

The facts are simple. Speeding and other like offences are illegal. Research supports the fact that even five kilometres over the legislated speed limit doubles the crash risk [7].

From a road-policing perspective, 60kph means 60kph and 100kph means 100 kph (maximum safety speeds in good conditions). As driving is a privilege and not a right, the drivers have an obligation to themselves and others to obey the speed limits. If a choice is made by the driver to exceed the speed limit, either carelessly or deliberately, then the expected consequences are known. Any revenue is a bi-product of those consequences and should not be accepted as a “catch cry” of offenders.

Police and governments have a responsibility to minimise or neutralise this revenue raising debate, eliminate the argument as a barrier and get on with their strategic responsibility of saving lives.

Conclusion

The challenges for law enforcement over the next ten years are to continue to provide focus on safer road user behaviour, instil public confidence in planned and systematic enforcement practices, maximise the application of available technology, and maintain a leadership role in determining strategies and tactics. Enforcement must be strong, active and visible and interrelated with public education and awareness. Enforcement technology does not make the role of the traffic patrol officer obsolete –

nor do ‘safer’ cars and better roads. Traffic law enforcement can and does change driver behaviour and is an essential element in ensuring public safety and reducing road trauma. The key is to maximise the integration of enforcement, education and road safety awareness as well as balance the mix of physical on-road policing and automated enforcement through technology.

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From the Viewpoint of Road Users

Motorcycles and Road Safety in Australia for the Next Decade

By Shaun Lennard, Chairman, Australian Motorcycle Council (AMC)

Hobart

Two significant events took place in 2008 which we hope will provide the basis for motorcycle-specific plans in the national road safety strategy for the next decade. The timing of these in the lead up to the next ten-year strategy is perfect – stakeholders have time to digest the recommendations and develop them into practical measures for an Australian strategy.

In April 2008, the Australian Government hosted the first-ever Motorcycle and Scooter Safety Summit, held in Canberra. This was followed – purely by coincidence – by the inaugural Workshop of Motorcycling Safety hosted by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)’s International Transport Forum, held in Lillehammer, Norway, in June 2008.

I was fortunate enough to represent Australian riders through the Australian Motorcycle Council (AMC) at both of these





significant events, being the sole Australian rider rep invited to the OECD workshop.

Whilst these two events were being organised in isolation, the coincidence is that – in both Europe and Australia in late 2007 – ideas were developing for major motorcycle safety forums. The OECD event originated as a European Union (EU) forum, but grew in the early planning stages to encompass the OECD and thus involve Australia.

The themes and formats were remarkably similar – the first day identifying the problems and issues and the second developing recommendations and solutions.

The OECD workshop concluded by announcing three priority general principles which the AMC believes should be adopted in Australia, (where they are not already in place):

- cooperation between the various stakeholders, including continuing dialogue and cooperation,
- a fundamental requirement of motorcycling having a place in overall transport policy and infrastructure/policy management, and
- that counter measures be founded on evidence-based research

The philosophy of the second note is certainly not in place in most parts of Australia, but progress is being made. Meanwhile, there has been a huge increase in the number of motorcycles and scooters on the roads in Australia over the past decade – from 334,000 in 1999 when the current strategy was finalised to well over 550,000 now. The average annual increase has been around 5%, although closer to 9% p.a. in recent years.

There also seems to be a view emerging in Australia that we have done as much with driver/rider training as possible, and that the focus should be on injury containment, e.g. reduction in traffic speeds. Yet what is contained in the current curriculum for novice drivers around awareness of vulnerable road users?

Some strategists have taken the approach of looking at ways to reduce the numbers of people taking up motorcycling – for

example Queensland's increase of learner age and the appalling-confronting advertising campaign we saw recently. But that's a bit like trying to stop the tide, if recent years are anything to go by. It is far better to help make motorcycling safer, than simply attempting to reduce the total number of riders. I'm pleased to see that a new consultative body has just been established in Queensland, and this should see future initiatives developed in a far more collaborative manner.

At the OECD workshop we had a refreshingly different view too.

...I'd like to see... authorities genuinely acknowledging motorcycles as part of the transport mix

"It's time to end the blame-game and finger-pointing..." was a common theme coming from both rider and Government representatives in Europe. That's a key change I'd like to see in place as we develop the next ten year strategy in Australia; authorities genuinely acknowledging motorcycles as part of the transport mix and motorcycle riders and representative groups understanding – seeing – that those working on road safety are genuinely interested in seeing improvements in motorcycle safety.

Before looking ahead, let's remind ourselves of the five motorcycle-specific points in the 2009-2010 Action Plan, noting that we are only a little over a quarter through that period, so there is still time for further work in these areas before the end of 2010.

The points are simply summarised as:

- public education programs focussed on the greater risk faced by motorcyclists,
- ensure that motorcycle-specific issues are taken into account in the design and construction of roads,
- promote the safety advantages of ABS,
- a best-practice graduated licensing system, and
- a national rating system for protective clothing

In addition to the three general principles, the OECD workshop then developed a number of practical measures. In many ways the first six reflect the above points from the Australian action plan, so we must be on the right track. The challenge is that the measures need to be implemented and not remain as words in a strategy.

Below is a summary of those first six OECD items, which we believe should form the basis of plans for the next decade in Australia, along with the existing action plan items.

Training programs for motorcyclists

Countries have different training needs, based on their vehicle fleet and riding environment. Motorcycle training should therefore build on existing standards, focus on risk awareness and risk avoidance, and develop an understanding of the rider/motorcycle capacities and limitations.

Improved training for drivers

A component on awareness and acceptance of motorcyclists should be included in the general training for all drivers, with a particular emphasis on the need for appropriate traffic scanning strategies.

Braking systems

Manufacturers should continue to introduce advanced braking systems, such as combined brake systems and ABS. Getting safety messages to the riders and portrayal of responsible riding

Safety messages to riders should be developed in partnership with rider groups, in order to use the effectiveness of peer advice in communicating key issues to riders on issues that will impact their communities.

Integrated awareness campaigns

To develop an awareness of motorcyclists and mutual respect between road users, education activities and campaigns should be set up from early childhood, to emphasise that “road safety means road sharing”.

Guidelines for the development of road infrastructure and training for road designers

Each level of government should include in their infrastructure guidelines measures for accommodating motorcycles, developed with input from relevant stakeholders.

The Right Approach for Older Drivers

By Mr Robin Anderson, Prof Kaarin Anstey and Prof Joanne Wood

1. Introduction

The safety of older drivers is at times a contentious and emotive issue. While it is widely believed that most older drivers are relatively safe and responsible, there is a small proportion of drivers who are unsafe, and with population ageing, the number of individuals in this group will increase. It is timely to look ahead now to design strategies to address this issue.

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2. Demographic changes

As a result of an ageing baby boomer cohort and increasing life expectancy, the number of Australians aged 65 years and older will more than double from 2000 to 2025 (1). This demographic change means that older drivers comprise the fastest growing segment of the driving population. By 2030, it is expected that the proportion of Australian licensed drivers age 65 and older will rise to 22%, compared to just 13% in 2000 (2).

Older adults comprise 19% of all road-related fatalities (3) and 9.4% of all serious injuries (4). A conservative estimate places the cost of accidents involving older adults at around 12% of the total annual cost; approximately \$2.1 billion. US statistics show that drivers over the age of 75 are 3.8 times more likely to be involved in a fatal crash compared with all other drivers (3), and as a result of their increased frailty, older adults are more likely to sustain serious injury or die if involved in a crash

(4). Driving cessation has been linked with isolation, depression and mortality (5).

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3. Age-related changes that may influence older driver safety

Driving is a complex task involving integration of visual, cognitive and psychomotor skills. In later life, specific disease or general age-related changes may lead to deterioration in the basic abilities that are required for safe driving.

Cognitive changes associated with ageing that affect driving include slowing of reaction times, reduction in visual and divided attention, and reduction in executive function (6). Decline in executive function associated with atrophy of the frontal lobes, may underpin inconsistency (7) in responding to stimuli, poor planning of responses, and a lack of insight into physical or psychological declines that impact on injury risk (6). As the sheer number of people with dementia increases with population ageing (8), there will be an increasing need to manage the issue of driving in the early stages of dementia.

In addition to cognitive deficits from dementia and other medical illness, the prevalence of visual impairment increases significantly with age (9). Age-related changes in visual function have been investigated as risk factors for crashes