



Network

Motorcycle Action Group

November 2005

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ANOTHER DRACONIAN THREAT TO LIBERTIES?

MOTOR VEHICLES (ANTI-SOCIAL USE) 4.17 pm

Bob Spink (Castle Point) (Con): I beg to move, That leave be given to bring in a Bill to prohibit the anti-social use of motor vehicles; to make provision for the seizure of motor vehicles used in an anti-social manner; and for connected purposes.

My purpose today is to promote increased use of seizure, and stronger laws and sentencing measures to help protect people from the dangerous and antisocial use of motor bikes, quad bikes and similar vehicles off highway. I also want to clarify the action that local councils and the police should be taking under existing laws.

Antisocial off-roading is often destructive of bio-diverse and sensitive environments and recreational areas, and damages residents' quality of life and is dangerous to the public and to the off-riders themselves.

My constituent Mr. Roy Hutson said:

"Not only are the daily lives of residents being disrupted by the noise of these off-road motorcycles, but the safety of those persons who use the land legitimately for recreational purposes, dog walking etc. is also at risk because of the selfish and intolerable attitude taken by this illegal, anti-social behaviour."

Another constituent, Ursula Fuller, said:

"The Northwick SSSI site on Canvey Island is a wonderful bio-diverse asset for our community, but it is subject to regular damage from illegal off-road motorcycling and its fragile habitat and protected species are being systematically destroyed. We must give it more protection."

I congratulate Roy and Ursula and others who are fighting to help their communities on such issues. They are true heroes. The public want tougher action to protect people's quality of life. They want to conserve precious environments. They value habitats which, like Canvey's Northwick area, support rare and delicate wildlife, fauna and flora. They want to preserve recreational land for walking, sport, or even just for flying kites with their children. We must not stand by and see land destroyed. It must be safeguarded for future generations and for biodiversity.

Of course, there are many decent off-riders and I unreservedly commend them. They suffer from the bad name that the activity gets because of a few off-riders who could not care less. Sadly, those irresponsible people are not just teenagers but adults who should know better- especially as it is the most vulnerable people, the elderly, who suffer most from this nuisance. As the Prime Minister said last week, we cannot tolerate jobs damaging the quality of life of the elderly.

What can be done? Prevention is the obvious first step, but that is often difficult. Earth mounds and fences are expensive and are not respected by some who tear them down and even use them as ramps. Existing laws are difficult to enforce and the police have important and diverting priorities. Off-riders escape on their vehicles when the police arrive, often using several alternative exits from a site, so we have years of recurring complaints, resulting in costly but often ineffective action.

In such circumstances, I suggest the following approach. First, the pattern of activity should be established. Then a warning leaflet should be given to riders, where possible, and posted at the site entrances, stating that confiscation will follow if offending continues. Then a surprise sting operation should be mounted, with mass police descending quickly around the site and taking positions at the various exits to trap the offenders. There must then be immediate and mandatory confiscation of all vehicles and prosecution for any offences, with appropriate sentences handed down by the courts. Offenders would then know that their illegal behaviour was harmful and would not be tolerated. In the long run, such an approach would save time and costs for everyone, protect the environments, restore quality of life for residents and improve public safety.

One of Castle Point's excellent police officers, Kevin Diable-White, wants "a longer term, sustainable solution to stop these recurring incidents".

He told me last Friday that he spent more time on this issue than on many other important areas of crime. His experience is not unusual, because it is a national problem. The hon. Member for Thurrock (Andrew Mackinlay) is in his place to support the Bill today, because off-riders in Essex harm communities and terrorise people in public parks in Basildon. In Bristol, antisocial behaviour orders have been taken out to stop juveniles riding motorcycles and abusing and harassing residents. Stroud police have issued confiscation orders to bikers who were wreaking havoc in ancient woodlands. A helicopter was used in Liverpool to crack down on scrambler bikes, quads and go-pads;- whatever they are- and the National Trust has raised the issue of children and adults riding motorbikes, quads and go-peds, destroying the environment and rights of way and putting themselves and innocent walkers at real risk. Problems have been reported in areas as far apart as Stafford, the Yorkshire dales, Scotland and Manchester- and I could go on.

We can make good use of existing laws, where there is a will. For instance, in Durham residents were plagued by children, teenagers and adults riding motorbikes and quads off-road, on public footpaths and on private land. In one operation, the police confiscated and destroyed 33 motorbikes. Residents near Warwickshire's Brandon Woods have suffered misery and land destruction similar to that seen on Canvey Island, with dozens of off-road bikers having meets on a Sunday. Those residents were rescued by a police helicopter operation that trapped more than 20 of them on the site. More than 100 off-road motorcycles were impounded by police and the local council in Barnsley. Under current laws, local authorities and the police have powers to seize any vehicle being driven off-road without the authority of the landowner. If an offender drives his off-roader on the public highway, even for only a few yards, it may constitute an offence under the Vehicle Excise and Registration Act 1994, the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 or the Road Vehicle Lighting Regulations 1989. Antisocial behaviour orders are also available.

I propose two new measures. First, the Government should ensure that previous warning is deemed to have been given to an individual by virtue of a leaflet having been handed out at the site and posted at the site entrances, with no need to prove that the individual has previously been warned. That would enable local councillors and police to be confident in mounting the sort of stitch-in-time sting operation that I described earlier. Secondly, the courts should impose significant periods of disqualification from driving for such antisocial offences. An elderly Canvey resident chased a youth on a motorbike from a field just behind his home. The resident was nastily abused-I shall not tell you what was shouted at him, Mr. Speaker-and the job said that he did not care about the law and would be back. The one thing that such people care about is their driving licences. For youngsters, disqualification should be deferred until they reach 17. That would make the sentence fit the crime, and increase its deterrent effect. The provision should also apply to illegal boy-racing on the highways.

Minimotors and go-peds pose a new problem. Go-peds are motorised skateboards, whereas minimotors are tiny motorbikes. They may seem innocuous and fun toys for kids of all ages, and I do not want to be a killjoy, but these are motor vehicles and real issues arise. It is illegal to use them on public roads, and they are subject to the same regulations as all cars and motorbikes. They can cause a nuisance and they pose a serious accident risk, such as when they come into conflict with a full-size motor vehicle. I am afraid that a child will be hurt in an accident, so parents who buy these vehicles need to be properly informed about the law and about the dangers involved. I have no doubt that this House will return in due course to the sale and safety awareness issues associated with these toys.

The Government have repeatedly voiced concern about vehicles that cause nuisance, and one Home Office Minister has said that the antisocial use of vehicles can

blight communities and cause misery and distress to people going about their daily lives. My Bill would secure tougher action from local councils and the police, and require the Government to produce new and clearer laws. In that way, people would be protected from the increasing problems posed by the vehicles to which I have referred. We must protect communities from this form of antisocial behaviour and deter people who may not understand the danger, nuisance and destruction caused by the antisocial behaviour that is off-roading.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Bob Spink, Charles Hendry, Andrew Mackinlay, Mr. Kevan Jones, Dr. Julian Lewis, Mr. Henry Bellingham, Mr. David Heath, Mr. David Evenett, Mr. Lee Scott, Mr. Michael Clapham and Mark Francois.

Bob Spink accordingly presented a Bill to prohibit the anti-social use of motor vehicles; to make provision for the seizure of motor vehicles used in an anti-social manner; and for connected purposes: And the same was read the First time; and ordered to be read a Second time on 20 January, and to be printed [Bill 54].

HELMETLESS" RIDERS ARE LESS LIKELY TO DIE IN MOTORCYCLE CRASHES ON FLORIDA ROADS

The 2004 Crash Statistics for Florida wipe away NHTSA's prediction of a blood bath.

According to the recently released, Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles annual Traffic Crash Statistics Report for 2004, motorcycle riders wearing helmets were more likely to sustain an injury or suffer a fatality than their non-helmeted counterparts. The huge increase in death and injury to non-helmeted motorcycle riders, predicted by NHTSA (National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration) in a report released this summer, has not been substantiated. The numbers are going to disappoint the proponents of helmet laws while simultaneously confirming the facts presented to the public by ABATE of Florida, Inc. (American Bikers Aimed Toward Education). ABATE is a non-profit motorcycle rights organization in Florida and has spent years focusing on motorcycle related issues, including crash prevention and stiffer penalties for negligent vehicle operators who kill and injure motorcycle riders.

Of the 388 motorcycle riders killed in crashes on Florida roads during 2004, over 51% were wearing safety helmets. The crash facts also demonstrate that riders wearing safety helmets were more likely to sustain injuries than non-helmeted riders. In each of the statistical focus topics presented in the study, the percentage numbers were very close between helmeted and non-helmeted riders, except for non-injury crashes. The study stated that non-helmeted riders were 20% more likely to walk away from a crash without injuries than riders who were wearing helmets. This disparity

could be due to the visual and physical limitations imposed by a helmet. Wearing a motorcycle helmet cannot keep a crash from occurring, however, riding without a helmet could allow a rider to respond more quickly or to visually recognize potential hazards, decreasing the severity of the injury sustained or avoiding injury all together. There are no statistics available for crashes which riders were able to completely avoid due to training or equipment use.

According to the crash statistics, the top three contributing causes of all motor vehicle crashes include careless driving, failure to yield the right-of-way and driving under the influence of alcohol. None of the three include equipment failure, environmental or weather related issues.

Each of the top three causes for crashes are directly linked to driver error or negligent action by the motor vehicle operator. Therefore, it stands to reason that a significant number of crashes could be avoided if motor vehicle drivers took personal responsibility for operating a deadly weapon prior to engaging their engines.

People can only control two things in their lives; what they think and what they do. Personal responsibility cannot be legislated. Political and governmental entities cannot mandate ethical and honourable actions. It is society, which dictates acceptable public behaviour. Rehabilitation programs rely on education and a series of problem identification and behaviour modification systems to alter behaviours that are harmful to a group or individual. Re-educating the public on safe operation of their motor vehicles or rehabilitating vehicle operators that habitually drive impaired or recklessly is an enormous job, however, ABATE of Florida, Inc. is taking on one piece of that task. The group is getting information out to the public on motorcycle safety and awareness through high school drivers education programs, posters, flyers, the presentation of a free Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Program, along with a series of annual safety seminars for the motorcycle riding and non-riding public.

In conjunction with the Florida legislature, ABATE is putting Billboards throughout the state to encourage drivers to be aware of motorcycles and to drive alertly. In other words, to take personal responsibility for their driving actions and to think about the way they operate their vehicles. James "Doc" Reichenbach, president of ABATE of Florida, Inc. who's group lobbied strongly for motorcycle helmet reform in 2000, said, "The numbers from the crash report for 2004 may favour our point of view, but even one death is too many. We motorcycle riders have to ride defensively and we have to educate everyone we meet." To help educate the driving public, four billboards with motorcycle safety messages have already been installed on major Florida highways. Within the next few months, Mr. Reichenbach expects approximately ten more billboards to be in place in areas where high motorcycle injury rates have been reported.

Motorcycle shop owner, Dan Fish of Doc's Southern Cycles in Pace, Florida, said, "I've had five times as many people in the shop in the past week looking for bikes under 600cc's." He said people are worried about getting around and are looking for economical transportation. The motorcycle population has more than doubled in the past five years with over 700,000 endorsed riders. With the marked increase in gasoline prices and concern over fuel availability, the number of motorcycle riders on Florida highways could easily reach 1.5 million in the next five years.

Motor vehicle operators will be encountering an ever-increasing number of two wheeled travellers in the future. Motorcycles are smaller and can easily be lost in blind spots of larger vehicles. Drivers need to be aware of the presence of all vehicles in their vicinity and give motorcycles their full lane of travel. Perception of the speed that a motorcycle is travelling is often misjudged and failure to yield the right-of-way is sighted as the cause in a significant number of motorcycle versus automobile crashes.

Statistical reports, no matter how reliable the source, will not stop the motorcycle helmet usage debate, however, the real issue is crash prevention. To get involved in motorcycle crash prevention or to find out more about the Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Programs being offered, contact ABATE of Florida, Inc. at P.O. Box 2520, DeLand, Florida, 32721 or visit www.abateflorida.com

Here's the answer to the question "why is my salary so low?":
About your salary:
Engineers and scientists will never make as much money as business executives.
Now a rigorous mathematical proof that explains why this is true:

Postulate 1: Knowledge is Power.

Postulate 2: Time is Money.

As every engineer knows,
Work
----- = Power
Time

Since Knowledge = Power, and Time = Money, we have
Work
----- = Knowledge
Money

Solving for Money, we get:

Work
----- = Money
Knowledge

Thus, as Knowledge approaches zero, Money approaches infinity regardless of the Work done.
Conclusion: The less you know, the more money you make.
q.e.d.

Feedback from one MAG member on the issue of the Defra's farm subsidies and Motorsport:

Hello,

I tend you agree with you on some of the points but not on a cart blanche basis, I am a bit of a mixed up girl you could say, having owned horses all my life, hunted, am a conservationist and my husband and I have had numerous bikes, as have all my past boyfriends (scramblers and trials bikes). I was brought up with and have owned land rovers and have lived in the countryside most of my life so I feel I have quite a broad view from this mixed experience.

My point being that the government seems to be picking on everyone, farming, hunting, motor sports, green belts no longer safe from developers etc etc, if fact when Labour came into Government I said they would start the tarmac machines in Scotland and roll down the country but in fact they started in Kent and are rolling up the country and they won't be happy until everything green is gone.

However I feel that the farmers are the only wardens left of the country side other than Volunteer Environmentalist Groups. They are paid subsidies/grants to keep the conversation corridors (hedgerows etc) so that wildlife can flourish and also return to some barren parts of our countryside. They are encouraged with grants to stop monoculture, especially in forest plantations for the same reasons. How can this flora and fauna flourish when ripped up by off roading, covered in petrol and diesel fumes, oil spills and then compete with the rubbish that the spectators leave behind. Some of the smaller events are not so invasive, and trial biking certainly is a lot more countryside friendly. I would agree that the list issued by Defra is not fair but they should consider the type of damage done by the motor vehicle event when they make the assessment rather than a complete U turn.

Elizabeth

Abridged minutes

MAG National Committee Meeting 13th August 2005 Masonic Hall, Rugby

Meeting commenced 10:00 Hrs Removal of any item not deemed by NC to be appropriate or related to Regional Reps

Minutes of last Meeting - matters of correctness

The Minutes of the last NC were reviewed and after some minor amendments the minutes were accepted.

NC minutes – Proposed Gerard Livett (Uncle Sol), seconded John Mitchell

Vote unanimous

A vote of thanks to Steve Wykes for his efforts with the minutes was given.

Matters arising

Derwen was assisting Andrew Davis in setting up an open day in South Wales to try and kick start the region.

Action Ongoing

2. Sol indicated that Essex and Herts was not functioning satisfactorily as a region with little or no feedback or communication through the regional rep. As a consequence he was preparing an AGM with assistance from Shan. Consideration was also being given to whether or not setting up a County rep structure could assist in bridging the communication gap to local groups. Members in the region to be canvassed for their input.
Action Uncle Sol

Appointments and Resignations

Murray Webb was welcomed onto the NC as the new regional rep for Eastern Region.

Alan Wooley regretted that he was forced to resign from the National Clubs Liaison Officers position, due to work commitments.

A vote of thanks for his efforts in the post was proposed by Jane Chisholm and seconded by Robin Straughan and backed unanimously by the NC.

Public Affairs Director Political Report

A very packed report for the meeting.

The report for the meeting has a different slant this time with pulling the issues that have been discussed on the NC email list and putting them into a format that would see future publications on the issues.

The ideas and issues in the report are not set in stone and may need to be modified after the meeting via email to present the issues to reflect MAG's true positions.

CRASH BARRIERS

At the MEP Ride in Strasbourg in July FEMA presented its "Road To Success" document on how to improve the safety aspects of crash barriers for motorcyclists.

UK MEPS, Malcolm Harbour, a long time supporter of the MEP Ride and new comer, Peter Skinner were very enthusiastic about the motorcycle friendly crash barrier system.

Since then we have launched our own document, "Vehicle Restraint Systems – Safety Fences – Crash Barriers – Motorcyclists", due to additional information received since the document was published, it is now on version 1:4 and Trevor expects to update the document shortly as new research has come to light.

One new contact was with the Chair of the Road Safety Committee, Motorcycle Council of NSW (Australia) and highlights the global concerns of riders regarding crash barriers.

From the FEMA and MAG documents we have launched a three pronged lobby of MPs, MEP's and the Minister of State for Transport, Dr Stephen Ladyman.

The action document was press released, published in the July issue of Network and put on the MAG UK website. Please prevail on your Local Group Reps and members to lobby on this especially the concerns regarding Wire Rope Barriers.

The most recent document on crash barriers was presented at the 19th ESV conference in Washington in June 2005 "Motorcycle Impacts to Roadside Barriers - Real World Accidents Studies, Crash Tests and Simulations Carried out in Germany and Australia".

Of interest is the chapter on wire rope barriers:

Documents are available at:

<http://www.fema.kaalium.com/crashbarrier2005/index.htm>

<http://www.network.mag-uk.org/crashbarriers2005/MAGcrashbarrier2005.pdf>

<http://www.network.mag-uk.org/crashbarriers2005/MAGactioncrashbarriers.pdf>

<http://www.network.mag-uk.org/crashbarriers2005/MotocycleBarriers19thESV.pdf>

A CD is available with most of these documents presented, plus short film clips, computer simulations and testing on motorcycle friendly guard rails. Though lots of

information is still coming in since the publication of our position statement.

Finally on this I would like to thank Wim from MAG Netherlands for pushing the issue forward in Europe and Morten from MNCU Norway for the work on the FEMA Road To Success document.

Third Driving Licence Directive

Where are we now with the directive?

Since Trevor's last report at Junes NC meeting we have put together two documents. The first is a MAG Action Document for lobbying MEPs, MPs and the Secretary of State for Transport, Alistair Darling. The second is a review of the Directive.

The action document was published in the July issue of Network and there is a complete overview and lobby in the latest issue of Streetbiker. It will be pressed released shortly and put up on the MAG UK website.

This has been a complicated issue over the last year and has raised interesting debate within FEMA as the directive twist and turns not only on the technical issues but political manoeuvrings.

Dalek Death Studs?

A representative from CTC (national cyclists' organisation) contacted MAG asking if we were aware of the fitting of these studs and asking for support.

Sarah took the portfolio on and her report was presented to NC

Contact details are the MAG office or email

national-resource@mag-uk.org

Loud Pipes

For many years politicians have stated that motorcycle noise is the subject that they receive the most letters about. Unfortunately, this leads to a continuing push for even lower noise limits, although not necessarily lower noise levels.

This has been highlighted recently by the Earl Peel asking questions in the House of Lords on inappropriate or excessive speeding, use of illegal number plates, the fitting of illegal noisy exhaust systems by motorcyclists. Motor Cycle News (MCN) in their 27th July 2005 issue carried the banner on the front page "The End For Loud Cans" which misses the point, loud cans are illegal. Riders are fully aware of this and as in the article also aware that police forces have the power to enforce the law on loud pipes.

Interestingly WP.29 (United Nations working party on Global Harmonisation of Motorcycle Technical Regulations) has effectively agreed that Regulation 41 will become a global regulation rather than a European one, as it currently is. This could mean that the European Union would not seek to reduce motorcycle noise limits until they are established globally. There again if that would be a long time off they would probably go ahead with a European reduction in advance of any global moves

A useful document from FEMA, Motorcycle Noise – The Sound Of Our Demise?" can be downloaded at <http://www.fema.kaalium.com/docs/NoiseEn.pdf> See <http://www.noisemapping.org/default.asp> for details.

The DfT in the governments National Motorcycle Strategy sets out a way to address the issue of loud and legal exhausts:

"We welcome the Advisory Group on Motorcycling (AGM) recommendation for a campaign to 'win the hearts and minds' of riders to keep their machines to road legal specification.

However, to be most effective, we believe that this campaign should be led by the motorcycle industry, retailers and rider user groups, rather than by Government. A campaign is more likely to receive a

positive response if riders see it as an issue for those who build and sell motorbikes, and those who represent the users. We would of course support and endorse such a campaign.

The action is to press for and give support to a campaign, led by the motorcycle industry, retailers and rider user groups, to encourage riders to keep their motorbikes road legal for noise."

The politicians continued to lower limits and have thus partly created the problem that Earl Peel is all steamed up about.

MAG also advised the politicians to use enforcement of existing limits rather than reducing those limits as a means of resolving the problem. We suggested to them that if they kept lowering limits then people would buy illegal pipes that met no limits. They went lower and are reaping the consequences of doing so.

MEP Ride

This year's focus was on the issues of 3rd European Driving Licence Directive and the Road Traffic Safety report, both currently being discussed within the European Parliament.

The MEP ride is successful and could be expanded if members from around the regions are encouraged to contact their MEP and take part in the ride.

Sidecars and Trailers

MAG Belgium have put the issue off motorcycles with a sidecar towing trailers back on their agenda.

The situation in Belgium at present is:

- a motorcycle is towing a trailer: permitted
- a motorcycle with sidecar towing a trailer: not permitted.

The issue was on the agenda in 2004 but with changes in the government at the end of 2004 the case was closed and looked like being lost.

MAG Belgium have tabled a new question to the Minister responsible asking what the government are going to do to resolve the problem.

In the meantime MAG Belgium are counting on our support for this issue.

They are asking that you sent them as many emails asking why travelling by sidecar and trailer is forbidden by law in Belgium.

This will enable MAG Belgium to build support for their position and to present these to their members of the parliament.

The principle of freedom of movement prevailed in Spain when the ban on a motorcycle towing a trailer with restrictions was lifted.

FEMA press release on the issue can be viewed at:

http://www.fema.kaalium.com/news.phpstart_from=10&ucat=&archive=&subaction=&id=&#?

Suggested Letter send to:

Erwin Steegmans

Vice President

MAG Belgium vzw

Email: ondervoorzitter@mag.be

MAG SUPPORTING PARKING CAMPAIGN

Grammy award winning musician Evelyn Glennie calls on biking community for support against unfair parking policies in central London

Westminster Council are unfairly targeting motorbike users by the indiscriminate issuing of parking tickets says Grammy award winning musician Evelyn Glennie after she received her 4th parking ticket in just 4 months.

RoSPA

Trevor was invited to attend a meeting organised by RoSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents). The purpose of the meeting, attended by representatives of the Department for Transport (DfT) and the new lead on the Bikesafe initiative, was to talk

through a draft for a leaflet for bikers on the most common crashes and how to avoid them.

The five most common are

1. Failure to negotiate left hand bend on rural A road
2. Failure to negotiate right hand bend on rural A road
3. Collision at junctions
4. Collision while overtaking
5. Loss of control

MAG will be supporting the leaflet when it is launched early next year.

SMIDSY Campaign

Motorists are being urged to look out for motorcyclists as part of a new road safety campaign, SMIDSY (Sorry Mate I didn't See You) to reduce the number of motorcycle casualties on South Gloucestershire's roads. Temporary road signs displaying the campaign web address 'www.smidsy.co.uk' and other messages will be going up at motorcycle accident hotspots to remind drivers to look out for motorcyclists.

The campaign by South Gloucestershire Council and Tony Sharpe, aka IHIE guidelines, states the obvious to motorcyclists and is welcome by MAG to target the ignorance of car drivers.

It is hoped that the campaign will go national and MAG has offered its support.

If a motorcycle is not in the field of vision of a car driver or if car drivers are not looking for a motorcycle or looks and their senses do not see a motorcycle, then all the day -glo vests, headlights, daytime running lights will not make a big difference

The DfT are to conduct research on car driver skills and attitude to motorcycle safety. Previous research has shown that a high proportion of multi-vehicle accidents involving motorcycles is due to drivers' observation or perception skills.

Many of these accidents happen at junctions when a car pulls out into the path of a motorcycle and seem to involve older drivers, I wonder if by any chance they are driving a Volvo at the time.

My thanks to colleague Sarah Gardner for picking up an article in the March Issue of Bike magazine and research on motion illusion, the looming effect.

Apparently Dragonflies use the trick to sneak up on their prey and in aerial battles with hoverflies.

Learn about your vulnerability, learn about road positioning and treat all other road users as "idiots". National Motorcycle Council (NMC)

Trevor attended a further meeting of the NMC and DfT representatives. The purpose of the meeting was to further progress the delivery of the governments' national motorcycle strategy.

Nothing much more to report other than the DfT are committed to delivering the targets set out in the strategy.

Mini Motor Bikes

Contacted by the DfT to give advise on their proposed statement on the illegal use and safety for "Mini Motor Bikes" Go -pads, mini motos, quads etc.

Trevor involved the MCI, MRTA on the issue and have come up with a draft proposal.

Unfortunately the contact at the DfT has not replied to any further emails and they have published their statement. Work in progress at the present time.

FEMA

Trevor attended the June FEMA meeting in Denmark with fellow MAG FEMA representative Elaine Hardy (National Research Officer).

The trip was wet and arduous and the return ferry trip saw severe body work damage in monetary terms to the

K1200 RS caused by the bike "tipping" over with several other bikes on board the ferry in gale conditions.

This was superseded by excellent hospitality by our hosts and fellow FEMA members MC Touring Denmark. You can sample this excellent hospitality by visiting their website at www.mctouringclub.dk and MAG members receive a discount: spend the first night at MC Touring Camp free of charge, provided you bring their own tent and MAG membership card for each person.

National Officer Reports – Chairman, Vice Chairman, Finance Director, Clubs Officer, National Network Communications Officer, National Research Officer and Regional Reps reports Regional Reps Reports Foundation Report, Board Meeting Report.

Affiliated Clubs

Some concern has been expressed at the number of affiliated clubs who have failed to re-affiliate this year. Regional Reps were encouraged to find out the reasons why clubs were not re-affiliating in their area and report back.

Action Regional Reps

There was some feeling that at least part of the problem was the inclusive PLI offered by the BMF for rallies, ride outs etc. there is also an issue where clubs are not permitted stands at the BMF show if they are not affiliated to the bmf. If this is a major problem then we need to publicise our competitive rates for affiliation with exclusive/inclusive PLI insurance.

Details of insurance rates are currently available from central office.

Eddie Lowe gave a presentation on a possible venue for next years AGC in the West Midlands. Details of the venue and accommodation in the Bromsgrove area was provided.

Robin Straughan thanked Eddie for his detailed presentation and proposed that this proposal be accepted for next years AGC and John Mitchell seconded the proposal. Proposal Ratified by the NC The constitution with amendments required following the AGC at Salisbury was tabled for NC consideration. The amended Constitution was ratified by the NC.

Questions from members :

Some questions and points had been received from members, which it was felt worthy of addressing at this point.

1 The Yellow Road defect cards had been noted to have included the word affected rather than effected – this was to be corrected at the next reprinting of the card.

2 Membership forms have been corrected.

3 Typographical and grammatical errors in StreetBiker had received criticism – StreetBiker was now being subjected to more stringent proof reading.

4 Some members felt that Network was becoming rather long. It was agreed that inclusion of the entire minutes, had contributed to this growth and that Bullet Points should be provided to allow quick access to relevant sections and that the minutes could be abridged to reduce content, although access to the full minutes should still be made available.

5 Members were being encouraged to sign up by standing orders, but problems were being encountered with memberships being slow to emerge. It was pointed out that delays were principally as a result of bank processing time. While applications typically take two weeks from receipt for processing this frequently misses the first standing order payment and membership is only sent when the first standing order payment has been received.

As a result members need to allow up to four weeks for receipt of membership. To counter this problem, those manning stalls need to be made aware that standing

order date should be post dated by at least two weeks from receipt of the application for and a further two weeks needs to be allowed for receipt of their membership. To counter this problem and ensure members can take full advantage of their membership it was suggested that temporary memberships be issued to those taking out standing order membership. Boundary changes to Eastern Region and Neighbouring Regions.

There is a feeling that the existing Eastern Region is something of a mix of groups and fails to have a regional identity. Lincolnshire want to be a region consisting of groups in North Lincs., Grimsby and Mid Lincs.

While the position of the Peterborough, South Beds and Rad MAG groups need to be reviewed to see if they can be sensibly incorporated into other surrounding regions. The affected reps and Jane Chisholm to review membership numbers, distribution and group strength of Eastern and surrounding regions.

Action Jane Chisholm and Regional Reps involved AOCB John Mitchell raised the issue of entitlements being lost when renewing licenses at DVLA. This has effected a number of motorcyclists and others with HGV/PSV and other less common entitlements. He had only had his bike entitlement reinstated after an affidavit from a police officer who attested to him having been riding for ten years. Though normally DVLA won't accept affidavits.

Steve Wykes indicated that this had also been a problem for one of his members, who had lost her entitlement on changing her address.

It was pointed out that DVLA had lost records for 1981 – 1984 due to a fire and again in 1987 due to a systems failure. DVA also had a policy of shredding old licenses sent to them after 3 months.

It was suggested that notes should be included in StreetBiker and Network advising members how to protect their entitlement.

These would include sending their license to DVLA by recorded delivery, taking a photocopy of their license before sending it to DVLA and having the copy certified as a true and accurate copy of their license by a lawyer or other appropriate person. And ensuring that the new license is checked immediately on receipt and any errors in their new license are brought to DVLA's attention.

Meeting closed at 3.25 pm.

FULL MINUTES CAN BE VIEWED ON THE NETWORK WEBSITE OR HARD COPY OBTAINED FROM CENTRAL OFFICE

RIDERS WIN!

A bit of cheerful news from the far side of the world! Tasmania is the southern island state of Australia. What is below here was addressed to our locals.

Guy Stanford

Chairman

Motorcycle Council of NSW

www.mccofnsw.org.au

The Tasmanian Government has proposed that every motorcycle license holder in the state be charged a levy of \$15 per year to pay for implementation of the Tasmanian Motorcycle Safety Strategy.

The Rider Levy Bill passed through the lower House of Tasmania on the party numbers that control the lower house, albeit with some savage debate.

Today, Thursday 13 October 2005, the Upper House defeated the Bill.

The Tasmanian Levy is dead. Social justice is alive in the Tasmanian Upper House.

We heartily applaud the Tasmanian Opposition!

Congratulations to the Tasmanian Motorcycle Council and Motorcycle Riders Association of Tasmania for lobbying, preparation of briefings and credible representation to government. Job well done.

Hobart Mercury story : <http://tinyurl.com/aev7w>

No other road user group in Australia is required to pay a levy for basic road safety programs. We don't charge pedestrians a levy to change the light bulbs in the "Don't Walk" signs, or charge bicycles a levy for the cycleways, or charge trucks a levy for the signs to tell them to not use a particular street. But hey, this didn't stop the Tasmanian Minister for Transport, Brian Green from ambushing Tasmanian motorcycle riders.

Tasmanian motorcyclists, working through the Tasmanian Motorcycle Council (TMC) and the Motorcycle Riders Association of Tasmania (MRATas) developed a safety strategy in conjunction with the DIER (Govt body that deals with road safety).

It's a good basic strategy, even if it only targets motorcycle riders and fails to include any motorcycle awareness programs directed to other road users. A complete absence of ANY motorcycle safety programs in Tasmania was ready to be addressed.

Riders were shocked when the Minister for Transport, Brian Green told them that the Strategy would not be implemented unless they paid for it. Minister Green then introduced legislation that would allow the Tasmanian Government to extract \$15 from every rider in Tasmania. This would have set a dangerous precedent, singling out one road user group to pay for their own safety programs.

Passage of the Tasmanian Motorcycle Levy through parliament may be followed by reading Hansard.

The mechanism here is instructive to all involved in motorcycle lobbying.

The Tasmanian Minister for Transport, instructs that legislation be drawn up that permits the government to charge every holder of a Tasmanian motorcycle license, an annual fee of \$15 in addition to normal license fees.

This proposed legislation was called the "VEHICLE AND TRAFFIC AMENDMENT (MOTOR CYCLE SAFETY LEVY) BILL 2005 No. 46) "

First it went to the Lower House and copped a fair shellacking from the Opposition parties who spotted the unfairness and identified the ambushing of the TMC and MRATas. Some excellent political gamesmanship by the opposition prevented the legislation from going to vote, thus allowing more time for House members to research and review the issue.

Thursday 25 August 2005

<http://www.hansard.parliament.tas.gov.au/isysquery/irl295f/2/doc>

When Parliament resumed, the debate was incomplete. Further information showed the Government was planning to use the rider levy to pay for administration, not for actual safety programs. The Bill passed, on the numbers controlled by the Tasmanian Labour government.

Tuesday 20 September 2005

<http://www.hansard.parliament.tas.gov.au/isysquery/irl295f/1/doc>

Then it had to be passed by the Upper House, in Tasmania called the Legislative Council. This is the "house of review" that finally determines whether legislation approved in the Lower House will actually be approved and made law.

Thursday 13 October 2005

<http://www.hansard.parliament.tas.gov.au/isysquery/irl2974/1/doc>

At the time of writing, the afternoon Hansard has not been posted to the Tas Parliament website, but will be added in due course later today or tomorrow. That's what Upper Houses are for (Like the Senate and Legislative Councils at a State level)

Just goes to show that you need a check and balance to keep the government in line from time to time. Queensland abolished its Upper House in 1922 and Victoria had a system that meant that basically, whoever won the lower house won the upper house as well- which is pretty pointless. Tasmania, NSW and South Australia have Upper Houses that better reflect the voting pattern of the public. Ed:
A big thank you to Motorcycle Council New South Wales for this article.

SPEED AWARENESS COURSES "A PR GIMMICK"

It was announced today that "Speed Awareness Courses" are to be offered nationwide to first time offenders caught on camera at up to 39mph in 30mph limits.

This initiative is openly presented by ACPO (Association of Chief Police Officers) as a response to plummeting public support for speed cameras.

"This is nothing more than a PR Gimmick from those desperate to shore up a failing road safety strategy," said the ABD's Nigel Humphries. "If these courses were any good for road safety, why have they waited until the public have turned against cameras to roll them out nationally?"

The ABD supports sensible road policing and proper driver training, but we have heard mixed reports about the content of speed awareness courses held so far by various police authorities.

The facts are that millions of motorists are being caught by cash hungry camera partnerships for driving perfectly reasonably in limits that are set far too low. These drivers are not putting anyone at risk - quite the contrary. They have only drifted over the speed limit because they are looking at the road and driving appropriately for the conditions. Meanwhile, the dangerous drivers who need to be on courses are either not being caught or are not being given the option to improve their skills!

The courses have been piloted in several police areas, and evidence suggests that some of them have little valid road safety content -with even those that are useful being tainted by the need to provide a justification to a room full of safe and sensible drivers as to why they are there at all.

"All these courses can achieve is to stop drivers looking at the road, stop them thinking about what is a safe speed to travel and make them more likely to mow down children at 30mph - its contemptible," continued Humphries. "This is just another nail in the coffin of the nation's driving skills."

What is needed is an end to sticking plaster measures to con the public into accepting speed cameras. We need to abolish the camera partnerships and get back to sensible road policing that targets dangerous drivers. These are the very drivers who need to go on credible, constructive driver improvement programmes, but these are denied focus and resources by the one trick pony of camera policy.

Below is a first hand account of a "Speed Awareness Course" which appeared in a national newspaper:

The aim (of the Avon & Somerset Speed Awareness Course), it became clear, was gradually to shepherd us round from feeling we had been unlucky to be caught, via demonstrations of how anti-social it is to speed and how effective cameras are in reducing accidents, to a profound sense of guilt.

We must learn to see that breaking the speed limit is as socially unacceptable as drink driving (not really any different, as it was put, than "going out to hit someone over the head with a baseball bat"). And we must learn to love the camera as Big Brother, there to save us from ourselves.

Most striking was the way that "speed" was defined only in terms of breaking the law by exceeding a limit. What we were sharply steered off was any discussion of how "excessive speed" might more realistically be defined as driving at a speed inappropriate to the conditions.

When we were each asked to describe how we were caught, it was clear from the replies that no one appeared to have been driving in a way which endangered themselves or anyone else. All had been driving at a speed which seemed appropriate. But even to think such thoughts is heresy.

We are all guilty. We must learn to love Big Brother.

[Sunday Telegraph](#) Christopher Booker's notebook (25/09/2005)

MORE INFO ON INSURANCE 'BUM DEALS' NEEDED

Subject: Insurance

Hello,

I remember reading in MAG news that some people had trouble getting third party only insurance cover and that MAG were considering a campaign in this area. I have been refused third party only for both bikes and cars and have to pay for TPFT. Also each year the cost goes up and the cover goes down. Business use was silently dropped from my M/C policy without me noticing and now my car policy has removed the ability to drive/ride other vehicles. When I quizzed them about this they lied and said it had always been this way. These changes seem to be designed so they can wiggle out of paying in the event of a claim.

Are you still interested in these issues?

Regards,

Neil Faulks

MAG is fully aware of the ' cartel practices' of motorcycle insurance companies. Unfortunately the response from government is that 'provided TPO is included in the contract, the potential policy holder is obliged to take what the insurers give them - which may include TPFT or Fully Comp - or go elsewhere'. Further, in this country because motorcycle insurers can insure the person as well as the vehicle (this is not the case in other European countries where only the vehicle is insured for TPO), this gives the insurers a strangle hold on policy holders. What the government fails to accept is that motorcycle insurance is dominated by three companies - NU, NIG and Equity Red Star. This means that they set the pace and all the others (approximately 15 insurers) follow. This is not so much the case with car insurers, although I know that they are also restrict the market.

Compulsory insurance coupled with the restrictive 'oligopolistic' practices of the motorcycle insurers means that they can charge what they like and get away with it.

We would like to put together a case for the OFT (Office of Fair Trading) and the FSA (Financial Services Authority) to demonstrate that riders are being stitched up but we need people like yourself to do a number of things.

- 1) write to the OFT (check website for details of who to write to)
- 2) write to the FSA (check website for details of who to write to)

Could you please then send copies to us? If we can put together enough complaints then we have a chance of getting the government to recognise that there is a serious problem with motorcycle insurers.

Dear all,

I would be interested if any of you know of similar experiences with insurers. I would like to document such cases in more detail.

Thank you
 Elaine Hardy
 National Research Officer
 MAG [UK]
research@mag-uk.org
 0870 774 3567

Take a look at the future folks. This system is being looked at by a number of Scamera Praternships. Did I also mention that partnerships are now being instructed to factor in a 5% surplus for return to central govt?

WHAT IS STARTRAQ?

[Yet another means of revenue generation and big brother]



StarTraq is a business solution designed to reengineer Traffic Departments
 StarTraq is all about **efficient** violation workflow control
 StarTraq provides **all equipment** necessary for:

- o Speed and red light violation capture
- o Image digitization
- o License plate verification
- o Data and image management
- o Web based data and image viewing
- o Secure ePayment over the Web
- o Real time roadside LPR black listing

How StarTraq Works
 In depth analysis has shown that:
 Various parts of the process can be batched together
 Various parts of the process can be automated

So...
 StarTraq **saves time** by automatic batch processing at night

StarTraq's Capabilities
 A single StarTraq unit with a single scanner can easily scan **4000 violations** in an 8-hour day, and can be left to scan at night

Each verifier can verify up to **3000 violations** in an 8-hour day
 Additional scanners and/or verifiers can be added to increase production
 Reads [Truvelo](#) film format, adaptable to Gatso and video type inputs

StarTraq Results: Productivity

Photos/day	800	6000		
Maximum scanned				
photos/scanner/8-hour day	350	4000		
Maximum verified				
photos/verifier/8-hour day	350	3000		

The Business Models

Startraq provide on site for free:

- Cameras, hardware, software, upgrades, maintenance, calibration & insurance
- Local customization
- Scaling to council size

Council pays royalty or click charge on payment of traffic fines

OR

Council purchases StarTraq with an annual license fee

Why StarTraq Works

- StarTraq releases manpower from tedious paperwork
- StarTraq employs clever batch processing and workflow control
- StarTraq is adaptable to local requirements

StarLPR - Automatic License Plate Recognition [ANPR]

- [Teletraffic Lastech VHS Video Based](#)
- [Leica XV2 Video Based](#)
- [Gatso Speed and Red Light 35mm Wet Film Based](#)
- [Truvelo 35mm Wet Film Based](#)

Teletraffic Lastech VHS Video Based

Automatic unattended processing of violations
 Automatic Fast Forward to next violation
 Single VCR workstation normal workday processing capacity is approximately 20 hours of Lastech violation footage
 Outputs single JPEG image of violation, and associated violation data, ready for manual verification
 90% success rates under ideal conditions

Leica XV2 Video Based

Imports violation data and image after the Leica XV2 back-office system has processed the video
 Performs neural-network based LPR
 90% success rate under ideal conditions
 Presents violation data, image and license plate number for manual verification

Gatso Speed and Red Light 35mm Wet Film Based

Wet film digitized by high performance scanner
 Neural-network based LPR reads the license plates
 Neural-network based OCR (Optical Character Recognition) reads the violation data from the image
 90% success rates under ideal conditions
 No need for smart cards
 Second image retained in database for verification
 Presents violation data, image and license plate number for manual verification

Truvelo 35mm Wet Film Based

Wet film digitized by high performance scanner
 Neural-network based LPR reads the license plates

Neural-network based OCR (Optical Character Recognition) reads the violation data from the image
 90% success rates under ideal conditions
 No need for smart cards
 Presents violation data, image and license plate number for manual verification

StarTraq's clients are the following:

[Bedfordshire](#), [Hampshire](#), [Derbyshire](#), [Thames Valley](#), [Greater Manchester](#), [North Wales](#), [West Midlands](#), [Kent](#), [Nottingham](#)

<http://www.startraq.com/index.htm>

From The Times October 17, 2005

CAUGHT ON CAMERA
 Effect of speeding convictions upon insurance premium (£)

Number of points	0	3	6	9
21 year old male	306	384	384	409
21 year old female	266	304	279	287
30 year old female	177	177	177	213
40 year old male	154	162	162	189

Source: The A&A Group

Legend: Third party fire and theft Comprehensive

INSURERS TURNING BLIND EYE TO FLASH OF SPEED CAMERAS

By Ben Webster, Transport Correspondent

SO MANY drivers have been caught by speed cameras that insurers no longer automatically penalise them for having points on their licences.

More than 12 million motorists have been caught by cameras since they were introduced in 1992. Last year more than two million received three points and a £60 fine, and a quarter of households now have at least one driver with a speeding conviction.

Insurers used to raise premiums by at least £50 for those caught once by a camera penalty and by more than £250 for those caught three times. But many companies no longer raise premiums for a single speeding offence, and some are prepared to ignore a second.

Road safety groups said that the financial consequences of being caught speeding were now so low that the fine should be at least doubled to £120 to maintain the deterrent effect.

A survey conducted on behalf of *The Times* by A&A Group, a leading insurance broker, was based on drivers living in St Albans, Hertfordshire, who had four years' no claims bonus, and drove a Ford Focus 1.6 valued at £5,000. It found that the premium for a 30-year-old C living in St Albans, Hertfordshire, who had four years' no claims bonus, and drove a Ford Focus 1.6 valued at £5,000. It found that the premium for a 30-year-old woman would stay at £177 even she acquired six penalty points. At nine points, one offence away from a ban, she would pay £36 extra.

A 40-year-old man would pay £13 extra for six points and £35 more for nine points. Even a man, 21, normally deemed a high risk, would pay only £103 extra for nine points.

Insurers not increasing premiums for drivers with one speeding ticket include Swiftcover, NIG, HSBC and Ensign. Andrew Blowers, chief executive of Swiftcover, said: "There are so many ordinary, safe drivers getting three points that it is no longer an indication that they pose a greater risk." He said that the inability of cameras to take circumstances into account meant that many drivers were being caught when they were driving safely given the conditions at the time.

"In the good old days police would make a judgment and exercise discretion but cameras cannot do that. We all know there are times when 90mph on a motorway, if it's clear, is quite safe.

"There is no point in loading the premiums of people who have long unblemished driving records but are mortified to find themselves with three points after being flashed."

Tony Allen, the chief executive of A&A Group, said that insurers now took a more sophisticated view of speeding offences and were more likely to take into account other factors. "If you are a high-mileage driver then it is more understandable that you get speeding penalties. Also, if someone is caught speeding by a policeman, insurers tend to see that as more significant than being caught by a camera."

Brake, the road safety charity, said that the risk of receiving a higher insurance bill had been an important part of the deterrent against speeding.

Mary Williams, the chief executive of Brake said: "The £60 fine is just pocket money to many drivers and the insurance increase often used to hurt much more than the fine. Now premiums are not going up, it makes sense to double the fine at the very least. It's absurd that you can be fined £1,000 for flytipping or smoking on a bus but only £60 for endangering people's lives on the road."

Rob Gifford, the director of the Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety, said that all motoring fines needed to be reviewed. But he believed penalty points were much more important to most drivers than the size of the fine.

The Government is proposing in the Road Safety Bill to cut the number of points from three to two for drivers caught only a few miles over the limit. Mr Gifford said: "Instead of being disqualified for a fourth speeding offence, drivers would get up to six chances. If they took a speed awareness course instead of a penalty, they may have to be caught speeding seven times before being banned."

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<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,2-1828894,00.htm>

CAR SAFETY MEASURE PUTS LIVES AT RISK

MURDO MACLEOD [The Scotsman 23/10/05]

A common car safety measure designed to save lives has been identified by transport experts as a major cause of road accidents.

Passenger compartment pillars have been thickened in recent years to protect occupants from injury or death in the event of a crash.

But the Department of Transport (DoT) has now launched a £75,000 investigation into whether the widened pillars in many new models are contributing to accidents by creating a bigger 'blind spot' for drivers

.Analysts have even invented a new term for this type of accident: "looked but did not see", or LBDNS. One study found that one in five accidents were caused by LBDNS, making them the third most common reason cited by drivers for collisions.

The DoT has commissioned the Transport Research Laboratory in Berkshire to analyse data from accidents and construct computer simulations.

It believes the danger is especially acute at junctions, roundabouts, merging lanes on dual carriageways and motorways, because the blind spots may stop drivers seeing cyclists, motorcyclists and even other cars.

The concern is that in the approach to a typical junction the pillar will block the driver's view of another car for about a third of a second - about the time most drivers will spend on a glance to check there is nothing coming.

More disturbingly, if vehicles are approaching a junction or a merging of lanes at similar speeds, the pillars might 'track' the other vehicle, obscuring the view of the other road-user for several crucial seconds, with potentially catastrophic results.

A DoT study carried out last year into 61,000 accidents across 13 UK police forces, including Central Scotland and Strathclyde, concluded that LBDNS was the third most common reason claimed for an accident - the top two were "inattention" and "failure to judge another driver's path or speed" - with 19.7% falling into this category.

A spokesman said: "The Department is currently undertaking research to test the hypothesis that modern car design can obscure the road and other road users to such an extent that it is an important contributory factor in accidents.

"This project will provide information on what drivers see in real-world accidents and how their field of vision may be affected by car design."

The main concern, the DoT spokesman said, was that the thickness of the 'A' pillars - essentially the forward roof supports - has been increasing and limiting drivers' field of vision as a result.

"There is some evidence to support this claim, but to date the effects of 'A' pillar obscuration have not been thoroughly investigated," he said.

Road safety campaigners welcomed the DoT investigation but questioned why officials had taken so long to act.

Paul Smith, the founder of the Safe Speed campaign, said motorcyclists particularly felt at risk from car blind spots.

"The failure of the authorities to deal with this vital safety issue is all too typical of modern weak road-safety thinking," Smith said. "The study is too little, too late. How many crashes could have been prevented in the last year alone if government had acted to highlight the dangers?"

Roger Vincent, spokesman for the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, said pillar-widening was causing concern. "They have become wider and they make it harder for drivers to see, especially at junctions," Vincent said. "Drivers should take special care and not just take a quick glance."

Mark McArthur-Christie, the road safety spokesman for the Association of British Drivers, described the investigation as "very good news".

He added: "As someone who often uses a motorcycle, I feel especially at risk at junctions and roundabouts. We need to balance the safety of car occupants when they are involved in an accident with the need to design cars to avoid accidents happening in the first place."

The AA Motoring Trust agreed. Andrew Howard, the trust's head of road safety, said: "This has been emerging as an increasingly important issue in recent years. But the dilemma is balancing the safety of the driver and passengers with the need for visibility."

Growing concern about poor visibility from cars has prompted Europe's largest motoring organisation, ADAC - the German equivalent of the British AA - to draw up league tables for the best and worst cars for forward and sideways vision.

The poorest cars tested included the Mitsubishi Colt, the VW T5 Multivan, the BMW 750i, the Volvo V50, the BMW 5 Series and the Honda Accord saloon. The best included the Renault Espace, the BMW Z4 Roadster, the Mercedes CL Mini One Cabrio and the Fiat Croma.

Car giant Volvo has recently unveiled a new prototype car which aims to solve the problem by replacing the pillars with a steel lattice frame combined with high-tech transparent materials.

A spokeswoman for the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders said: "We will work with government, but drivers also have a responsibility to check their own blind spots and drive safely."

Douglas Robertson, the chairman of the Scottish Motor Trade Association, said: "This is not an issue we have had any feedback on from consumers, who seem very happy with modern cars.

"The answer is, as is pointed out in the highway code, to move your head, and drivers need to be careful and remember that it is up to them to be sure that the road ahead is clear.

"My car has thick pillars and I know that had I not moved my head for better visibility on a number of occasions, I would have taken out cyclists."

groups based on their observation techniques. In the poorest group almost 70% of drivers crashed because of screen pillar obscuration and even in the best group 11% of drivers crashed.

<http://scotlandonsunday.scotsman.com/index.cfm?id=2133062005>

<http://www.smidsy.co.uk>

<http://www.smidsy.org.uk>

Exclusive copy of University of Minnesota report:

<http://www.safespeed.org.uk/minnesota001.pdf>

Contact for University of Minnesota report:

Dr. Curtis Hammond

Human Performance Research Lab

Univ. of Minnesota, US

email: chammond@umn.edu

President Bush was visiting a primary school and he visited one of the classes.

They were in the middle of a discussion related to words and their meanings.

The teacher asked the President if he would like to lead the discussion on the word "tragedy".

So the illustrious leader asked the class for an example of a "tragedy".

One little boy stood up and offered: "If my best friend, who lives on a farm, is playing in the field and a tractor runs over him and kills him, that would be a tragedy".

"No," said Bush, "that would be an accident."

A little girl raised her hand: "If a school bus carrying 50 children drove over a cliff, killing everyone inside, that would be a tragedy." "I'm afraid not," explained the president.

"That's what we would call a great loss."

The room went silent. No other children volunteered. Bush searched the room.

"Isn't there someone here who can give me an example of a tragedy?"

Finally at the back of the room a small boy raised his hand. In a quiet voice he said:

"If Air Force One carrying you and Mrs Bush was struck by a friendly fire missile and blown to smithereens, that would be a tragedy."

"Fantastic!" exclaimed Bush.

"That's right. And can you tell me why that would be a tragedy?"

"Well," said the boy, "It has to be a tragedy, because it certainly wouldn't be a great loss and it probably wouldn't be a f***ing accident either".

Event Submission Form — MAG Events – Affiliated Clubs - MAG Supported Events

To get your event listed, please fill out the form and return to MAG UK PO BOX 750 Rugby CV21 3ZR or
FAX: 0870 444 8449

Or check out the Events List Submissions Page on the MAG UK web site www.mag-uk.org

Event Name	
Organiser (MAG Group/Region or Club Name)*	
Start Date <i>day/month/year</i>	
End Date <i>day/month/year</i>	
Your email address*	
Your contact Phone Number*	
Website or page URL	
Enquiries Email	
Location Map URL <i>i.e. (StreetMap / MultiMap)</i>	
Enquiries for Event Phone Number	
Tickets available from (optional)	
Ticket Pricing	
Event Location <i>Where its happening</i>	
Additional Information <i>e.g. Fancy dress compulsory</i>	

*required information

All MAG events including Affiliated Clubs events are listed free on: MAG UK Website - Streetbiker – Network.

You can also send a flier for your event which will be inserted in Network.

MAG and supported events will be included free of charge.

Affiliated Clubs please contact MAG Central Office for details.

CONTACTS Central Office, P.O. Box 750, Rugby CV21 3ZRTel: 0870 - 444 8 448 Fax: 0870 - 444 8 449 Email : central-office@mag-uk.org

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Please be aware that with the exception of the Central Office Staff - Public Affairs - Streetbiker Editor all of these people are volunteers with 'day-jobs'.

Consequently, they may not be available to receive or return phone calls during office hours. In many cases, e-mail

November

4-6 Liverpool & West Lancs MAG Smoke on the Water - Scarisbrick Village Hall, Smithy Lane, Scarisbrick Near Southport, directions off the A570 near Ormskirk and Southport, Live bands, stalls, Rock Disco, Rock Karaoke, great beer, food bonfire and Mag North West AGM on Sunday, Tickets: £8.00 on the gate. Information: Billy 0772-0530110

9 Wakefield MAG Biker Quiz Nite - The Grey Horse, 219 Kirkgate, WAKEFIELD, WF1 4EJ. 9pm in the back room. 100 questions, all about bikes, biker culture, history, milestones, motorcycle sport etc. Enter as a team or individually. Prizes for 1st, 2nd & 3rd & booby prize for the least number of correct answers. £1 entry p.p. Information: 0772 078 4734

10 Greater London MAG London MAG Social Night - Ace Cafe, Ace Corner (off North circular road), Stonebridge, London NW10 Meeting Starts 8:30pm

12 Salvation Army Manchester/Group of associated bike clubs Salvation Army Manchester Toy Run - Manchester city centre (Wilmott street) to The Trafford Centre. NEW toys and cash donations directly distributed within the northwest. Free entry. Information: 01617433904

25 Manchester MAG Pre-Nollaig Bash - Irish Association Social Club, Cross Road, off High Lane, Chorlton, Manchester. Proceeds to be shared between MAG, NABD and TASK Brasil. Tickets: £4 adv; £5 on door. Information: 0161 434 2624

26 Past It MCC (MAG Affiliated Club) Christmas Bash - Stoke Works Club, Weston Hall Road, Stoke Prior, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, B60 4AL. Information: Ron 01527 872589 or 07967 911751

December

2-4 North Devon MAG Lee Bay Christmas Bash - Lee Bay Hotel, Lee, nr Ilfracombe, North Devon. 2 nights B&B and Christmas dinner £57.00 per person - pre-book only and book early to avoid disappointment as this is a popular event. Friday night DJ. Saturday night 5 course Christmas dinner, biker style (tongue in cheek) black tie and band. Party poppers are essential. Prepare yourselves for a relaxed weekend of good food and good beer in comfort and warmth in this hotel, set in an amazing secluded North Devon smugglers cove. See for yourself at www.leebayhotel.com No vehicle discrimination, all like minded people welcome. Possible ride out on Saturday. Currently the only event of it's kind in MAG, Come along and see for yourselves. Tickets: Lee Bay Hotel 01271 867600. Information: 01271 324111

3 Furness MAG Furness MAG Xmas Fancy Dress Party - Conservative Club, Abbey Road, Barrow-in-Furness. Raffle, Live Band, Top time guaranteed, open fancy dress. Tickets: £4 pre-book or on the door Contact mike on 01229-871912 for ticket info. Contact Jan on 01229 838398 for local B&B. Information: 01229-871912

8 Greater London MAG London MAG Social Night - Ace Cafe, Ace Corner (off North circular road), Stonebridge, London NW10 Meeting Starts 8:30pm

10 Basingstoke MAG Xmas Party and Run - The Camrose Club, Basingstoke Football Ground, Basingstoke. Glam Rock band and disco. Tickets: £3.50 adv £5.00 on door. Information & Tickets: Steve 01189 820204

11 MAG South East Region South East Region AGM - East

Grinstead RFC, Saint Hill Road, East Grinstead. Time 2pm.

11 MCC Rainbringers (MAG Affiliated Club) Shrewsbury Toy Run - The Square, High Street, Shrewsbury. Meet 10.30am onwards, Run leaves at noon visiting a special school & hospital. After at Cock Inn, Hanwood. Bring a toy or make a donation. Information: 01743 244082

16 York MAG York MAG Christmas Party - Crescent Working Mens Club, Blossom Street, York. Please Note New Venue. Tickets & Information: Jon 01652619665

16 South Herts MAG Christmas Party - Golden Lion PH, 111 High Street, London Colney, ST. ALBANS, Herts, AL2 1RG. Featuring Womble's Rock Disco. Tickets: £5 on door. Information: 07775 962761

18 Gloucester MAG Gloucester MAG Christmas Dinner - Pre book only, Contact & details: Donna Proctor 01452 506941 donnaglosmag@aol.com

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21 Gloucester MAG "AFTERCHRISTMASPARTY" - Contact & details: Donna Proctor 01452 506941 donnaglosmag@aol.com

27-29 Bury St Edmunds MAG The 11th BSE Mad Cow Rally - British Sugar Sports and Social Club, Bury St Edmunds. Due to limited places and increasing popularity it is advised to pre book early to avoid disappointment and save a 3rd over otg prices £10.00 pre person pre book, £15.00 on gate if your lucky, NO PROMISES. Free badge for 1st 100 tickets sold. Cheep beer, good food, live bands + disco, tattoist, 24 hour toilets with showers, warm hall to dance the night away, Fancy dress Saturday Night with prize offered. To book your place ring Herb on 01284 724273 or Pete 01449 736464 or send a Sae To: 4 Church Rd, Felsham, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP30 0PN. Club special book ten tickets get one more free. Information: 01449 736464

February

4 Thames Valley MAG Fred Hill Run - Depart Chieveley Services 12:00pm, (J13 M4/A34). nr. Newbury. Ride to Martyr's Memorial in Broad Street, Oxford. Short stop at Pear Tree Services to re-group. Followed by Thames Valley AGM and evening party. Information: 0790 500 35 85

March

24-26 Southampton MAG Frozen Beaver Bash - The Bold Foresters, Soberton, Hampshire. This is a very basic rally (and has been for the last 15 years) that we hold each year to kick start our rally season! All monies raised after expenses will go to MAG. Tickets: £5.00 Available From: 127 Gordon Road, Fareham, Hants, PO16 7TG. Information: Rose Mobile 07919000635 or L/line 01329 237035.

April

14-16 Western Region MAG 19th Duk Dik Rally - Put this in your diary now & watch this space for more details! Information: Donna 01452 506941 donnaglosmag@aol.com

23 Southampton MAG MAG Bike Show - Cricketers, Chestnut Avenue, Eastleigh, Hants. All monies raised from this event after expenses will be given to MAG excluding the raffle money as this will go to a charity of our (the group) choice. Any traders interested in having a stand at this event please contact me. Information & Trader Stands: Rose 07919 000635 or 01329 237035.



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