

New Approaches to Rider Education for Continuing and Returning Riders

Graham Knight^a, Teresa Senserrick^a, Brett Molesworth^b

^aTransport And Road Safety Research, ^bSchool of Aviation
The University of New South Wales

Abstract

While novice riders remain over-represented in motorcycle rider causalities, continuing older and returning riders' causalities are on the rise. In contrast to their less experienced counterparts, there is no motorcycle training scheme for these riders. Hence, the aim of this project was to establish an effective method of educating older and returning motorcycle riders. Late in 2016, *Ride It Right Motorcycling Techniques* conducted a pilot trial course with 12 participants, using their experience as a learning tool to improve safety. Positive participation and feedback demonstrated the course was able to achieve its objective. This presentation will discuss the relative merits of this approach to rider training and safety.

Background

A Motorcycle Rider Training Scheme was introduced in New South Wales (NSW) in 1987 to improve rider safety. In 1992, motorcycle rider training was made compulsory for novice and learner riders. Hence, many riders aged over 30 years have not undergone training in this scheme. This may account for, in part, the high number of rider causalities in this (older) age group (TfNSW, 2012). Therefore, the aim of this project was to establish an effective method of educating riders over the age of 35 years, in order to improve rider safety.

Active riders over the age of 35 years, who had either not experienced the compulsory rider training, or had completed it more than 10 years ago were targeted. The course was designed around the concept and principles of 'Later Life Learning' or 'Geragogy'; Referring to the need to "fine tune adult learning, teaching and instructional styles to aid the learning experiences of older adults who [may be] Post work and post family, and sometimes frail and with [physical] limitations." (Findsen & Formosa, 2011. p.103). Central to Later Life Learning is building on the experience [of the learner] of the adult learner. This approach was combined with 'peer learning and teaching', which has also been identified as a popular and effective teaching strategy for older adults.

Method

The pilot course was delivered in late 2016 to a group of 12 volunteer riders by *Ride It Right Motorcycling Techniques*. All riders were aged between 35 and 60 years and had either not experienced compulsory rider training, or had completed it more than 10 years ago. The course was conducted on the public road network, using a standardized approach of a talk to introduce a topic, then a ride to put the concepts discussed into practice. The course relied on the principle of self-directed learning, where participants are encouraged to take ownership, and responsibility for applying concepts discussed throughout the course. A chat room on social media was set up post training, to encourage ongoing group interaction, as well as to assist in determining whether the course objectives were met, and importantly whether it was effective in changing behaviour and enhancing safety.

41 Results

42 The resultant discussions in the chat room revealed that, anecdotally at least, the objectives of the
43 course had been met. Moreover, all participants were actively involved in the chat room and
44 discussing riding techniques covered in the course as well as sharing their learning experiences,
45 making riders more safety aware.

46 Conclusion

47 The course was effective in having riders reflect on their own riding practice and encouraged
48 effective peer learning through ongoing social media interaction. For older, continuing and
49 returning riders, it was effective in encouraging self-directed learning and recognising past
50 experiences as a valuable contribution to the overall outcomes. The course is worthy of further
51 research, particularly in the areas of how 'graduates' of the course are able to apply the topics and
52 concepts covered in the course to their own ongoing riding experience.

53 References

54 Findsen B., & Formosa, M. (2011). *Lifelong Learning in Later Life: A Handbook on Older*
55 *Adult Learning*. Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Sense Publishers.

56 TfNSW (2012). NSW Motorcycle Safety Strategy 2012-2021. Sydney, Australia: NSW
57 Government,