutions to undertake concrete actions to reduce the number of fatalities on European Roads.

It was a unique opportunity to defend the Directive on Road Infrastructure Safety and Management discussed in the Parliament.

The FEMA General Secretary was invited as a panellist and offered a brief but convincing presentation on the need to improve road infrastructure to reduce motorcyclists’ accidents.

The TV crew which followed the FEMA team for a report on lobbying was present at the event.

More info on:


FEMA presentation:

http://tinyurl.com/36k3es

**FEMA Recent Position Statements/Press releases**

DRL – 3 April 2007

http://tinyurl.com/2mgno9

Infrastructure – 19 April 2007

http://tinyurl.com/35v79j

Green Paper on Urban Transport – 30 April 2007:

http://tinyurl.com/2uzxug

**MEP Ride**

The preparations for the 11th MEP are well underway.

MEPs from Germany and Sweden have already accepted to be patrons of the event and we are waiting for a response from MEPs in the UK and Portugal.

A special MEP Ride Logo has been developed, preparation of the poster is evolving and a MEP Ride website will be available by 25 June.

Where: Strasbourg

When: Wednesday 5 September 2007 - Ride starting at 7pm

Main themes:
- Green Paper on Urban Transport
- European Agenda for Motorcycle Safety

Key “lobby” moments:
- Before departure: Message on driving licence
- Arrival at the restaurant: advantages of motorcycling
- Cocktail: Power Point Presentation on Infrastructure problems

If you are interested in taking part in the ride, representing MAG UK and to find out what will be involved please contact myself

Trevor Baird Director Of Public Affairs (MAG UK)

Tel: +44 (0)1788 570065
Fax: +44 (0)1788 570052
Email public-affairs@mag-uk.org

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**Campaign Manager Activities**

**Membership Membership Membership**

Forgive me for starting my article with this mantra but I will keep banging on about it. Now we have relaunched the MAG ‘brand’ at the Farmyard party adverts will start appearing in various motorcycle journals. They are very impactive and tailored to meet the different audiences that buy the range of magazines.

It would be nice to think that the advertisements and the profile of MAG in itself with bring in the membership but it never works like that.

This is where you, the membership, can have a real influence by being proactive in recruiting members. Remember, if we all renew our membership and each just recruits one member we will achieve an increase of 100% by this time next year.

We should all be very encouraged by the positive feedback we received at the Farmyard at the new look
MAG. Some people said they were joining MAG on the strength of it. Hooray! This is one part of the overall marketing strategy that I have been busy project managing as an add on to my ‘day job’

**MAG and riders rights at the Centenary TT**

In the first two weeks of June I was on my annual pilgrimage to the Mecca of motorcycling that is the TT races, this year made so much more special because of the Centenary celebrations. I was taking part in a conference celebrating the Heritage, culture and place of the TT and I gave a presentation on ‘the spectators perspective’ and the role of MAG within rider’s rights. The audience was made up of international academics from as far as the USA and New Zealand, representatives from leading manufacturers including Honda and Manx government officials. Apparently I went down well and I have invitations to give presentations in the USA New Zealand at conferences that are being arranged. You can’t beat spreading the word of MAG!

**Off Road Registration Bill**

I am sworn to silence on this one at the moment as the passage of the Bill is at a very sensitive stage. I have had one to one meetings with various MP’s and shadow ministers, including a meeting with the transport secretary himself.

In the company of Craig from MCIA, Dave Luscombe from to ACU and representatives from the National Farmers Union we were invited to meet the transport secretary in his offices at the DFT. As soon as I can report back on detail I will, but suffice to say that time is rapidly running out for Graham Stringer’s bill. Watch this space.

**Companies banning employees from riding bikes in the course of their employment.**

I reported in May’s Network of this development and the fact that I was making representations to RoSPA to ensure that motorcycling issues and effective risk management were being properly considered.

I am pleased to report that I have been asked to be a ‘motorcycling champion’ to inform risk management strategies. My first meeting is in mid July so hopefully I can report something positive in the next issue.

**Transport Forums**

On the evening of 20th June I went to Sheffield Police HQ for a meeting with county road safety officer, police, and representatives from BMF, IAM and motorcycle trainers to inform their motorcycle casualty reduction policies. Our very own Andy Timms and Chrissie Wood from MAG Sheffield attended and will be providing the continuity within the forum. All in all a good meeting and reassuring to find that the chair and road safety officer is a biker himself.

I have been to a number of these county forums now and I am encouraged to find that where bikers get involved we really can influence policy in a positive way. If you want to get involved make a telephone call to your county road safety officer. Their details can be found on your local authority web site. Councils are very keen to be ‘inclusive’ and to ‘consult’ so you should find them receptive. If not, or you simply want some advice on how to deal with them let me know, I am only a phone call away.

**Humber Bridge Tolls**

Wayne Rooney from East Yorkshire MAG and I had a very positive meeting with Peter Hill the Bridge master on the Humber Bridge. I have reported this in full in the latest edition of the road but suffice to say we persuaded Mr Hill to recommend to the Bridge board to install a toll free lane for the exclusive use of motorcyclists when the tolling system is renewed.

This will take place within the next five years. In the meantime and to ensure this commitment isn’t ‘lost’ in the translation Wayne and I have been invited to be members of the Humber Bridge tolls stakeholder group. This provides us with the opportunity to keep the pressure up. A result and I suspect an opportunity to celebrate when it all comes to fruition!

**Chief Constable Richard Brunstrom**

As you will have seen from last months Network I sent a letter of complaint on behalf on MAG and the wider motorcycling community to the Independent Police Complaints Authority and others regarding the actions of Brunstrom. I have received a letter of acknowledgement and I am assured the inquiry will be concluded very soon, but not in time for this edition. No doubt the result will be published in MCN for you all to read first hand.

**Roads Policing**

Despite the police service commitment to Bike Safe and the nationally agreed Motorcycle enforcement policy there are still far too many examples of Forces not adhering to these agreed policies. In particular North Yorkshire has ‘opted out’ of the enforcement policy and seems to be nailing bikers for everything and anything. Fortunately North Yorkshire has just had a change of Chief Constable and I have written a letter seeking a meeting to ‘help inform their policies’. I know the new Chief and I am confident we can make an impact here. Sadly I know where the problem lies, like most things it boils down to personalities and prejudice.

**Talking of Prejudice!**

Last week Pete Walker, Prince of Yorkshire and Farmyard ‘Grand Master’ put up a sterling performance at the South Derbyshire licensing sub committee which was discussing the proposed Donnington park camping event for the Motoggp. Despite a smear campaign promoted by one of the residents the council quite rightly granted the licence in favour of MAG. Unfortunately the timing of the hearing was too close to the event to run the risk of having to commit finance in case the hearing had not gone our way.

I was involved in a live debate on the issue on radio Derbyshire, going head to head with one Bob Wheat who was the main instigator of the smear campaign against the bikers. We can rightly claim a moral victory and the interviewer was sympathetic to our cause and was giving bob Wheat some stick. Well done Pete, I told them we would be back next year!
Parliamentary Transport Select Committee – Governments response

Finally, it is with satisfaction that I report on the outcome of the government’s response to the parliamentary transport select committee’s enquiry into the Governments Motorcycle Strategy. It has been a lengthy process including preparing a report, written evidence, and a hearing on behalf of MAG. Attending the hearings and giving evidence. Commenting on the select committees recommendations and, finally, receiving the government’s stated position. The full details are available as a MAG press release including the government's response outlining the responses. Overall a positive result for motorcycling and not a lot of fears regarding remote speed controls.

Well that’s it for a couple of weeks. As of tomorrow morning my partner Suzie and I fly out with twenty other Ducatisti to Ancona in Italy to be reunited with our bikes, which we have shipped out ahead of us, for a week of total motorcycling indulgence that is the World Ducati Week, a festival based around the Misano race circuit. If nothing else my objective is to recruit the twenty as new MAG members which will add to the ten I managed to recruit at the Isle of Man TT races a couple of weeks ago.

Bike Safe, Ride Free
David
Campaigns Manager

POLICE CHIEF "OUT OF TOUCH WITH REALITY" ON ROAD POLICING

Meredyth Hughes (Head of Road Policing for the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO)) claimed that the ABD have "encouraged drivers to believe that there is something inherently wrong with enforcing the law" (Times article 23 May). Hughes was announcing attempts to counter the increasing determination of the British motorist to fight speeding tickets through the courts - something that has been happening with more and more success as a groundswell of opinion has swung against speed cameras.

The ABD supports the enforcement of sensible laws against people who are causing danger to themselves and others. What is "inherently wrong" is the creation of bad laws which criminalise reasonable behaviour - laws which only exist because they can be enforced automatically.

ABD Chairman Brian Gregory said "Once again, ACPO have shown that they fail to understand what law enforcement is for in a democracy. Even the camera partnerships do not dare claim that laws should be enforced purely for their own sake - it's supposed to be justified by safety. It's supposed to have reasoning behind it. But it doesn't, and that's why people are fighting speed camera tickets with everything they have."
drivers and criminals, but as an enemy that is out to get them. They are raising their children to think the same."

Brian Gregory concluded: "I regret to say that Hughes' comments show that the police no longer police Britain's roads with the consent of the public."

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**HIGHLY VISIBLE CAMERAS**

Work is being carried out to make sure that all roadside safety cameras in Avon and Somerset are clearly visible to drivers.

The Safety Camera Partnership, working with its local authority partners, wants to ensure that none of the fixed cameras is obscured by trees or bushes which have grown up in recent months.

Workmen are trimming back foliage so the yellow-painted cameras can be easily seen by road users.

Superintendent Andy Pullen, head of the Road Policing Unit of Avon and Somerset Police - one of the partners in the Safety Camera Partnership - said: "These roadside cameras were installed to deter drivers from driving too fast on stretches of road where there have been injury collisions in the past so it is important that drivers can see the cameras well in advance so they can adjust their speed if necessary."

"We don't want to prosecute drivers. We want them to keep within speed limits. This will reduce the risk of a collision in which they, their passengers or other road users could be killed or seriously injured."

Supt Pullen said the public could help by reporting any camera which was obscured by foliage to the partnership on 01823 423430.

The strict rules on the use of safety cameras have recently been relaxed by the Government with the launch of the new road safety partnerships.

But the Safety Camera Partnership for Avon and Somerset says it will continue to operate under the old guidelines and has no intention of using "hidden" cameras.

Fixed camera housings will continue to be painted bright reflective yellow and will be visible to a driver from at least 60 metres where the speed limit is 40mph or less, and 100 metres in areas with higher speed limits.

Mobile camera vehicles will be distinctively marked to make them conspicuous to drivers.

The areas in which cameras operate – both fixed and mobile – are clearly signed in advance with the familiar black and white camera silhouette signs.

There are 68 fixed roadside cameras and Avon and Somerset, with mobile cameras being used at another 183 locations.

Cameras have also been installed at 42 busy road junctions to deter drivers from "jumping" red lights.

During the past four years there has been a 24 per cent reduction in the number of casualties on roads covered by cameras.

Further information about the location of cameras with maps and the collision history, can be seen on the Safety Camera Partnership’s website - www.safecam.org.uk

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**TOO MANY DEFECTIVE SPEEDING PROSECUTIONS**

According to the Times, The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) will send a crack defence team to prosecute drivers who dare to challenge their speeding fine.

Safe Speed says that ACPO is merely upping their bluff. The biggest bluff of all is that the resources do not exist to prosecute every speeding case. If drivers stopped accepting fixed penalties the system would collapse in weeks. This is the real reason for the ever increasing 'bluff and bluster' tactics - they need to force us into paying fixed penalties because neither the courts nor the CPS can possibly cope with much of an increase in cases.

Paul Smith, of SafeSpeed.org.uk, said: "This action by ACPO is a dirty trick - they are attempting to put access to justice beyond the pocket of ordinary drivers. They are effectively saying - 'you are guilty because we never make mistakes'. But the newspapers are full of Police mistakes, and, to make matters worse, one of the key pieces of police prosecution equipment is downright dodgy. So dodgy, in fact, that it has been christened the 'dodgyscope' by Internet users."

According to The Times (verbatim quote): {Mr Hughes said: "I respect competent lawyers who go through the evidence on behalf of their client. My job is to make sure the prosecution case is as robust as the defence."}

He criticised anti-camera groups such as Safe Speed and the Association of British Drivers, which encourage drivers to challenge speeding tickets.

"What these groups have done is encourage people to believe that there is something inherently wrong with enforcing the law.")

Paul Smith replied: "What is wrong, Mr Hughes, is the overzealous application of a law that simply isn't up to the job. You are damaging confidence in the justice system, the Police / public relationship and road safety itself. You can't even comply with the speed limit yourself, because you recently had 6 driving licence points for speeding."

"We encourage drivers to investigate the case against them. I would go as far as to say that MOST speeding cases are DEFECTIVE on the prosecution side. If you dig deep enough a fatal defect is quite likely to emerge. If you know you were not speeding according to law, or you do not know who the driver was at the time of the alleged offence then you are likely to have a winnable case."

"The whole thing has become a petty war of technicalities with ACPO and the Police throwing ever increasing resources against an increasingly untrusting
public. In this ridiculous war road safety has been forgotten. Mr Hughes may well claim that the law is on his side but however much he may bleat about the law the fact is that millions upon millions of speeding prosecutions are not saving lives on the road. It isn't 'the law' that matters most here, Mr Hughes, it's the number of roads fatalities. You should know better."

Motorist's Prosecution Checklist:

- The speed limit must be correctly signed in accordance with the regulations (Folly Bottom, Wylye, North Wales, Cleveland, Starcross and others)
- A speed limit order must apply correctly to the location in question. (Lincolnshire, London, North Wales and others)
- The paperwork must be correct and in accordance with all laws and regulations. (Dorset, Cleveland)
- The paperwork must be delivered on time
- The Notice of Intended Prosecution (NIP) cannot be served by second class post. (South Wales)
- Papers to issue a summons must be laid within 6 months of the date of alleged offence.
- The equipment must be calibrated correctly.
- The operator must use the equipment in accordance with rules and guidelines.
- The operator must form a prior opinion of speed in excess of a speed limit.
- Arguably only a Police constable is qualified to form a prior opinion of speed in excess of a posted speed limit.
- Communications equipment must be switched off while measurements of speed are taken (including the operator's mobile phone).
- The site must be suitable (restrictions include near power lines)
- The equipment must be working properly.
- Evidence must be disclosed to the defence 7 days before the trial on request or it becomes inadmissible.
- If you don't know who the driver was at the time of the alleged offence you may well have a statutory defence in RTOA1988 S172(4) as amended
- The court must be impartial (And since the Magistrate's Court Service are usually a camera partnership member it is far from clear that the court has the required degree of impartiality.)
- The process must not breach your Human Rights (A 'right to silence' case is ongoing awaiting verdict at the ECHR at Strasbourg.)
- In the case of Gatso fixed speed cameras the transit of the calibration marks in the two photographs must match the speed recorded by the radar speed meter.
- The prosecution must turn up in court with the correct paperwork.
- Witness statements cannot be signed by machine. (North Wales)
- The LT120.20 (common laser speed meter used in virtually all mobile speed camera vans) is subject to various operating anomalies, notably 'slip effect'.
- A failure in any of these areas will usually be fatal to a prosecution case.

The Times today: [http://tinyurl.com/2eytv](http://tinyurl.com/2eytv)

SAFE SPEED'S 'SCRAP SPEED CAMERAS WEEK' LAUNCHED ON SUNDAY 24TH JUNE.

Let's have the facts out on the table.
- Road deaths haven't fallen as expected
- Road crash hospitalisations haven't fallen for a decade
- Speed camera benefit claims are dominated by a statistical blip
- Speeding is endemic, yet only 5% of injury crashes involve ANY speeding vehicle
- Speed cameras come with a vast catalogue of adverse side effects.
- Department for Transport cancelled their side effects research
- The word 'speed' is used officially with multiple overlapping meanings and has clouded the thinking and the debate
- Driving too fast is dangerous, but that's not the same as exceeding a speed limit
- Driver quality is the foundation of all road safety - but DfT policies are making it worse.
- Road safety isn't mainly about physics. It's mainly about road user psychology.

Paul Smith, of SafeSpeed.org.uk, said: "We've launched 'Scrap Speed Cameras Week' for one reason and one reason only. Speed cameras are making road safety worse. We absolutely must get rid of them to refocus road safety efforts on the things that matter - not the things that are easy to measure."

"Speed cameras have only been supported by dodgy statistics, wishful thinking and false assumptions. They have failed to make our roads safer and now they must go."

"I'm 100% confident that any proper examination of the facts will be forced to conclude that speed cameras have made our roads more dangerous."

"Speed cameras. We hate them. They don't work to make the roads safer, and they have to go."

MOTORISTS LOSE THEIR CASE

As reported in Network in January of last year: [http://www.network.mag-uk.org/jan06p2.html](http://www.network.mag-uk.org/jan06p2.html)

The European Court of Human Rights has accepted eight motorists' applications claiming that S172 of the 1988 Road Traffic Act breaches the right to silence implicit in Article 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

And the verdict [http://tinyurl.com/2tpgd](http://tinyurl.com/2tpgd)

The Court held, by 15 votes to two, that there had been
no violation of Article 6 § 1 (right to a fair trial) of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Idris Francis, (appellant), said: "Today is a black day, not just for British or European drivers but for free people around the world, where the right to silence will be breached not only in motoring law but increasingly in other areas of criminal law."

"By their perverse verdict today, the judges of the ECHR have sent a crude message to law-makers - that the use of threats to secure confessions, and convictions based on those confessions, is acceptable."

"It has been unacceptable in Britain for more than 400 years, and at present remains the case for every type of criminal offence other than modest driving offences - but how long will it be before politicians and judges, having breached this vital principle, start extending it to other offences? What price innocence until proven guilty now, or the necessity for the State to prove it's case beyond reasonable doubt? Why should the police bother to investigate crimes when they can obtain confessions by the use of threats? How many more will confess to crimes they have not committed, because the penalties for not confessing are even worse than for the crime?"

"This defeat is a serious blow, but make no mistake - it was only one battle in the war for freedom and the defeat of tyranny. Our fundamental rights have for some years been under greater threat than ever before, and the fight must go on to defeat and remove from office those who would take away our fundamental freedoms in exchange for supposed protection and security they can never deliver. Depend upon it - this fight is not over, it has only just begun."

"The on-going tragedy of speed camera policy will now roll on, gathering more victims as it goes - despite the now overwhelming evidence that cameras cause far more problems than they solve."

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**DODGY AND DISCREDITED STATISTICS IN RESPONSE TO 'SCRAPCAM' PETITION**

Downing Street has trotted out some dodgy and discredited statistics in response to the 28,000 signatories of the famous 'scrap speed cameras' petition which closed on Tuesday.

The response from the Prime Minister's office in full with Safe Speed comments inserted and marked with a *'*. Thank you for taking the time to register your views about safety cameras on the Number 10 web site.

Speeding kills. It is a contributory factor in 26% of all fatal accidents in Great Britain.

* No it isn't. According to Department for Transport figures exceeding a speed limit it is a contributory factor in 12% of fatal crashes. We know that many of those are caused by reckless and 'abnormal' driver behaviour.

The facts are stark. If a child pedestrian is hit at 30mph they stand an 80% chance of surviving. But if they are hit at 40mph they stand an 80% chance of dying. That is why the Government is committed to achieving appropriate vehicle speeds on the roads as part of its integrated road safety strategy.

* The true facts are more encouraging. In 2005 in built up areas (20, 30 and 40 mph speed limits) 11,000 child pedestrians were injured out of which 47 were killed. 0.42% were killed. So clearly we're not running into them at 'speed limit' speeds because at 30mph we would have killed 2,200. The claim is grossly misleading. [2]

We are succeeding in changing attitudes, and in making drivers realise that one of their responsibilities is to comply with speed limits. The proportion of car drivers who comply with the 30mph limit has greatly increased over the last few years.

* Hardly greatly - and the means of gathering the information changed in the year when the biggest fall was recorded - but that's NO HELP AT ALL when road deaths aren't falling significantly. We don't need more compliance - it's a false objective. We need safer roads. And we aren't getting them.

Safety cameras provide a valuable and cost-effective method of preventing, detecting and enforcing speed and traffic light offences. Their use is based on solid evidence. All reliable research from around the world clearly demonstrates that cameras reduce speeds and save lives.

* Solid evidence? I'm afraid not. The 'evidence' is dominated by statistical errors and a total failure to consider the side effects of the policy.

Independent research (new window), published in December 2005, shows that safety cameras had saved around 1,745 people from being killed or seriously injured, and had prevented around 4,230 personal injury collisions on Britain's roads each year.

* That very same report reveals - buried in appendix h - that 'regression to mean effect' accounts for a full three quarters of the benefit claimed. To make the claim while ignoring the know error is nothing less than a FRAUD.

And while they are saving lives, safety cameras will remain a key part of our road safety strategy.

* They aren't saving lives. That's why they must go. That's why 28,000 signed.

Dodgy statistics won't save lives. The Prime Minister's office needs to do far far better than this.

Official response:
http://www.pm.gov.uk/output/Page12127.asp

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**STOP DNA BY STEALTH - EPETITION REPLY**

We received a petition asking:
"We the undersigned petition the Prime Minister to legislate to require all UK Police forces to delete DNA data from persons not convicted of an offence."

Details of petition:
"The Police, with government support, are building a DNA database without Parliamentary or public consent. This is being achieved by collecting DNA data during the
arrest procedure, and subsequently retaining this information, in perpetuity, even if a person is later released without charge or acquitted. We believe this is an unjustified accumulation of private data by the State, which erodes the presumption of innocence and feeds a culture of authoritarianism."

Read the petition [http://tinyurl.com/ywam9w](http://tinyurl.com/ywam9w)

Petitions home page [http://tinyurl.com/y648un](http://tinyurl.com/y648un)

Government's response [http://tinyurl.com/yt9cda](http://tinyurl.com/yt9cda)

Police powers to take DNA on arrest are laid down by the Police and Criminal Evidence Act. Amendments to this Act to widen these powers in recent years have been made by the normal legislative process requiring parliamentary consent. In 2001, the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 amended PACE so that the police no longer had to destroy DNA taken from people who were acquitted or where charges were dropped; the Criminal Justice Act 2003 widened police powers so that DNA can be taken from anyone arrested for a recordable offence regardless of whether they are later charged or convicted.

While the Government understands that some people are concerned by these powers it firmly believes that they are justified by the additional crimes solved. Sampling persons who have been arrested but not proceeded against has yielded a match with a crime scene in over 3,000 offences including 37 murders, 16 attempted murders and 90 rapes.

The DNA Database does not contain information on criminal records (this is held on the Police National Computer). Someone whose DNA profile is held on the DNA Database but has not been convicted does not suffer as a result - they do not appear in any criminal record checks for job applications and the like, as they do not have such a record.

Further Information

Home Office [http://tinyurl.com/4pgyj](http://tinyurl.com/4pgyj)

The Forensic Science Service [http://tinyurl.com/2enze3](http://tinyurl.com/2enze3)

UNITY RIDE II IS ON

At last! We can announce the Unity Ride will go ahead on 19th August.

Unity II is to be a fun charitable event, creating a positive fitting memorial.

We will start the ride at the Excel Conference Center (East) and we will finish at the Ace I. The ride will be primarily a charity event consisting of marshalled satellite rides from Boxhill, High Beech, the Ace Café, Oakdene Café, Poole, Portsmouth and a few others not yet confirmed, to the Assembly Point at Excel East followed by a ride through central London controlled by Sgt Paul Mostyn and the Met’s BikeSafe team.

The Charities: There will be a £5 registration fee which will go to ‘Help a London Child’, ‘Children in Need’ and The Unity Foundation.

A full descriptions of these will be available on the Unity Ride website: [http://www.unityride.co.uk](http://www.unityride.co.uk)

We will sell t-shirts and memorabilia online and on the day, which should raise additional monies.

**THE RIDE:** The route has been planned and this will be the most extensive ride undertaken through London and should take about 2 hours to complete and will pass through most of the major London landmarks en route to The Ace.

The Sights of London on the Unity Ride Route

- London City Airport
- Thames Barrier
- The Dome
- Canary Wharf
- Lime House Link
- Tower of London
- Embankment
- London Eye
- Houses of Parliament
- Downing Street
- Whitehall
- Trafalgar Square
- Aldwych
- St. Clement Danes Church
- Fleet Street
- St Pauls
- The Bank / Mansion House
- The Monument
- The Gerkin
- London Bridge
- City Hall
- Tower Bridge

Unlike Unity I, we (or anyone else) can no longer marshal the ride in the manor we did before. Instead we have had to develop a scheme to train riders to a standard that is acceptable to the police; The Unity Support Riders (USR’s). These will have taken First Aid Training, Slow and Group Riding Skills Training and a Police assessment. We will this time utilize not only the motorcycle press but also the national and local media to promote the ride and encourage the public to come on to the streets in support of the Unity riders.

So here is what happens next.

1. If you want to be involved in any aspect of the ride, you need to send a personal mail to us via: [http://www.unityride.co.uk](http://www.unityride.co.uk) and make yourself available and then register on the Unity Ride website. There is a forum there where all parts of the Unity Ride are open to discussion or at least viewed, depending on your registration status.

2. We are approaching members of TLB’s to become part of the Organising Team but we are also going to need everyone on this site to contribute in some way, whether it be stewarding the post ride event, making a few phone calls, raising a few quid via sponsors, using your work skills or just giving your opinion.

We can do this!
POLICE SET UP CLUBS FOR MINI-BIKE RIDERS

MINI-MOTORBIKE riders are to get a place to show off their skills under a police attempt to curb illegal off-road riding.

Warwickshire Police is to launch two mini moto clubs for youngsters aged between eight and 16 at Coventry Stadium, Brandon, and in Rugby.

Trained police community support officers will run the clubs with the help of members of the Autocycle Union, so the young bikers can ride their motorbikes legally and safely.

They will also be able to learn new skills.

A launch event will be held at Coventry Stadium – home of Coventry Bees speedway team – next Saturday, June 23.

A second event has been organised for Saturday, July 14, in Overslade, Rugby.

PC Ian Tatton, of the Warwickshire Police Bikesafe team, said: “We want to promote safe biking and that includes the youngsters, too.

“The only place where off-road vehicles can be lawfully ridden is on private land with the express permission of the landowner whether on payment or otherwise.

“This course is designed to test the youngsters’ skills with different bends and obstacles requiring a variety of skills.

“The idea is to provide the kids with an area where they can legally ride the mini motos under expert supervision.”

PC Tatton said many parents mistakenly believed their children were legally allowed to ride mini motos on wasteland.

He said the law prohibits the use of bikes in parks and nature reserves, rights of way and bridle paths.

Every motorbike has to be registered with the DVLA to be used on roads. They must also be taxed and insured and need an MOT certificate if they are more than three years old.

PC Tatton said: “The children will be assessed before they are allowed on the course and basic safety checks will be carried out on the bikes to ensure they are safe.

The launch event will be between 10am and 1pm.

Youngsters don’t need to book but will have to pay a year’s joining fee of £10 to cover insurance. Each event will cost £3.

For more information call Fran Carty on 01788 541 111 or PC Ian Tatton on 01926 415 000.

NOTE: For those of you who have never been in France, all bikers salute each other on the road, usually by pointing two fingers. That’s the way of saying “hi there”:

The small box on the bottom right says "Alcohol and speed are the two main cause of accidents when only the biker is to blame".

A Biker? Where’s the biker?

The small box on the bottom right says "In 70% of all accidents between a motorcycle and a car, the car driver did not see the biker. Look in your mirrors, put on your indicators and turn your head."

http://tinyurl.com/278c49

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7000 SOULS DEFY RAIN

Over 7000 hardy souls braved diabolical weather last weekend to make MAG’s 21st Farmyard Party Motorcycle Rally in North Yorkshire. Despite Met. Office warnings of extreme weather in the region, motorcycle riders poured into Duncombe Park close to the town of Helmsley.

Besides being one of the group’s major fund raisers, this year’s Farmyard Party provided the launch pad for MAG’s new revitalised image.

The site, including the main stage area, was decorated with banners and bunting displaying the new logo and messages which proclaimed MAG as “The Heart and Soul of Biking” and posed the question to people, “Are you passionate enough?”

Significantly, people were queuing up to join MAG. New members and lapsed members were joining because they could see that MAG was broadening its appeal to all bikers of all persuasions.

Over 200 brand new memberships were processed over the weekend.

A testament that the marketing strategy is working.

National Chairman Jane Chisholm explained; “MAG is refreshing its image in order to make a bold statement to all motorcyclists that MAG is here for everyone. Whether you ride a twist and go, step through or the latest sports bike, MAG will represent you”

“Anti biking legislation does not differentiate between motorcycle types, we are all affected and subject to prejudice and misinformation peddled by an anti biking brigade. The relaunch is a wake up call to all...
motorcyclists everywhere to come and join us. This is a most exciting time in the development of MAG."

"Our management has never been more dynamic, innovative and forward thinking. There has never been a better time to be a member of the UK’s leading riders’ rights organisation. Come and join us."

Event organiser Pete Walker applauded the stoic attitude of all those who faced torrential rain. "It’s a real testament to the patrons of the event that they would ride through that, but then again it is the best biker party in Europe."

Campaigns Manager David Short, who has led the marketing and image project with creative marketing company Creo Communications Ltd. reported positive feedback from nearly all at the show who viewed the new logo, images and direction which MAG is taking.

"MAG is confirming its position as the leading rider organisation in the UK" he said. "MAG’s credibility in political spheres is leaping ahead at a time when a strong rider movement is needed more than ever."

1. Further information and high resolution images available from Ian Mutch Tel: 020 8556 6495 Email: theroad@mag-uk.org
2. Picture available at http://tinyurl.com/ytw5lz

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NEW BIKER, 71, DIED OF EXCITEMENT

A 71-year-old man died from excitement the first time he went out on his new motorcycle, says a coroner.

John Parsons, a retired engineer from Barry, Vale of Glamorgan, suffered a heart attack on his 125cc Honda and fell into the path of an oncoming car.

The bike was delivered the day before and he was "very excited" about riding on it, the Cardiff inquest was told.

Recording a narrative verdict, coroner Mary Hassell said Mr Parsons suffered a heart attack while riding his bike.

The inquest was told that Mr Parsons had wanted the bike for years but his wife Myra had prevented him buying one.

Miss Hassell said Mr Parsons had wanted to ride the motorbike for so many years "and when she was alive his wife had put a stop to it, as wives often do". But after her death from cancer last summer, he went ahead and bought the machine to comfort himself.

Recording a narrative verdict, Miss Hassell told the hearing: "He went out doing something that he had wanted to do for so many years."

The hearing was told Mr Parsons suffered chest pains which caused him to wobble and fall under the wheels of a Range Rover on Five Mile Lane at Bonvilston in the Vale of Glamorgan last September.

Range Rover driver Stephen McKay said: "He came off and slid under the wheels of my car.

"There was nowhere I could go. I didn’t stand a chance."

Miss Hassell said: "The excitement was too much for his heart. He went out doing something that he wanted to do for so many years."

"In some ways, what a way to go."

FEMA Directive Infrastructure

Incoherence at the European Parliament!

By rejecting the Directive on Infrastructure, the European Parliament voted against a proposal aiming to save hundreds of lives per year on Europe’s main road network. This decision is not only completely incoherent; it also underlines the influence of powerful Member States, which overlook the needs of less advanced countries in the road safety field. In addition, the voice of road users has completely been ignored. This is a worrying sign for participative democracy.

Too many European roads are unsafe. Thus, the European Commission’s proposal for a directive on infrastructure management was warmly welcomed by road users, particularly motorcyclists. Providing Member States safety management procedures and guidance to ensure that safety is integrated in all phases of road planning, design, construction, operation & maintenance, could indeed drastically reduce the number of road fatalities and help meet the road safety targets set in 2001 (50% reduction of road casualties by 2010).

During the last voting session of 5 June, the Transport Committee however rejected the Directive on Road Infrastructure Safety Management as a whole. Being described as “too bureaucratic” and “too costly”, the directive was eventually judged “unnecessary”!

Yet, the directive was proposed in the context of the European Road Safety Action Programme. It’s mid-term review by the Parliament specifically underlined the problems of motorcycle safety and called for an integrated approach to road safety: “Infrastructure in particular, must be thought and developed considering the needs of all road users including the more vulnerable ones, namely motorcyclists, cyclists and pedestrians.” (EP 2005/2007 report on road safety)

Infrastructure is indeed one of the main contributing factors to Powered Two Wheelers accidents, but motorcyclists are surely not the only ones to benefit from the proposed measures. If the proposed measures were implemented, around 7000 road injuries could be avoided and around 600 lives could be saved every year.

According to the Federation of European Motorcyclists’ Association (FEMA), the directive is an absolute necessity to improve vulnerable road users’ safety, among whom motorcyclists.

The European Parliament obviously steps backward and shows a total lack of political consistency. FEMA wishes to express its strong disappointment and underlines that in this context, it will not be ready to accept any additional restrictive regulation aiming at so-called “motorcycle safety improvement” if the issue of infrastructure is not being addressed.

Besides, FEMA - as all major civil society stakeholders - have been closely involved throughout the consultation process and have clearly expressed their support for the directive. If the role of the Parliament is to reflect the voice and needs of European citizens, this representative role is now to be questioned!

2. In MAIDS study http://maids.acembike.org - the most recent and in-depth European study on motorcycle accident causations - out of over 900 cases throughout Europe, 30% of PTW accidents were due to road surface defects, 10% to inappropriate maintenance, design, road furniture or signs, and 6% to design defects.

3. FEMA detailed position on the Directive on Road Infrastructure Safety Management can be found http://tinyurl.com/yv4xcq

June 18th 2007

CEN recognises the need to revise EU guardrail standard to include motorcyclists After 25 years of continuous fight at national and European level, FEMA finally made Member States recognise the problem of existing road restraint systems with regards to motorcyclists, and made them commit to find a solution.

Thousands of dead and seriously injured motorcyclists, hundreds of demonstrations, numerous presentations, discussions and shouts of anger throughout Europe have been necessary before Member States' representatives recognised the problem caused by guardrails and decided to find a solution.

Road restraint systems in Europe have so far been designed and tested to protect all categories of vehicles, except motorcycles.

This situation has not been amended but rather reinforced with the development of a European standard. Although the standard proved to be inadequate for motorcyclists, Member States rigorously applied it. Motorcyclists immediately denounced the problem, calling for the EU standard (EN1317) to be adapted and to take their specific characteristics into account.

Indeed, when impacting, colliding or simply sliding on a road, motorcyclists are obviously not protected by traditional “road restraint systems”.

On the contrary: these turn into a major additional hazard when the motorcyclist impact the supporting poles.

Aline Delhaye, General Secretary of the "Federation of European Motorcyclists' Associations" (FEMA) attended her first CEN/TC2261 meeting last week in Oslo, Norway, since the association was granted the liaison status last January as representative of European motorcycle riders.

During the meeting, Aline Delhaye managed to explain motorcyclists’ concerns about existing EN1317 standard and currently designed guardrails and convinced TC226 members to start working on the issue of motorcyclist protection with regards to road restraint systems.

In its resolution 287, CEN members unanimously accepted in principle to work on the protection of motorcyclists in respect of road restraint systems and asked the Chairman, the Secretary and the convenor of WG 1, in consultation with FEMA, to prepare the scope for a new work item based on the existing standards, regulations and technical specifications in the CEN member countries”.

CEN/TC226 last week's vote marks a milestone for FEMA and its members in their collective fight to have protective guardrails which do not turn into additional road hazards in the unfortunate case of an accident.

Aline Delhaye says: “The CEN resolution is a great success for the whole rider community and we can celebrate this as a first step towards victory! To obtain such a positive result at our first meeting with CEN members was unexpected.

One would have thought FEMA lobby work would have lasted years before obtaining such positive move forward.

I was particularly pleased to notice a broad understanding and recognition of the problem among TC226 members, which I believe is mostly due to FEMA members' constant work and pressure towards road authorities, standardizing bodies and the general public at national level.”

The next challenge will be to ensure that the work undertaken will not take ages, as it is sometimes the case for EU standards.

Notes to editor:

1. CEN: European Committee for Standardisation - TC226: Technical Committee on "Road equipment"

The CEN, the European Committee for Standardisation, was founded in 1961 by the national standards bodies in the European Economic Community (EEC) and EFTA countries.

Today, CEN is contributing to the objectives of the European Union and European Economic Area with voluntary technical standards which promote free trade, the safety of workers and consumers, interoperability of networks, environmental protection, exploitation of research and development programmes, and public procurement.

On behalf of governments, the European Commission or EFTA Secretariat may request the European Standards organisations to develop standards in support of their policies by issuing formal 'mandates'.

More information on http://www.cen.eu/

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Federation of European Motorcyclists Associations
Rue des Champs 62, Brussels, Belgium

T. +32 (0)2 736 9047
F. +32 (0)2 736 9401

Email: fema@chello.be
Website: www.fema.ridersrights.org
STOLEN MOTORCYCLE

MAG OFFERS CASH REWARD FOR INFORMATION LEADING TO THE CONVICTION OF BIKE THIEVES

PLEASE CAN YOU ADD MY BIKE TO ONE TO LOOK FOR, IT IS SILVER & RED GS ADVENTURE, WITH SILVER BMW PANNIERS(?) & NO MIRRORS.

THE BIKE HAS DONE APPROXIMATELY 18000 MILES.

IT HAS AN EASY TO SPOT GREY & RED SEAT, CHASIS ZH53053.

STOLEN FROM BRISTOL APPROXIMATELY 2AM 26TH JUNE 2007.

THERE IS A PERSONAL REWARD FOR THE SAFE RETURN OF MY PRIDE & JOY (£1000).

MOB 0794834820 OR EMAIL dbelsten@yahoo.co.uk

I AM A MEMBER OF THE BRISTOL BRANCH THAT MEETS AT THE MAYORS ARMS.

DAVID BELSTEN

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Brotton's Rachel revs up to raise some cash

NEMAG’s Teeside fundraiser Rachel Leonard’s plans for a 3,000 mile round the coast of Britain charity bike ride were ruined after a mean thief stole her motorbike.

But now they’re right back on track!

As the Gazette reported, Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) member and L-rider Rachel, 20, of Brotton, parked her metallic blue Honda CG 125cc in Lorne Street, Middlesbrough, on Sunday March 4.

It was double locked, but she was heartbroken after a mean thief stole it. It’s never been seen since.

However, after rethinking her plans and getting some assistance in obtaining a replacement imported bike, Rachel is now getting ready to complete her single handed marathon trek in August.

She said: “I am indebted to Keith Hawk, of Hawk Motorcycles, of Darlington.

“He’s helped me source an imported Superbyke RBP 125cc motorbike and has donated me some panniers and other gear.

“It was very disappointing to have to postpone the trip two months ago due to someone’s greed, but now I’m raring to go!”

Rachel, a trainee chef at a Guisborough pub, will start on her Round Britain Ride on August 10 at Guisborough, finishing at Great Ayton on August 24.

Rachel will raise money for Riders for Health, a charity which helps African medics to ride motorcycles and reach outlying communities and hopes to raise around £3,000.

Anyone who wants to contribute to Rachel’s fund can call 07886 830004, or visit the website www.justgiving/rachels125

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OPEN LETTER TO THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE

From the gloriously titled “The Tyke and Poacher Times,” http://tinyurl.com/2dfwdv the Yorkshire and Lincolnshire newsletter of the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP). It reads as if I have read it before but none the less quite enjoyable for that.

Dear Sir,

My friend, who is in farming at the moment, received a cheque for £3000 from the government for not rearing pigs. I now wish to go into the not rearing pigs business.

In your opinion, what is the best kind of farm not to rear pigs on, and which is the best breed of pigs not to rear? I want to be sure I approach this endeavour in keeping with all Government policies, as dictated by the EU under the Common Agricultural Policy.

I would prefer not to rear bacon pigs, but if this is not the type you want not rearing, I will just as gladly not rear porkers. Are there any advantages in not rearing rare breeds such as Saddlebacks or Gloucester Old Spots, or are there too many people already not rearing these?

As I see it, the hardest part of this programme will be keeping an accurate record of how many pigs I haven’t reared. Are there any Government Local Authority courses on this?

My friend is very satisfied with this business. He has been rearing pigs for twenty years or so, and the best he ever made on them was £1422 in 1968, until this year when he received a cheque for not rearing any.

If I get £3000 for not rearing 50 pigs, will I get £6000 for not rearing 100?

I plan to operate on a small scale at first, holding myself down to about 4000 pigs not raised, which will mean about £240,000 for the first year. Then I can afford to buy an aeroplane.

Another point. These pigs I plan not to rear will not eat 2000 tons of cereals. I understand that you also pay farmers for not growing crops. Will I qualify for payments for not growing cereals to not feed the pigs I don’t rear?

I am also considering the not milking cows business, so please send any information you have on that too.

Please could you also include the Government information on set-aside fields? Can this be done on an e-commerce basis with virtual-reality fields?

In view of the above you will realise that I will be totally unemployed, and will qualify for unemployment benefits.

I shall of course vote for you at the next general election.

Yours faithfully,

Anon
The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily the views of MAG [UK]
The Avalon Hotel, Whitley Bay and North East Region Motorcycle Action Group, in conjunction with North Tyneside Council, proudly present The

Whitley Bay
1st
2007

Festival of Motorcycles

Tickets now on sale
Weekend tickets (including camping) £15 pre-book or £20 on the gate
Day tickets ‘til 8pm only £5
Children up to 16 yrs £2

Send a cheque/PO and SAE to:
WBFoM Tickets
The Avalon Hotel
26 South Parade
Whitley Bay
NE26 2RG
Tel: 0191 251 0080
Email: info@theavalon.co.uk

Please note cut-off date for pre-book tickets is strictly 27th July. Orders received after this date will be returned.

Tickets now available over the bar at the Avalon Hotel and the following outlets:

Hunters Motorcycles
241 Westgate Road
Newcastle upon Tyne
Tyne and Wear NE4 6AE
Tel: 0191 2618552 / 2321258

Morpeth Motorcycles
Dark Lane
Morpeth
Northumberland NE51 1SU
Tel: 01670 513 057
www.morpeth-motorcycles.co.uk

Durham Bikes (Tommy’s)
Newhouse Road
Esh Winning
Durham DH7 9UX
Tel: 0191 3733200

Vertical Motor Bikes
Unit 4 Front St Ind Est
Shotton Collery
Durham DH6 2ND
Tel: 0191 517 3279
www.verticalmotorbikes.co.uk

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NO fires NO dogs NO glass NO cars NO excuses (Disabled cars by prior arrangement only)

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www.whitleybayfestivalofmotorcycles.co.uk

The AA.com
Free on site Breakdown

Demon Bikes
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Tel: 0191 253509
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