



AUSTRALIAN WEDGE TAILED EAGLE

The Motorcycle Riders Association Australia Submission  
**MAY 13, 2023**

The Legislative Assembly of Victoria's Economy and Infrastructure Committee's  
Inquiry into the impact of road safety behaviours on vulnerable road users.

The Committee will focus on how the COVID pandemic affected road users'  
behaviour

[new.parliament.vic.gov.au/roadsafetybehaviors](https://new.parliament.vic.gov.au/roadsafetybehaviors)

2.

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AUSTRALIAN WEDGE TAILED EAGLE

May 10, 2023.

### INTRODUCTION

Governments around Australia consider motorcycling a fringe sport and riders as mostly thrill seekers with criminals in the mix. This prejudice dates back to the 1950s. Few governments or road authorities do anything to research/consider road registered motorcycles & scooters as useful commuters and/or healthy recreational machines that contribute to our tourism industry and riders' well-being.

A person who rides a motorcycle or scooter to work generally arrives less stressed and happier than a person who arrives in a car after being stuck in traffic for an extended time.

When launching The State of Australian Cities, then Federal Transport Minister Anthony Albanese said. ***"... in the Australian policy context they (motorcycles & scooters) tend only to be mentioned in discussions about safety. This can obscure the fact that they are an important and growing component of the urban transport mix at a time when congestion drags like an anchor on our time and productivity."*** The Melbourne Herald Sun. December 4, 2012.

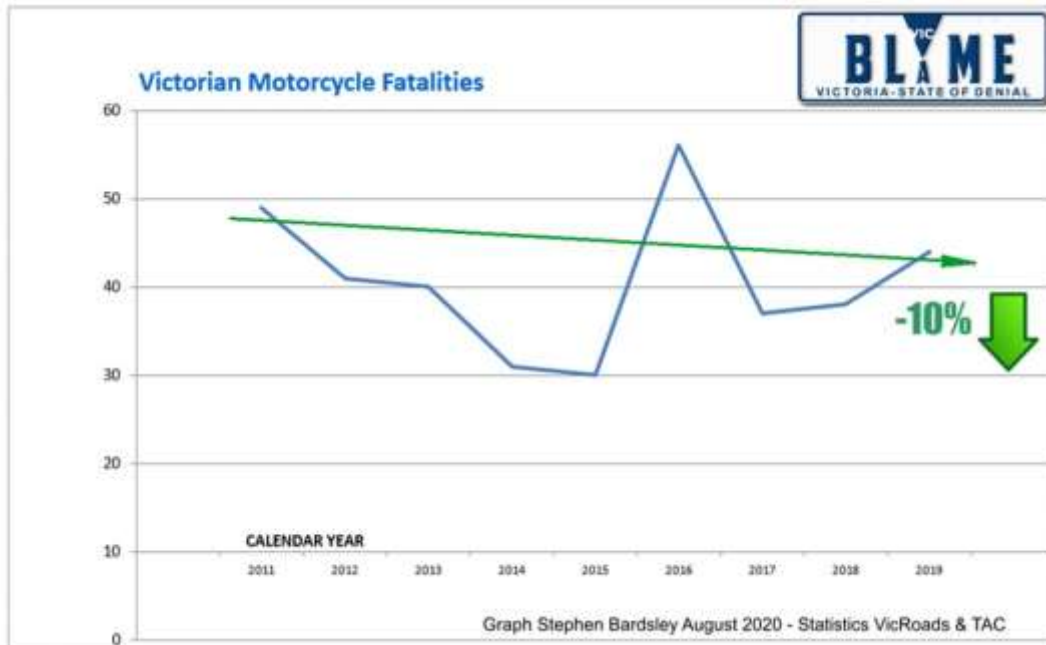


Figure 2 - Reducing Victorian Motorcycle Fatalities

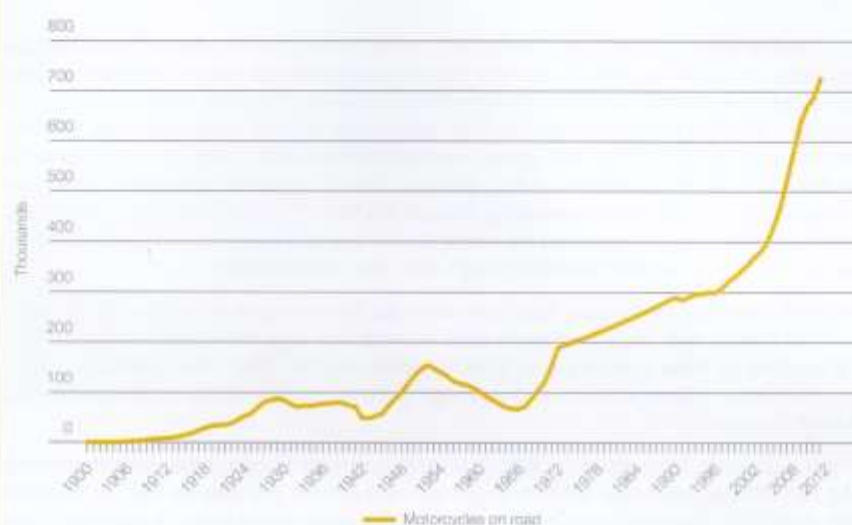
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## CRASH DATA AND PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY RECOMMENDATIONS

### Motorcycles and scooters

In many of the world's cities, the streets are thronged with motorbikes and scooters as people take advantage of this low-cost and space-efficient form of transport. In Australian transport policy, however, if they are mentioned at all it is usually in a discussion of safety. This can obscure the fact that they are an important and growing component of the urban transport system.

Figure 3-12 Motorcycles and scooters on the road 1900–2012 (projected)



Source: BITRE data

Figure 3-12 shows that the story of motorcycles and scooters has been one of fluctuating fortunes in Australia. From their beginning as essentially motorised bicycles at the start of the 20th century, motorcycles grew into a viable means of transport as engines, frames and (sometimes) suspension improved. For the first three decades of the century Australia had a thriving motorcycle industry using either local or imported components.

The growth was ended by the Depression which also meant the effective end of the local industry. Motorcycling grew strongly again after World War II as ex-military machines became readily available and cars were scarce and relatively expensive. This was also a period of technical innovation perhaps best exemplified by the Vincent HRD (partly designed by the Australian Phil Irving) which marked a watershed in design.

This renaissance was short-lived, however. Cars became more abundant and substantially cheaper in the 1950s which also coincided with the baby boom. It was also a period of relative technical stagnation in motorcycles although it did see the birth of the modern-day scooter in Italy.

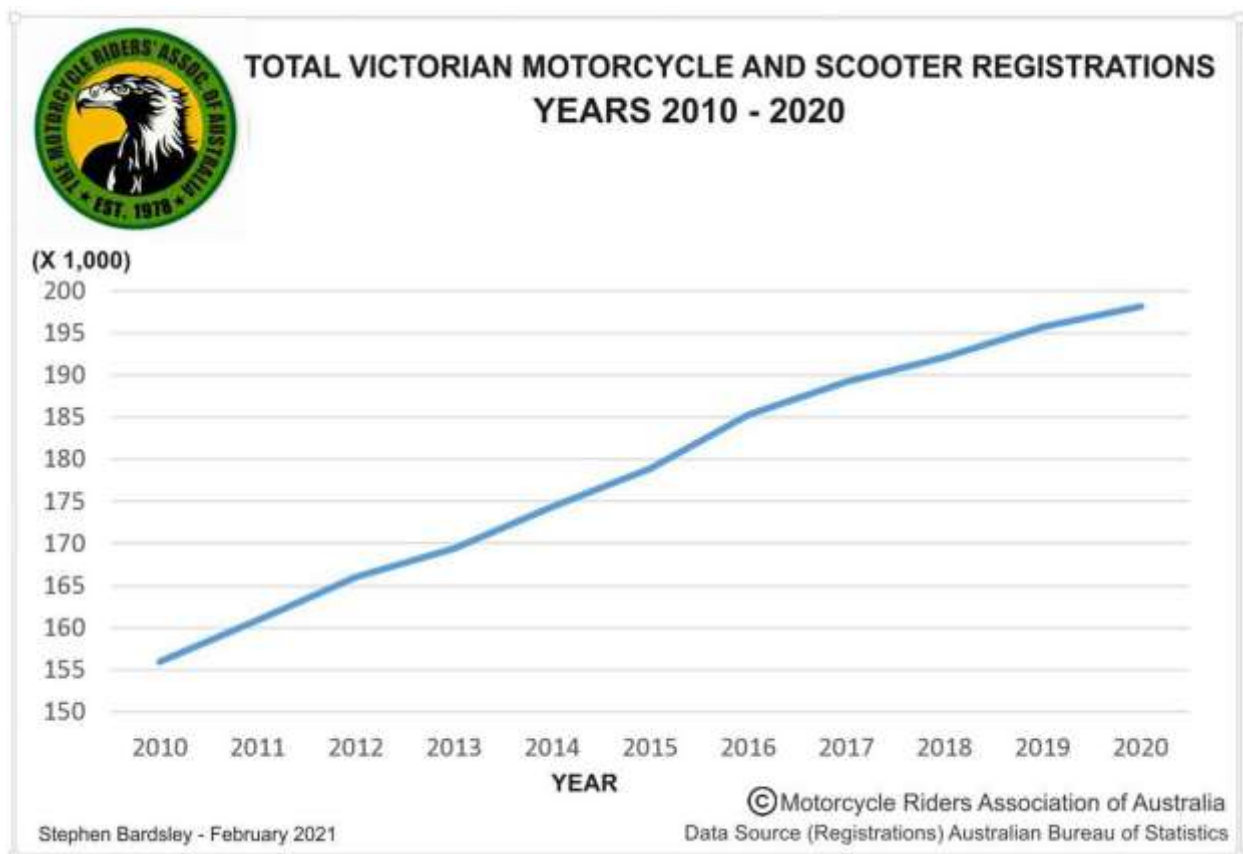
Most research organisations rely, at least in part, on tax payer funding. Governments and road authorities tell researchers what they want researched so researchers rarely seek positive aspects to motorcycling.

5.

In Victoria it is difficult to accurately measure changes to road user behaviour in the last four years because **“crash data collection and assessment is inadequate and unreliable.”** Collectors and assessors of crash data are the self-titled **“road safety partners”**. They are the Transport Department (VicRoads), Transport Accident Commission (TAC), Victoria Police (VicPol), Justice and Health. They are extremely reluctant to allow stakeholders access to what crash data does exist.

Changes to road user behaviour during and since the C19 pandemic cannot be effectively assessed without assessing road environments and the methods and competence of our transport network managers/administrators – the road safety partners and their history.

There are around 4.5 million registered vehicles in Victoria. Dr Michael Czajka PhD, the MRAA Road Safety and Research Officer, estimates there are 180,000 road registered motorcycles & scooters in Victoria and probably close to 400,000 off-road, unregistered machines.



What we can say with some certainty is that in the last four years car drivers have caused the majority of vulnerable road user injuries and deaths. The VACC column in the Melbourne Herald Sun (4/11/ 2022). **“Every life lost on Victoria’s roads is a tragedy. It’s also an immense cost to the economy, with the value of statistical life of just **one road death estimated to be \$8.56 million** in 2020 dollars.”**

6.

A contributing factor to Victorian road trauma is the way crash data is collected, cleansed and assessed. Too many casualty motorcycle crashes are caused by bad roads, animal strikes where the animal does not stay on site or by hit & run drivers are reported as lost control of the motorcycle. Road authorities blame victims after casualty crashes rather than addressing systemic problems with the way crash data is collected and handled and with badly managed road environments.

LISA SKAIFE, driver training expert, wrote in Linked In (April 2023). ***“Data is an integral part of any decision-making process to determine what’s working and what’s not. Using only the raw numbers (deaths/serious injuries) shows the current processes/ procedures are NOT working, with nearly every State & Territory’s fatality rate exceeding the previous 12 months. Road trauma costs over \$32B annually, and accounts for over 70% of beds in emergency wards nationally. The crash rate incidence is higher than it’s ever been. Fatality rates have decreased over the last 2 decades, whilst serious injuries have increased. Death rates have decreased due to improvements in infrastructure, policing, safety features of cars and MEDICAL INTERVENTION. In the 18-20yo age bracket death rate is 9:100,000 users – nearly DOUBLE the overall ratio of 4.9:100,000 users. Prevention is better than cure – improved education/training & testing is needed for the safety of all, especially the most vulnerable cohorts.”***

<https://lnkd.in/eEEgfHSW> #roadsafetymatters myDRIVESCHOOL® #simulationtraining

It seems the number of car drivers behaving badly has increased over the last four years. Road injuries and deaths have increased through the C19 Pandemic.

## Too fast and furious

A third of adult Australians have confessed to getting fast and furious within the last 12 months, admitting they go beyond the speed limit.

This comes as Australia recorded a 10.8 per cent increase in road fatalities this January compared with January 2022.

According to a recent Compare the Market survey, the age group with the lead foot was Baby Boomers (38 per cent), followed by Gen X (32 per cent), Millennials (28 per cent) and Gen Z (27 per cent).

While Gen Z was the least likely age group to speed, they were most likely to stop in a no-stopping zone (14 per cent), park in a no-parking zone (10 per cent), drive without headlights on (6 per cent), run a red light (5 per cent) and park in a disabled car park (2 per cent).

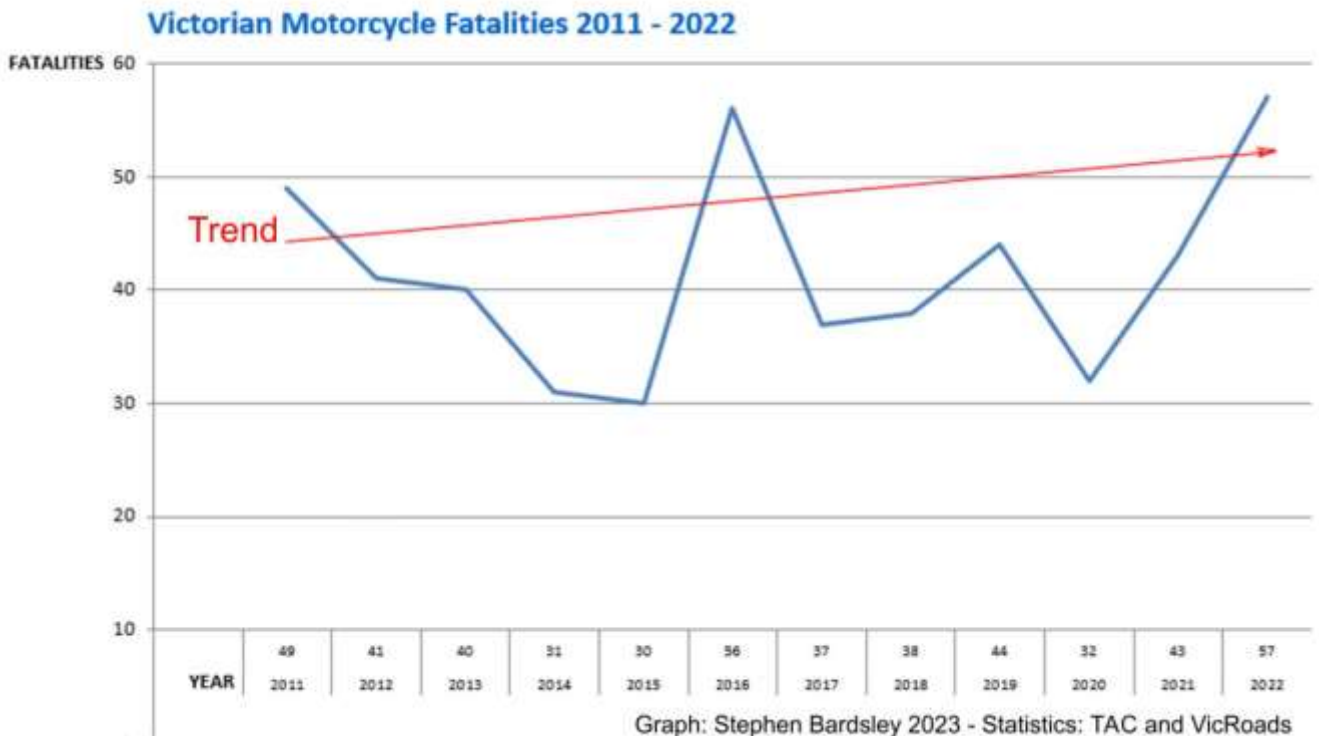
The Hobart Mercury. May 11, 2023.



7.



Dr Michael Czajka’s graph shows the risk to Victorian road registrations steadily decreasing between 2000 and 2019.



8.

Stephen Bardsley's graph shows two spikes in motorcycle fatal crashes since 2011. These crashes include unriders, unregistered and/or unlicensed riders. The actual causes of motorcycle crashes are not often recorded. The increase in serious motorcycle crashes since 2019 may be caused by car driver error, bad roads or animal strikes, but, **too often the cause is recorded as "lost control of the motorcycle" or "a motorcycle incident"**.

Mark Rodgers, 47, and Jodie Andrews, 42, hit a "shove" caused by heavy traffic when out for a ride. No speed, no alcohol or drugs, no problem with the motorcycle, an experienced rider and good weather. VicRoads knew there was a dangerous shove on the Great Alpine Road but did nothing. Mark and Jodie were thrown into an oncoming police car. In 2018 the Coroner found, **on advice from VicPol**, the cause of these deaths was **"Multiple injuries (motor vehicle impact – motorcycle rider)"**. Court Reference: COR 2015 1119.

For 2 years, stakeholders at the Motorcycle Expert Advisory Panel (MEAP) at VicRoads tried to raise the Coroner's finding but time was not allowed. MEAP was disbanded and the Motorcycle Community Engagement Panel (MCEP) invented. There have been several motorcycle committees going back to the Motorcycle Safety Forum in the 1980s. Each time a new committee is invented there are more restrictions. **No one was ever held to account for the double fatal on the Great Alpine Road in 2018.**



**Rough ride to death**

Poor road repairs blamed

HERALDSUN.COM.AU MONDAY, MAY 11, 2015

THE Coroner is investigating whether a dangerous road defect overlooked by VicRoads caused the horrific motorcycle accident that killed a Victorian couple on their weekend roadtrip.

The road authority has prepared a 20-page report for Victoria Police's Major Collision Investigation Unit on a 15cm bump near the crash scene on the Great Alpine Road near Essay.

It has emerged another

**ALEX WHITE**

motorcyclist was involved in a serious crash in the same spot less than 24 hours before the couple was killed.

Ringwood father-of-three Mark Rodgers, 47, and partner Jodie Andrews, 42, (above) died after their bike suddenly veered into oncoming traffic, hitting a police car on March 7.

It is understood authorities have ruled out speed as a

factor in the investigation and are now focusing on a sealed pothole as the main contributing factor.

VicRoads admitted conducting a hazard check on March 5 — two days before the crash — however, the damage was not reported.

VicRoads made temporary repairs in the days after the deaths and fixed the defect permanently on March 26.

Motorcyclist Justin Eard, 46, was a friend of the couple

and was riding in convoy with them from Bairnsdale when the crash occurred.

He said his bike was jolted by the same bump but he was able to keep control because he slowed to 40km/h after seeing the crash ahead.

"We saw the bike in the middle of the road. It was engulfed in flames 20 feet high and the bodies were lying there," he said.

Grieving sister Jodie Buckley, 45 said her brother

had been a keen rider for more than 20 years and loved weekend trips on his Harley-Davidson.

"He was an extremely happy and positive person. He was loved by everyone who met him."

VicRoads officer Peter Todd said the matter was under investigation.

"VicRoads is working closely with Victoria Police," he said.

alex.white@heraldsun.com.au





**CONCERN:** Jan White, widow of motorcyclist Phil White, spoke out against wire rope barriers at the 'Bad Roads Rally'. Picture: GLENN DANIELS

## Rally for better roads

MORE than 100 people gathered in Rosalind Park yesterday as part of a rally against the condition of rural and regional roads.

The crowd, mostly consisting of motorcyclists, were there for the Motorcycle Riders Association's 'Bad Roads Rally'.

The group wants the next state government to establish an independent crash data authority, review the Coroners Court's handling of fatal crashes, and restart the

parliamentary inquiry into VicRoads' management of country roads.

Four months ago, the parliamentary committee tabled an interim report in which it identified it would not be able to complete a full inquiry before the completion of this term of parliament, and recommended a full inquiry be undertaken in the next term.

The motorcyclists' association holds particular concern about wire rope barriers

and wants the government to cease the roll-out.

The government's Towards Zero safety plan says the flexible wire rope barriers reduce the chances of head-on and run-off-the-road crashes by 85 per cent.

VicRoads told the *Bendigo Advertiser* earlier this year the rollout of the barriers was based on evidence that showed they were "incredibly effective".

The widow of a central Victorian motorcyclist who died

at Tarradale in November last year after hitting a kangaroo on the Calder Freeway addressed yesterday's rally.

Jan White, the wife of Phil 'Whitey' White, said her husband died because he hit the wire rope barriers. "Make no mistake: he did not die from his motorbike hitting the kangaroo," she said.

Deputy State Coroner Iain Treloar found Mr White's cause of death was multiple injuries sustained in a motorcycle incident, but could not

determine their exact cause.

Yesterday, Mrs White said the wire rope barrier was the only roadside hazard there and it was her view the road authorities had "much to answer for".

Rally organiser Damien Codognotto said the general condition of rural and regional roads was also a concern. Individuals and businesses had to bear the cost of repairs when a road in poor condition caused damage to a vehicle, he said.

The Bendigo Advertiser. November 19, 2018.

Phil White was riding his motorcycle on the Calder Highway at Tarradale. He hit a dead kangaroo that was hidden by a car travelling in the same direction. There was a wide, grassy median strip but it was fenced off by a wire rope barrier (WRB). Phil hit the barrier. He died.

A similar crash on the Western Highway near Melton in 2022 took the life of a female motorcyclist on her way home from work.

Another double fatal near Geelong where a wide grassy median was fenced with WRB. It failed to stop a car crossing the median and crashing into oncoming traffic. Two died.

10.

## Plea for witnesses after horror ring road crash

Rebecca McDonald / 31 March 2023



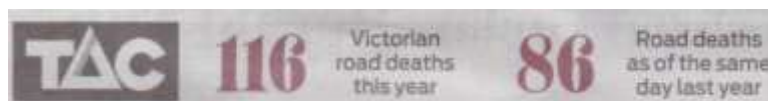
Police are calling for witnesses and dash cam footage as they investigate a double fatality on the Geelong Ring Road.

Two people died when a blue-coloured sedan and a large dark utility collided just after 5.20pm on Thursday.

Five people from one of the vehicles, including three primary school-aged children,

Geelong TV. March 31, 2023. These examples of crashes where crash data and advice to the Victorian Coroner is suspect are just the tip of the iceberg.

[https://www.facebook.com/watch/?ref=search&v=677394831064273&external\\_log\\_id=1bd530de-bad2-447d-8f5a-a5da2e692663&q=Bell%20Post%20Hill%20Geelong%20Ring%20Road](https://www.facebook.com/watch/?ref=search&v=677394831064273&external_log_id=1bd530de-bad2-447d-8f5a-a5da2e692663&q=Bell%20Post%20Hill%20Geelong%20Ring%20Road)



The cost of injuries not included. The Melbourne Herald Sun. May 11, 2023. 30 more dead than at this time in 2022.

In spite of what the road safety partners and researchers tell the media, crash data in Victoria is inadequate. No one can develop effective counter measures to road trauma without reliable, comprehensive crash/traffic data. Regardless of Parliamentary Inquiry recommendations the road safety partners resist change.

11.

## VICTORIA LACKS RELIABLE CRASH/TRAFFIC DATA

UPDATED MARCH 28, 2020.

Victorian Parliamentary Inquiries are regularly held by road safety committees that include elected representatives from all political parties.

The lack of reliable road crash data has been identified as a serious problem by various inquiries. *The problem is systemic.*

Without reliable data on road furniture, traffic flows, crash sites, road maintenance & repairs and more, the real cost of roads and road trauma cannot be accurately calculated. Road safety initiatives and infrastructure planning cannot be effective.

### 2005. CRASHES INVOLVING ROADSIDE OBJECTS

**"EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.** Crashes involving roadside objects are a major road safety problem in Victoria, accounting for almost one-fifth of all crashes resulting in an injury or fatality. ... *The Committee noted a number of areas where crash information was missing or could be more detailed. The difficulty obtaining adequate data, in particular travel exposure information to better assess crash risk and target safety treatments, is a continuing issue in Victoria, coming up time and time again in Committee inquiries. Governments agree to improve crash information, yet crash and crash risk information continues to be an impediment to the improvement of roadside safety in Victoria. Crash information recording and publications need to be greatly improved. ... The Committee observed that there was no systemic approach or strategic plan to comprehensively address the problem of crashes involving roadside objects.*"

### 2006. DRIVER DISTRACTION INQUIRY

**"CHAIR'S FOREWORD.** ... One of the problems faced by the Committee during the Inquiry was the lack of clear definition and information systems which measure distraction and its role in crashes. *The Committee calls on Victorian Road Safety Authorities to develop clear definitions, categories and suitable crash data reporting in order to understand the extent of the problems and to develop appropriate countermeasures. ...*"

**"EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.** ... *In view of the lack of suitable definitions, categorisations and suitable data, Victoria and most other Australian jurisdictions are not well placed to accurately assess the role of driver distraction in crashes. Recent studies in the United States, together with an ongoing study by the New Zealand Ministry of Transport, provide some insights into driver distraction impacts. Development of comprehensive crash data is a vital first step in guiding future Victorian road safety initiatives relating to driver distractions.*"

### 2012. INQUIRY INTO MOTORCYCLE SAFETY

**"EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.** ... *The first, and arguably the most important theme was the lack of accurate and robust data, both for crashes and trauma. Many arguments, proposals and observations made in submissions and witness statements were based or justified on crash and trauma data. However, the significant data issues identified by the Committee meant much of the evidence presented to the Committee was difficult to verify. ... Addressing data issues is the single most critical aspect of our future response to motorcycle safety.*"

**"RECOMMENDATION 1.** *That an independent office of road safety data be created that will be responsible for collecting, collating, interpreting and publishing all data relevant to road safety.*"

### 2018. INQUIRY INTO VICROADS' MANAGEMENT OF COUNTRY ROADS

**USE OF DATA IN DECISION MAKING.** VICROADS does not effectively use its' data to inform decision-making processes.

**NB** Under the current system most of the whole of government response to road safety inquiries is written mostly by the departments that need to change. Most Parliamentary road safety inquiry recommendations are not acted on in Victoria.



12.

## THE ROAD ENVIRONMENT

Road repairs, dangerously neglected in recent years, have added to the state's road trauma. A rider hit a huge pothole near Shepparton. She died. It is reported as **"lost control of the motorcycle"**. It is possible the bad road that caused the crash will not be mentioned in a Coroner's inquest probably in 2025. The Weekly Times. January 25, 2023.

**JASON GREGORY**  
and **DAVID JOHNSTON**

**SICK AND TYRED**  
**OUR**  
**WORST**  
**ROADS**

TWO of Victoria's highest-ranking public servants have delivered a stunning rebuke of both the funding and maintenance of the state's regional road network.

Meanwhile, it has been disclosed that damaged roads are being investigated as a potential contributing factor in at least two recent fatal accidents in regional Victoria.

Victoria Police road policing command assistant commissioner Glenn Weir said officers were "constantly" alerting road authorities or local councils to the parlous condition of Victoria's road network.

"We are (aware of safety issues with potholes), we are always seeing reports of collisions, and we are investigating a couple of serious ones where the road infrastructure is part of the investigation," he said.

"It is frustrating.

"We have had extreme weather, we have had a whole range of things that our friends at Infrastructure are telling us that are impacting, but it is always part of our investigation," he said.

According to a police spokesperson, the two fatalities were the New Year's Eve death of a motorcyclist near Shepparton, "when her bike struck a pothole and lost control".

The January 7 death was that of a female motorcyclist who crashed into a tree near Darramin, in the state's east.

Meanwhile, Regional Roads Victoria's chief Paul Northey said there was a current shortfall in money available for regional road repair, with major flooding late last year a key contributing factor.

"There is no doubt we will have to look at what additional dollars we will need in terms of recovery and getting the rebuilding program going after all the damage the floods have caused.

"I am expecting it will be significant dollars," he told 3AW.

Mr Northey said the \$780 million annually allocated for road maintenance in Victoria had remained stagnant in recent years, with \$470 million of the budgeted amount presently spent on regional roads.

A further \$160 million was allocated by the Victorian government late last year to deal with priority flood repair works with over 120,000 potholes repaired.

A Victorian government spokesperson said "any life lost on our roads is one too many and our thoughts are with anyone who has been impacted by road trauma".

The spokesperson said the government was making "record" investments in maintaining Victoria's roads, "but we know that there's always more to do".

Nationals leader Peter Walsh said the state government must commit increased and sustained funding for road maintenance beyond those released for the post-floods blitz.

# Letters

## VicRoads must be accountable for damage

THE reason the Great Alpine Road is in such dangerous condition is that VicRoads is a law unto itself ("Great Alpine Road rage," WT May 4). Most of the time victims can't hold the road authority to account when it causes a crash. That allows the city-based bureaucrats to pick and choose roadworks that suit them.

In March 2015 a couple riding on a motorcycle with friends died when they hit a "shove" on the Great Alpine Road and were flung into incoming traffic. Mark, an experienced rider was 47. Jodi was 42. This shove was a 15cm bump caused by heavy traffic. No speed, drugs or alcohol. Their bike was roadworthy. The weather was good. There is no doubt in my mind that the neglected road surface caused the crash.

A week or so earlier the shove was reported to VicRoads by a road patrol. VicRoads did nothing. A day before the crash another touring rider hit the shove and wound up in hospital. VicRoads did nothing.

At VicRoads in Melbourne, members of the Motorcycle Expert Advisory Panel (now disbanded) put the coroner's finding (motor vehicle impact) on the agenda for nearly two years but there was always a reason the MEAP did not have time to discuss this crash. Like



so many other crashes caused by bad roads in Victoria this one slipped away into history with no blame attached to VicRoads. Until VicRoads is held to account for the damage done by neglected country roads, road users can expect more unnecessary casualties.

**Damien Codognotto,  
The Motorcycle Riders  
Association Australia**

**No time to waste**



14.

**FED UP**  
THE WEEKLY TIMES' READERS TELL US WHAT THEY THINK OF VICTORIA'S REGIONAL ROADS

I don't give a stuff who is responsible, just fix them. Did a recent round trip to northeast Victoria, the Hume, once a great road, is a disgrace and the roads in regional Victoria are just falling apart. I will not go up there again until they are safe to drive on.  
**Carol**

Anyone been on the Calder after Sunbury... down to one lane on both sides and has been for months... evidently you just put up bollards and that fixes the problem.  
**Janette**

Just came back from a driving holiday in New Zealand and their roads put ours to shame, barely a pothole sighted. The government is spending all our money in the wrong areas.  
**Craig**

The roads in Victoria have been in a very sorry state for years now. Longer than the recent rains and floods that's for sure. To the Government: stop treating us all like idiots and fix the damn roads!  
**Kalay**

The Bridgewater to Maldon road is an absolute disgrace and in parts so bad you have to drive on the wrong side of the road. With grain trucks frequently using the road it's an accident waiting to happen. Come on State Government, spend some money in regional areas.  
**Cherrill**

Try the Western Freeway/Highway to the Streatham turnoff past Beaufort or the Calder Highway/Freeway all the way from Mildura to Melbourne, both are a disgrace.  
**Michael**

Frustrating. It's less work to put out signs reducing speed limits than fixing them and millions cheaper.  
**Peter**

THEWEEKLYTIMES.COM.AU WEDNESDAY JANUARY 25 2023

Source: theweeklytimes.com.au

In recent years Auditor General's reports have criticised the way VicRoads manages rural roads in Victoria. Planning to keep country roads safe for more and heavier vehicles, drought, fire and flood damage has been less than effective with VicRoads and Regional Roads Victoria preferring expensive show projects and flashy media to effective road maintenance. Road authorities' answer to badly damaged roads is to put up signs and lower speed limits. Bad roads means more wear and tear on vehicles costing people and businesses time and money and reducing safety.

# Easter fatality closes highway for six hours

**Sue Bailey**

A young interstate woman, travelling in Tasmania with her husband, has died after a two-car crash on the Arthur Highway in the south – the state's first fatality this Easter.

The death comes as road safety authorities reveal the number of serious injury crashes is up 50 per cent on last year, which was a horror year on Tasmanian roads with 51 deaths.

The accident happened about 9.20am on Friday and the Arthur Highway was closed for six hours between Kellevie Rd and Sugarloaf Rd while crash investigators conducted inquiries.

Detective Inspector Re-



**Detective Inspector Rebecca Davis at Bellerive police station.**

becca Davis of Bellerive police said the woman was a passenger in a white MG sedan and died at the scene.

She said the male driver of the MG was taken to the Royal

Hobart Hospital with minor injuries.

The female driver and her female passenger in a Camry sedan were both taken to the RHH with minor injuries but an infant in the car was not hurt.

Inspector Davis said it was too early to say what might have caused the collision.

"We're in the early stages of the investigation and obviously a report is being prepared for the coroner," she said.

"We could say that the weather may have been a factor, or a contributing factor to this."

Traffic was light at the time of the crash and Inspector Davis thanked first responders

and those who helped at the accident scene.

"Police would like to thank witnesses and those who were close at the time of the crash and assisted those there and are continuing to help us with our inquiries," she said.

"We encourage anyone who has dashcam footage, or any witnesses to those vehicles driving in that vicinity around that time, to contact police."

Road Safety Advisory Council chair and former police commissioner Scott Tilyard expressed condolences to the woman's family and urged motorists to take extra care during the Easter break.

He said in the past five years over Easter there had been

three fatalities on Tasmanian roads and 19 serious crashes.

"It's extremely disappointing that so early this Easter there has been a death and our condolences go to the family of the young woman who lost her life and our thoughts are with all the first responders," Mr Tilyard said.

"It is very concerning that serious injury crashes are 50 per cent up on last year which was a horror year on our roads.

"The number of serious injury crashes is probably the worst it has been for the last 20 years."

With wet weather forecast and more traffic on the roads, Mr Tilyard urged people to slow down and pay attention.

The Hobart Mercury. April 8, 2023.

# Space saver punctures driver confidence

**Dom Tripolone**

Australia's wet weather has highlighted a shortcoming in many modern cars.

As our roads have become more potholed, motorists with damaged tyres are being caught short because car makers have done away with full-sized spare tyres to save weight and reduce fuel consumption.

Many new cars are now sold with tricky-to-use puncture-



**A MyCar tyre mechanic replaces a tyre.**

repair kits or "space-saver" tyres that can only be driven at 80km/h.

Exclusive data provided by the NRMA shows it had 116,597 call outs for flat tyres

this financial year and it is predicting it will be the worst year on record for tyre damage.

MyCar, one of Australia's largest auto service networks, replaces more than 80,000 tyres annually.

MyCar chief executive Adam Pay said drivers needed to be mindful that space savers and puncture repair kits were short-term fixes only.

"Full-size spare tyres have become increasingly rare in

new cars as manufacturers move towards space savers and temporary repair kits," Mr Pay said.

"While these offer a temporary fix for drivers, it's crucial to replace your flat or damaged tyre with a full-sized replacement as soon as possible."

The shift to space-savers and puncture repair kits will grow in coming years as more electric and hybrid cars arrive on the market.

The Melbourne Herald Sun. April 23, 2023.

Not all new technologies enhance safety.



16.

### **WIRE ROPE AND OTHER BARRIERS**

Between 2015 and 2023 hundreds of kilometres of wire rope barrier (WRB) were installed on Victorian roads. The cost was enormous. The MRAA was told by a VicRoads official that in 5 years from 2015 \$4 billion would be spent on WRB in Victoria. These barriers caused serious injuries and deaths in three ways.

1. Direct impacts. Trucks, cars, motorcycles and pushbikes hit WRB but it rarely performs as road authorities promote them to the tax paying public. In most cases they do not stop trucks or cars as advertised. VicPol do not identify and record barrier types in most crash reports.



2008. The site of a double fatal crash on the Western Hwy at Dadswell Bridge in Victoria.

17.



Wire rope barriers do not perform as advertised. They do not stop cars or trucks in too many situations.

In 2022 Prime Minister Morrison's security detail was travelling in an SUV in Tasmania. The SUV was hit by another car and then a w-beam barrier and on to a WRB. The WRB failed and the SUV rolled. Presumably the SUV was roadworthy and the driver trained and sober. The media blackout was swift.

**A barrier too far**  
LOOKS like those crazy wire rope safety barriers have done a great job of preventing the PM's security car from damage.  
Instead, it looks like the wire barrier has been instrumental in causing the vehicle to flip, the low placement catching it below its centre of gravity with disastrous results and injuries to the occupants.  
Hundreds of millions of dollars have been misguidedly spent on these barriers, with safety outcomes unproven – except by those who benefit politically or financially. They can act elastically, repelling vehicles and motorbikes back on to the road for other vehicles to crash into.  
I think I'd rather my tax dollars be spent on better roads, better signage and more highway patrols.  
**Peter Robinson, Brighton**

The Melbourne Herald Sun. April 18, 2022.



18.

2. Indirectly by reducing emergency stopping areas.



**Herald Sun**  
**Sunday**  
**EDITORIAL**

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2018

## Safety barriers deadly for motorcyclists

I'D like to take the Transport Accident Commission to task about the wire rope safety barriers that have been springing up everywhere lately, or "cheese cutters" as we motorcyclists like to call them.

They do not comply with one of the golden rules of their own OH&S safety regulations, mainly that to eliminate one hazard you must not create another one just as bad or worse.

If there is a 50/50 chance of hitting, say a tree, if I run off the road, that is better than a 100 per cent chance of hitting these barriers.

Also, if I hit the barrier in the middle of the road, then there is a good chance that I could be thrown over it into the oncoming traffic. By their own rules, safety measures must apply equally to all road users or not at all.

Just like at work, you can't have equipment that is safe for some people to use but not others.

They might be great for cars and trucks but definitely not for motorcyclists.

Stewart Waterman, Creswick

Melbourne's Sunday Herald Sun. September 16 2018.



# Tragic end to rescue

**BRIANNA TRAVERS  
LIAM BEATTY**

A FATHER has been killed after going to his son's rescue when he got a flat tyre on a Victorian highway.

The 55-year-old Rosedale dad was helping his son on the roadside when he was struck from behind by a passing car on the Princes Hwy at Flynn, between Traralgon and Rosedale, in the Latrobe Valley just before 8.20am on Friday.

He died at the scene.

The 23-year-old male driver of the car, also from Rosedale, stopped immediately and was on Friday night being treated in hospital for shock.

No charges have been laid, and police are still investigating.

"The exact circumstances surrounding the collision are yet to be determined and investigations are ongoing," Sergeant Megan Stefanec said.

Major Collision Investigation Unit detectives will look at whether the weather conditions were a contributing factor with a wet road and light rain possibly impeding the driver's visibility.

They will also find out if the young driver was distracted by his mobile phone.

The father was believed to be standing beside his white Peugeot van, parked behind his son's blue sedan, when he was hit. His van was badly damaged in the crash, and the driver's side door was almost ripped off. Debris was scattered across the road.

Road Policing assistant commissioner Glenn Weir said the man was one of five people to die in a horror 48 hours on Victorian roads.

He said the state was entering a high-risk period, cautioning motorists to not get "complacent" at the wheel.

"Slowing down, remaining alert and being extra cautious when roads are wet or visibility is affected are simple, but life-saving measures all motorists can take to protect themselves and other road users," he said.

"People sometimes don't understand the ramifications of a short period of inattention and reckless behaviour."

A pedestrian, 55, was also killed after being hit by a truck in Geelong on Thursday.

[brianna.travers@news.com.au](mailto:brianna.travers@news.com.au)



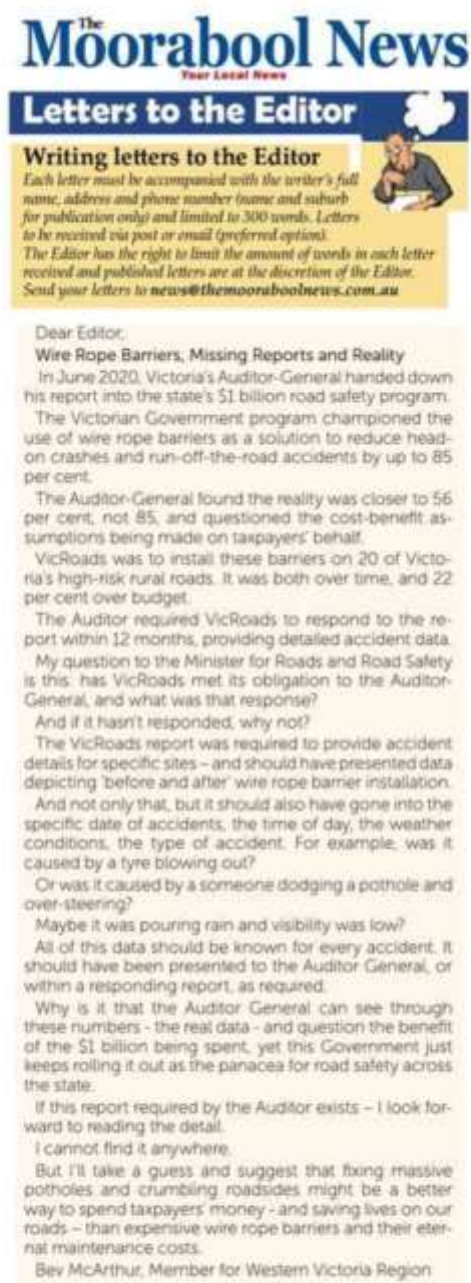
The crash scene near Rosedale. Picture: Jason Edwards

The Melbourne Herald Sun. June 18, 2022.

The MRAA has repeatedly called on governments to require all crash reports to record the type of barrier involved in, or adjacent to, casualty crashes. Crash investigators do not record barrier information in most reports.

20.

3. By diverting funds from rural roads to cover VicRoads' WRB projects. Refer to Auditor General's reports. WRB is the most expensive barrier ever installed on our roads. It has a 20 year working life. In the 80 year life of a smooth concrete barrier WRB must be replaced 4 times. It's easily damaged. Maintenance costs are high. Funding is not transparent.



**The Moorabool News**  
Your Local News

**Letters to the Editor**

**Writing letters to the Editor**

*Each letter must be accompanied with the writer's full name, address and phone number (name and suburb for publication only) and limited to 300 words. Letters to be received via post or email (preferred option). The Editor has the right to limit the amount of words in each letter received and published letters are at the discretion of the Editor. Send your letters to [news@themooraboolnews.com.au](mailto:news@themooraboolnews.com.au)*

Dear Editor,

**Wire Rope Barriers, Missing Reports and Reality**

In June 2020, Victoria's Auditor-General handed down his report into the state's \$1 billion road safety program. The Victorian Government program championed the use of wire rope barriers as a solution to reduce head-on crashes and run-off-the-road accidents by up to 85 per cent.

The Auditor-General found the reality was closer to 56 per cent, not 85, and questioned the cost-benefit assumptions being made on taxpayers' behalf.

VicRoads was to install these barriers on 20 of Victoria's high-risk rural roads. It was both over time, and 22 per cent over budget.

The Auditor required VicRoads to respond to the report within 12 months, providing detailed accident data.

My question to the Minister for Roads and Road Safety is this - has VicRoads met its obligation to the Auditor-General, and what was that response?

And if it hasn't responded, why not?

The VicRoads report was required to provide accident details for specific sites - and should have presented data depicting 'before and after' wire rope barrier installation.

And not only that, but it should also have gone into the specific date of accidents, the time of day, the weather conditions, the type of accident. For example, was it caused by a tyre blowing out?

Or was it caused by a someone dodging a pothole and over-steering?

Maybe it was pouring rain and visibility was low?

All of this data should be known for every accident. It should have been presented to the Auditor General, or within a responding report, as required.

Why is it that the Auditor General can see through these numbers - the real data - and question the benefit of the \$1 billion being spent, yet this Government just keeps rolling it out as the panacea for road safety across the state.

If this report required by the Auditor exists - I look forward to reading the detail.

I cannot find it anywhere.

But I'll take a guess and suggest that fixing massive potholes and crumbling roadsides might be a better way to spend taxpayers' money - and saving lives on our roads - than expensive wire rope barriers and their eternal maintenance costs.

Bev McArthur, Member for Western Victoria Region



**Bev McArthur MP** is with **The Moorabool News.**

16h · 🌐

Last month I asked for the hard facts on the success rate of VicRoads' enormous and sometimes utterly thoughtless roll-out of Wire Rope Barriers on our roads. With the program costing more than \$1bn and with some 5000 staff now at the Department of Transport and Planning (not to mention VicRoads!) - these kind of numbers surely must be available...

The Moorabool News. 2023.

21.

In a sales brochure from the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia (IPWEA) dated March 16, 2016 an extraordinary claim was made. ***“Wire rope barriers (were) shown to reduce serious crash incidence by up to 87%”.***

***“Researchers from Monash University Accident Research Centre (MUARC) looked at 100 km of wire rope safety barriers (WSRB) installed on Victorian roads. They found ... estimated reductions on individual routes ranging between 75% and 87%”.*** The MRAA understands this extraordinary estimate was based on two Melbourne roads then used to justify WRB installations across the state. We were not told if factors other than the crash rates were considered. Was traffic reduced due to activities in the area or extreme weather, fires or floods. We were not told if there were road works or reduced speed limits in this 100 km or over what time the survey was conducted.

The author was Nimmi Candappa then at MUARC.

***“The issue from the motorcyclist’s point of view though is they feel as though, because the posts can often be sharp on the edges, they might actually snag them in some way and impart greater injury than the smooth side of a concrete barrier.”***

Ms Candappa clearly has little motorcycling expertise. Riders collide with barriers at a shallow angle in most crashes. It is posts that cause greater injury to motorcycle or bicycle riders in any barrier system, simple logic.

***“In countries such as Australia and New Zealand, where larger vehicles outnumber motorcyclists, Candappa says road authorities have a responsibility to cater to the majority of road users. I think it would be questionable if we disregard a barrier or some form of infrastructure that is considered really, really quite good for safety for the majority of road users in the hope of catering for a very small percentage of road users.”***

This attitude to motorcycle safety is embedded in Victoria’s road safety partners. When WRB was being installed on roads to the Phillip Island motorcycle Grand Prix the MRAA complained. A policeman in the area told a Dandenong local newspaper that he felt motorcyclists gave up their right to road safety when they threw a leg over a motorbike. Many legitimate road-registered motorcycle scooter riders feel road authorities consider the situation to be one of mind over matter. They don’t mind and we don’t matter.

**The MRAA has repeatedly asked governments to require riders and drivers using vehicles illegally to be flagged in crash data so statistics give a more accurate picture of legitimate road users.**

22.



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## Minister for Transport; Planning

Our ref: 72-30484

Mr D Codognotto OAM  
The Motorcycle Riders Association Australia  
[damienkcodognotto@gmail.com](mailto:damienkcodognotto@gmail.com)

Dear Mr Codognotto

### **WIRE ROPE BARRIERS**

Thank you for your email of 12 December 2020, addressed to the Minister for Police, Hon Michelle Roberts MLA, regarding wire rope barriers on the State Road network. As this matter falls within the portfolio of the Minister for Transport, Hon Rita Saffioti MLA, your correspondence has been forwarded to this office and the Minister has asked that I respond.

I can advise that the State Government has recently allocated \$57.2 million to replace aging metal barriers and wire rope barriers on the Mitchell Freeway and sections of the Kwinana Freeway.

The barriers will be replaced with hard concrete crash barriers to help reduce maintenance costs, and to comply with the recently updated standards for barriers at rail corridor locations.

Planning for the replacement program, which will be jointly undertaken by Main Roads and the Public Transport Authority, will be completed this financial year with replacement works to be undertaken during 2022 and 2023.

I trust this information is of assistance to you and thank you for writing to the Minister.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R Farrell'.

**RICHARD FARRELL**  
**SPECIAL ADVISER**

2 FEB 2021



## Freeway wire barriers must go, say motorcyclists

Nadia Budihardjo

THE peak motorcyclists' group has made an urgent plea for safer freeway barriers in the wake of the tragic death of charity rider Katrina Reeve on the weekend.

Ms Reeve, 39, was on the way to HBF Arena in Joondalup as part of the annual Perth Bikers Charity Ride, which involves participants bringing toys for the Salvation Army Christmas Appeal.

She died after losing control of her motorcycle and hit a wire guard barrier at Hephurn and Whitford's avenues just after 9:30am.

In paying condolences to Ms Reeves' family, Motorcycle Riders Association of WA president Jeff Thomas said he hoped the tragedy would serve as a catalyst for speeding up barrier replacement.

"We haven't been happy about the wire barriers. It can be unforgiving if you hit one," he said.

"This was a public event with tragic circumstances.

"There's a lot of them (wire barriers) out there... you've got to be realistic, get rid of the most dangerous one first in the short term and go from there."

Main Roads spokesman Dean Roberts said barriers would be replaced with hard concrete as part of a program in collaboration with Public Transport Au-



Police at the scene of Sunday's tragic crash. Inset: Katrina Reeve. Picture: Danella Bevis

thority.

"Fifty million dollars has been allocated under the current State Budget to replace ageing metal barrier on the Mitchell Freeway, north and south, on the railway side median," he said.

"The replacement program will also include existing wire-rope barrier on both the Mitchell Freeway and some parts of the Kwinana Freeway. Planning will be undertaken this financial year and the replacement program will be rolled out over the next

two to three years."

Mr Thomas said they have been agitating for years for wire barriers to be replaced.

"We're going to approach the Road Safety Commission and Michelle Roberts, have a conversation and see where we can go with this," he said.

Two more motorcycles crashed at the same section during the charity ride, causing three people to receive serious injuries.

A man and a woman were taken to Royal Perth Hospital while another woman

was taken to Joondalup Health Campus.

Charity ride organiser Colin 'Bandit' Scott said they were waiting on the result of the investigation.

"The organisers of the Perth Bikers' Charity Ride wish to extend their deepest and most heartfelt condolences to the family of Katrina Reeve," he said.

"We also extend our best wishes to those who were injured in the accident and sincerely hope that they have a full and speedy recovery."

Mr Scott said the com-



munity was deeply upset by the fatal accident amid the generosity of charity ride participants this year.

"Just over \$22,300 was raised in cash, toys and food donations for The Salvation Army Christmas Appeal," he said.

"It's one of our better years, in light of COVID-19, it's quite an achievement."

From a Perth, WA newspaper in 2020. A run off area fenced by WRB killed a motorcyclist.

WRB kills a motorcyclist. VicRoads has continued to install wire rope barrier and this has contributed to motorcycle fatalities over the last four years.

Posts in any barrier system increase injuries to riders. Road authorities know this. They install "pole covers" or pads on some WRB posts to be seen to be doing something. The pads are expensive and as great a hazard as bare posts. Instead of hitting a post the sliding body hits a simulated small tree.

The posts on w-beam metal barriers are sometimes covered with a smooth metal skirt, or "rub rail" or "slide bars". By doing this road authorities make metal barriers like smooth concrete barriers which is safer for a body sliding into a barrier at a shallow angle.

From a rider's point of view, smooth concrete barriers are safer in most crashes. Where possible, the safest option is no barrier. Run-off areas are cheap to install and maintain. Road users who have to stop can pull off the road. Run-off areas can be safe havens for road and emergency service workers. Research may show run-off areas may reduce animal strikes. See the Roadside Crash Barrier Testing.



24.



W-beam with skirt covering the posts. Lake Mountain, Victoria. October 2009.

## for error', country fire captains warn

■ Josh Gambie, captain of the Kyneton brigade, said his crew's response times to a car entrapment one month ago and a grass fire mid-year were delayed, due to a lack of barrier openings.

■ Max Cox, a retired CFA volunteer of 65 years, said the wire ropes hindered firefighter access to a grass fire on the Hume Highway.

Experienced traffic engineer and former Planning Panels member Des Grogan warned that wire ropes were being installed too close to carriageways, in a letter sent to VicRoads and Minister for Roads and Road Safety Luke Donnellan one month ago.

But Mr Sherritt said research showed that having the barriers closer to the carriageway stopped vehicles from rolling over.

VicRoads consulted with the CFA, Mr Sherritt said. "We have worked with stakeholders, you pick up things, you learn things, you change it as you go through."

"The work on the Calder is not lost, but we might need to go back and retrofit a couple of things."

Acting Minister for Roads and Road Safety Philip Delidukis said evidence showed that the safety barriers reduced the risk of head-on and run-off-road crashes by 85 per cent.

"Dozens of people" hit barriers across Victoria this year, with the barriers "almost certainly preventing deaths and serious injuries" in many cases, Mr Delidukis said.

Since their installation, wire ropes along the Hume Highway have been hit 85 times. Princeps highway barriers have been hit 44 times, while those on the Calder Freeway were struck 26 times.

National MP Steph Ryan said CFA volunteers in her Euron electorate warned that rope barriers would "make fighting a fast-moving grass fire on the Hume Highway more difficult".



Andy Chapman, CFA captain, inspects the barriers. Photo: Justin McManus

The Melbourne Age. December 2018. Concrete barriers can be fitted with sliding gates.

## Wire rope barriers more harmful than good

**National Member for Ovens Valley Tim McCurdy stresses the Victorian Government wire rope barriers are increasing across regional Victoria and instead causing more harm than good to all motorists.**

In Parliament Mr McCurdy said, "evidence continues to grow that the wire rope barriers seem to be doing more harm than good, especially to motorcyclists."

"As someone who has ridden bikes all my life, I know motorbike riding is a high-risk mode of transport, but the increase in wire rope barriers has well and truly tipped the odds against motorcyclists."

"I am absolutely horrified by the increase of wire rope barriers they have grown so rapidly in the past few years and this is definitely a concern."

"I urge those responsible for wire rope barriers to review the OH&S for all road users. For instance, for a motorcyclist a tiny bump in the road, a bee sting or a rock on the road is significant. And when you put wire rope barriers on each side of you, it turns that risk from significant to deadly."

"Instead of placing wire rope barriers in the

strategic places, the Victorian Government has now made these 'cheese-grater' barriers the easy and quick fix alternative."

"The Victorian Government needs to follow the lead of Western Australia, the first state in Australia to replace various wire rope barriers with AMCO railing, where direct impact with AMCO railing instead results in cars or motorbikes sliding along the railing rather than be sliced open by wire rope barriers."

"To think about the impact these wire rope barriers have on cars and then to think about how much more damage they can do to direct body on wire contact for motorbike riders, is just horrific."

"I urge the Victorian Government to listen to the motorcycle riders of Australia to ensure road safety is a priority for all road users, not just the larger users."

Mr McCurdy will continue to push for the implementation of AMCO railing in replacements of wire rope barriers in Parliament.



National member for Ovens Valley Tim McCurdy sits atop wire rope barriers on a recent motorbike ride.

25.

## THE MOTORCYCLE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PANEL

In 2021 VicRoads set up the **Motorcycle Community Engagement Panel (MCEP)**. MCEP replaced the **Motorcycle Expert Advisory Panel (MEAP)**. These replacements go right back, via the **Victorian Motorcycle Advisory Committee (VMAC)**, to the **Motorcycle Safety Forum** in the 1980s. Each time VicRoads replaces a motorcycle committee transparency is reduced and bureaucratic control tightens. These name changes and replacements reduce departmental accountability in road safety.

From the MCEP website. ***“Road Safety Victoria and its’ road safety partners are committed to listening to riders to understand the issues that are important to them. We know that motorcyclists are a very diverse group of road users with different attitudes, motivations, experiences and behaviours. We want to hear those varied opinions and make sure that all riders are represented in the way we approach road safety.”***

Stakeholders are not allowed to elect their own representatives. They are not allowed to raise issues or add items to agendas. They are not allowed to see the minutes of MCEP meetings. It took the MRAA six months to get copies of some heavily censored MCEP minutes through Freedom of Information. MCEP meetings directly effect the safety and well being of Victoria’s legitimate motorcycle community.

<https://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/safety-and-road-rules/motorcyclist-safety/motorcycling-community-engagement-panel>

The motorcycle community has not been engaged by MCEP. The Department of Transport (DoT) paid Hayes Recruitment \$17,000 from the Transport Accident Commission’s (TAC) motorcycle safety levy known in the motorcycle community as the TAC tax. Hays assisted in the short listing of candidates but DoT selected the MCEP members. MCEP members are paid under section C of the Victorian Government Guidelines.

On 28 Jan 2023, at 3:02 pm, Professor Marcus Wigan wrote:

After a considerable time, redacted agendas have finally been extracted from the Victorian Government. I would like to express my gratitude to Damien for persevering for so long through the Freedom of Information (FoI) process. The necessity for which should be unnecessary and is clearly counterproductive. Secrecy and disablement of any meaningful engagement is extremely destructive. It has clearly vastly reduced both the effectiveness and the credibility of both the Motorcycle Community Engagement Panel (MCEP) and the Government. I therefore have the following constructive observations, based not only on my professional background in such fields, but on active participation in the very successful Victorian Motorcycle Advisory Committee (VMAC).

1. That there is nothing that should not be made public prior to each MCEP meeting. Permit interested parties, especially riders, to have adequate time to input observations and questions to MCEP members in time for them to be addressed at MCEP meetings

26.

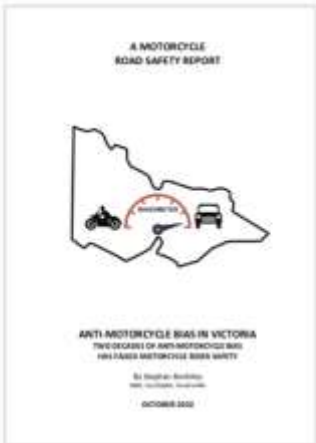
2. That MCEP clearly invites externals to discuss agenda points, but as far as I can see only those specialists under contract to the government (MUARC in this case). This should be extended to those with material presentations on subjects of concern or proposals for action, especially where levy funds are concerned

3. It is peculiar -and immediately engenders suspicion as to the politicisation of the discussions and conclusions for to lack of transparency example-no that when suggestions are made by those with solid professional backgrounds are not invited to present the MCEP meetings when their proposals are to be discussed

May I propose that in the interests of road safety, credibility of the proposals considered, and to reestablish at least some measure of currently minimal trust and low level of credibility of MCEP that these observations are taken seriously. I would be happy to engage in a constructive exchange with the Ministers advisors to see what constructive measures might now be initiated. Far too long a time has passed while the trust and engagement levels have steadily fallen. This is not in the interest of riders, however convenient it might be regarded for political control and management.

Professor Marcus Wigan  
Melbourne, Victoria.

**A MOTORCYCLE ROAD SAFETY REPORT ANTI-MOTORCYCLE BIAS IN VICTORIA TWO DECADES OF ANTI-MOTORCYCLE BIAS HAS FAILED MOTORCYCLE RIDER SAFETY**



**Steve Bardsley**  
2022. ANTI-MOTORCYCLE BIAS IN VICTORIA  
244 Views

[View PDF >](#) [Download PDF ↓](#)

**ABSTRACT**

This report examines the five main influences on the anti-motorcycle bias that has existed in Victoria, Australia over the last two decades.



27.

## CAR DRIVER BEHAVIOUR DURING AND SINCE THE COVID PANDEMIC

An anti-motorcycle culture has long existed in the Victorian road safety partners and in parts of the Australian media. Media units vilify motorcyclists.



The Melbourne Herald Sun. September 9, 2022. No numbers surveyed, time period or methodology mentioned. Were unriders and unregistered step-on scooters included?

**CREATING NEGATIVE STEREOTYPES & PERCEPTIONS OF MOTORCYCLISTS**

Steve Bardsley

2022, CREATING NEGATIVE STEREOTYPES & PERCEPTIONS OF MOTORCYCLISTS

18 Views

[View PDF](#) [Download PDF](#)

**ABSTRACT**

(MRAA) represents the interests of Australian motor cycle riders and supports road safety initiatives, including the recommendations of the 2012 Parliamentary Inquiry into Motorcycle Safety (PIMS). PIMS promoted a consultation process for motorcycle safety, this involving all Victorian road safety agencies,...

[read more...](#)

This stereotyping creates resentment in car drivers. It generates road rage in some drivers. It has increased in the last 4 years.

<https://www.youtube.com/@damiencodognotto6983/playlists>

Please watch the TOY RUN for FATHER BOB video to see how the media often links positive motorcycling stories to negative news. The vilification got worse in the COVID years.

28.

During COVID lock downs car drivers seemed to spend less time on the road while motorcycle scooter riders were going for rides. The risk of a COVID infection was virtually nil when riding solo and wearing a helmet and face covering. Going for a ride had at least two benefits. It reduced the stress of the pandemic and it kept motorcycle & scooter riders in touch with the road.

During the COVID pandemic, with health, family, money, employment and other concerns, some drivers may have taken alcohol and/or drugs. Then they may have continued after restrictions relaxed. As COVID restrictions relaxed, frustration with the return of serious traffic congestion stressed some drivers which may have led to aggression, road rage and hit & run incidents. The mental health of some drivers post pandemic is a serious concern.

## Cyclist left for dead

**Olivia Jenkins**

Police are hunting a driver who allegedly left a cyclist to die after a hit-run in Fitzroy North.

It is understood the 30-year-old cyclist was riding on Brunswick St, near the Fitzroy Bowls Club, when a car hit him about 3.15am on April 3.

The driver allegedly parked his black Volkswagen hatchback a short distance away and returned to look at the victim before fleeing on foot. The rider was taken to hospital with life-threatening injuries.

CCTV video captured a man wearing a dark jumper and jeans jogging away from the scene. He appeared to have black hair.

A Victoria Police spokeswoman said the man was the only occupant of the car.

Anyone with video of information should contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.

The Melbourne Herald Sun. April 16, 2023.

## Arrest over alleged hit and run

**Brittany Carlson  
Gemma Scerri**

A woman handed herself in to police on Monday following an alleged hit-run that left a Pakenham cyclist in hospital.

A Dandenong woman, 40, was taken into police custody on Monday afternoon after a public appeal to find the alleged culprit.

Robert Clarke, 59, appealed for information four days after he was allegedly struck by the vehicle in Noble Park on April 13.

The car – a white Mitsubishi Lancer – allegedly stopped to allow him to cycle past on Douglas St, before accelerating towards him, mounting the kerb, and striking him.

Mr Clarke fell off his bike onto the road and was dragged for more than 100m.

He was left with severe grazing and bruising to his legs and back. He was taken to hospital for treatment.

"I heard the acceleration, and I just thought 'here's another smart ass revving to try and scare me,' but the next thing I knew, the world was spinning," Mr Clarke said.

He was grateful for his helmet and protective clothing.

Anyone with information about the incident is being urged to contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.

The Melbourne Herald Sun. April 18, 2023.

## 'Hit-run' charges loom

Police are expected to charge a woman who turned herself in over an alleged hit-run in Noble Park last week.

A 40-year-old Dandenong woman came forward to police after a plea was made for the driver of the car, who allegedly hit cyclist Robert Clarke, to hand themselves in. Police investigations uncovered further CCTV footage that assisted in determining who was driving

the white Mitsubishi Lancer along Douglas St at the time.

The woman is expected to be charged on summons with reckless conduct endangering life, reckless conduct endangering serious injury, intentionally cause injury, assault with a weapons, drive in a manner dangerous, fail to stop vehicle after an accident and fail to render assistance after an accident.

The Melbourne Herald Sun. April 20, 2023.

## Drug-fuelled road rampage ends in flipped car

Apr 20, 2023 | Hobart Mercury

Helen Kempton

An unlicensed 20-year-old who drove at nearly double the speed limit and ran red lights before flipping his unregistered car onto a busy Penguin footpath had been on a five-day ice binge.

James Michael Marshall pleaded guilty in the Supreme Court in Burnie to dangerous driving and a range of related

offences in relation to a rampage that started in Burnie and finished with his unroadworthy \$600 car upside down at the intersection of Main and Johnsons Beach roads in Penguin on November 27 last year.

Marshall has been in custody since his arrest that day.

Justice Tamara Jago said Marshall had told police after his arrest that the "car brakes failed and he had to dodge cars"

on his Eskm journey. He was headed to Sheffield before his potentially deadly road rampage was stopped in its tracks.

"You were travelling at speeds of up to 120km/h as you approached Penguin. You told the police you thought you were going to kill someone but you kept going," Justice Jago told Marshall.

"Your drug binge in no way mitigates your offending. It in-

creases the danger to other road users and pedestrians.

"You careered onto two wheels, struck the gutter and swerved across two lanes before you hit another kerb and landed on your roof just metres from a walking path.

"There were people there at the time and you are fortunate no-one was hit. For a young person your record for driving offences is poor.

"You have never had a licence and the car was unroadworthy. Both front wheels were non-compliant and there were no brakes."

Marshall was sentenced in the Supreme Court in Burnie on Wednesday to a court-mandated drug treatment order which will have a custodial component for 18 months. He will be subject to random testing during those 18 months.

The Hobart Mercury. April 20, 2023.

## Woman on hit-run rap

Police are investigating an alleged hit-run in which a child was injured in Melbourne's west on Friday.

A car hit a man and a child on Kings Rd in Delahey about 12.45pm. The driver, a 51-year-old woman, allegedly fled the scene but returned a short time later, police said.

A 23-year-old Kings Park man and a six-year-old child were taken to hospital with non-life-threatening injuries.

Officers arrested a Hillside woman, who is expected to be charged on summons.

It comes less than a week after 59-year-old cyclist Robert Clarke was hit by a vehicle in Noble Park before the driver fled the scene.

Dashcam footage shows a Mitsubishi Lancer appearing to strike the Pakenham man in Douglas St on April 17.

He sustained minor injuries.

The Melbourne Herald Sun. May 2023.



30.

**REVEALED** Drug and speed allegedly linked to crash that killed five workers after head-on collision with a truck

# HIGHWAY HORROR

SATURDAY, APRIL 22, 2023 \$3.50 (incl GST) HERALDSUN.COM.AU

**Regan Hodge  
Grace Baldwin**

The driver accused of causing the worst crash on Victorian roads in more than a decade potentially had cannabis in his system and was allegedly clocked speeding just minutes before five people died in a "catastrophic" head-on collision. Christopher Joannidis, 29, of

Doncaster, stood silent in the dock at Shepparton Magistrates Court during a brief hearing on Friday afternoon, when he was granted bail.

Police allege Joannidis was behind the wheel of his Mercedes C250 on Thursday afternoon when it clipped a Nissan Navara, which spun and rolled into the path of an oncoming truck, killing all five occupants, and a dog.

**FULL REPORT, PAGE 4**



Development of car technologies continued through the COVID pandemic. Since 2000 cars have become bigger, better insulated against sound, safer for occupants, loaded with high tech distractions and comforts for drivers. This has led to overconfidence and a lack of awareness of other road users in too many drivers.

At the same time the driving task has been dumbed down to a dangerous extent. In the last four years riders have seen a significant increase in car drivers operating large vehicles without due care and attention. Driver training and retraining should be in schools with teachers having to obtain a tertiary qualification.

There are too few visible police on Victorian roads.

Too many aggressive drivers harass road motorcycle, scooter and bicycle riders.

Experienced bicycle, motorcycle or scooter riders are safer car drivers.

31.

## SALES OF POWERED TWO-WHEELERS CONTINUE TO RISE

Federal Government subsidies on new, electric, road registered, motorcycles and scooters made or assembled by Australian companies should equal new electric car subsidies but motorcycles and scooters are specifically excluded.

A new Chinese electric MG4 costs more than \$50,000 drive-away. Range 435 kms.

A new Toyota electric RAV 4 SUV will cost about \$75,000 drive away. Range 461 kms.

A new FONZ electric road registered Arthur scooter costs \$4500. Range 130m kms.

A new Savic electric motorcycle costs around \$20,000.

Electric motorcycles are being made or assembled here by Australian companies. That means jobs, skills and profits stay here and we are less reliant on imports. Fonz Moto in Sydney, Savic in Melbourne and Benzina Zero in Brisbane are companies that should be encouraged producing machines for commuters that should be subsidised.



### 2023 Arthur 2+ Moon Blue

**Max speed:** 75 km/h

**Max range:** 65 kms

**Motor:** 5.5 kW

**Powerpack:** 2.1 kWh

**Warranty:** 24 months

**Featuring:** Luggage rack, Top-case, Performance+, Regenerative braking, CBS Brake System, USB connectivity and 4amp mini charger to charge inside your home or bike-to-wall. More accessories available on request.

**FROM \$31/WK FOR 48 MO.  
OR \$5,790+orc**

Save \$595



### 2023 Arthur 3+ Matte Black

**Max speed:** 85 km/h

**Max range:** 100 kms

**Motor:** 8 kW

**Powerpack:** 3.3 kWh

**Warranty:** 24 months

**Featuring:** Luggage rack, Top-case, Performance+, Regenerative braking, CBS Brake System, USB connectivity, and 4amp mini charger to charge inside your home or bike-to-wall. More accessories available on request.

**FROM \$38/WK FOR 48 MO.  
OR \$7,790+orc**

Save \$595

FONZMOTO road registered electric scooters are made in Sydney.

Fonzmoto.com – New South Wales

Benzinazero.com - Queensland

Savicmotorcycles.com - Victoria



David Ahmet says MotorCycle Holdings is receiving more

interest from people looking for a cheaper transport alternative. Picture: Steve Pohlner

## HIGH PETROL PRICE

**MOTOWING**  
**CHLOE GRIMSNAW**

AUSTRALIA'S largest motorcycle dealership group is attracting new customers as people look to find cheaper alternatives to a second car.

MotorCycle Holdings recorded a 7 per cent jump in revenue to \$462.6m in the 12 months to June 30, while net profit fell 18 per cent to \$23.1m, with the previous

year including \$5.8m in JobKeeper payments.

The company's managing director, David Ahmet, said the recent spike in fuel costs had resulted in more families considering motorbikes as a cheap alternative to a second car.

"When we see fuel prices jump a lot, and suddenly, we definitely get a large number of inquiries from people looking to buy a second

vehicle they can commute on and save money," Mr Ahmet said. "Motorcycles are twice as economical to run as a car. They are twice as fuel-efficient, they only have two tyres, and city workers can save a lot on parking fees."

"The fuel rebate the government is offering finishes next month so we might see an increase of 20c in fuel, and we could see a lot of interest come out that."

Mr Ahmet said MotorCycle Holdings' decision to focus on the used market had also placed it in a good position amid global supply shortages.

"With new bike supply being so restricted, we get lots of customers wanting to buy a new bike so we have been trying to find the newest second-hand version," Mr Ahmet said.

"To do that I've got a team of 10 buying used bikes from

all over Australia. We have always done it, but we have put more resources to it now."

He said market conditions for motorcycle sales remained positive. "(We remain) confident in the resilience of our business model," he said.

Directors declared a final dividend of 8c a share. MotorCycle Holdings shares fell 3.3 per cent to \$2.37 on Monday.

## REVS UP MOTORCYCLE SALES

The Melbourne Herald Sun. August 30, 2022.

Traffic congestion is a serious problem. Subsidising cars and not commuter scooters doesn't make financial sense. 70% of traffic in cities is made up of single occupant cars. These slow and hinder traffic flow costing in lost productivity and costly road repairs.

Commuter scooters and motorcycles take up less space reducing traffic congestion. Five scooters fit in a car bay. More people riding to work means less traffic congestion and more parking for people who have to use cars.

The C19 pandemic, war in Europe and the Middle East has damaged the world economy. A lot of Australians are looking at ways to save time and money to pay the rent or mortgage and cover child care, food and school fees. Electric commuter scooters are a cost-effective alternative to a car. Medium & high-density dwellings are the norm in cities so here is less car space.

Australia's population will grow. There will be more international students and migrants. Many of these people are from cities where commuter scooters are common. In Australia riding road registered scooters & motorcycles is safer than it has ever been mostly due to safer clothing, better equipment and better training.



Governments should recognise that powered two-wheel personal transport has been steadily growing for decades. It's here to stay. They should encourage electric road scooters & motorcycles and subsidise training and protective clothing.

**REGISTERED ELECTRIC SCOOTERS**

- Number plate required
- Compulsory third party insurance (TAC)
- Contributes financially to the transport system
- Motorcycle helmet required
- Rider training required
- Knowledge of road law required
- Medium range
- Medium goods carrying capacity
- Not allowed on footpaths
- Not dumped on footpaths
- Alternatives to cars for commuting
- Reduces traffic congestion
- Frees up car parking spaces
- Australian companies

**UNREGISTERED STEP-ON SCOOTERS**

- No number plate required
- No compulsory third party insurance
- No financial contribution to the transport system
- Motorcycle helmet not required
- Rider training not required
- Knowledge of road law not required
- Short range
- No goods carrying capacity
- Allowed on footpaths
- Dumped on footpaths
- No alternatives to cars for commuting
- Does not reduce traffic congestion
- Does not free up car parking spaces
- Not Australian companies



WEDNESDAY, JUNE 1, 2022  
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FONZ chief executive Michelle Nazzari at her new electric

motorcycle warehouse in Alexandria in Sydney. Picture: Britta Campion

### FUTURE FOR FONZ

**MOTORING**  
**JOSEPH LAM**

THE humble automotive manufacturer behind the nation's first eMotorcycle is ramping up its production. FONZ, formally Fontzarelli, has moved into new premises in Sydney and now has the capacity to build up to 100 bikes per month. Chief executive Michelle Nazzari said that was a jump

of five times its original capacity at the old shop. "I can really feel a shift now, it's definitely taking off," she said. "Our sales are up 250 per cent this financial year and we were up 100 per cent on top of that in the previous year."

FONZ first came about in 2012 and launched its first official line of electric mopeds in 2015. Seven years on and it has sold 2700

### EMOTORCYCLES IS ELECTRIC

electric motorcycles and mopeds across its network of 17 partnered dealers and repairers across Australia and New Zealand.

The brand makes four electric mopeds and a single electric motorcycle, the NKD, which has a retail price beginning at \$8990.

The average NKD customer spends \$13,700 however, as most customers adjust the bike's range and speed, which can reach up to 100km p/h and travel 200km on a single charge. Ms Nazzari said.

"The biggest fear for people with electric motorcycles has been that range anxiety," she said. "So we developed a type two charger which can work with electric car chargers." The type two charger conversion cost \$990.

Ms Nazzari said the nation's electric motorcycle market had been slow to gather pace compared to other countries largely due to regulation.

But FONZ has big growth plans. The manufacturer is looking to develop conversion kits for old classic motorcycles, to partner with developers to provide electric motorcycle chargers and to expand further around the country.

34.

## TOURISTS

<https://www.rsac.tas.gov.au/visitingdrivers/>

Click the link for touring motorcyclists. Riders visiting Victoria and Tasmania make significant contributions to both economies. The Victorian road safety partners attitude to motorcyclists is very different to the Tasmanian Government as this video shows.

Crashes involving tourists on international drivers licences are a problem. We are told that in some countries people who have no training and little or no experience driving can buy an international licence for a small fee. We understand there are international agreements but these must be reviewed. International licences and inbound flights are the responsibility of the federal Government but Victoria has influence and should encourage action on these issues.

A starting point would be a study of major property damage, serious injury and fatal road crashes, Australia wide, to find out how many drivers and riders crashed while on an international licence and what their nationalities were.

There should be a road rules test for inbound international tourists to ensure they understand the basics, speed zones, drive on the left and so on. This could be done when they fill in the customs declaration.

There should be a 24 hour ban on hire cars after arrival in Australia on a long flight, say over 8 hours. Some internationals do not understand the distances involved in travelling this continent. They get out of the airport, hire a car and head off on a long journey.

TT Line ferries across Bass Strait are part of the national highway system. motorcycles & scooter riders should pay a fee that reflects the size and weight of their machines. Say 20% of the fee for a car. The TT line distributes road safety advice to travellers as leaflets and on the big screens on the ferries.

**SUE BAILEY**

A DAUGHTER grieving the loss of her father in a road accident wants stricter measures for overseas drivers as Tasmania heads into its peak tourist season.

Emma Clark has questioned why international tourists can get a licence without sitting a driving test after a German tourist whose negligent driving in a hired motorhome killed her 59-year-old father, Michael Clark, in a head-on collision on the Huon Highway in January 2020.

"I don't want to see another family go through what we've gone through," Ms Clark said.

"Dad was pretty much our everything. He and his granddaughters were inseparable, he'd come to my house nearly every day.

"He was the best Poppy you could ever ask for.

"It will be our third Christmas without dad and it'll be the second one without mum. After the accident she just gave up on everything, herself, the house, she was that depressed."

Ms Clark, who has a nine-year-old daughter Bella, intends to write to road authorities to urge them to look at better educating and testing overseas drivers.

Tasmania's road toll stands at



50 – up 63 per cent or 19 more than last year.

Road Safety Council chair Scott Tilyard said 10 per cent of all serious crashes in Tasmania involved drivers from interstate or overseas.

"They are often not familiar with our winding roads which are a bit more challenging," he said.

"If you are from overseas and driving on a different side of the road you have to pay more attention which can be taxing and people get fatigued." Mr Tilyard said driving material was provided on the Spirit of Tasmania and international licences were consistent around the world.

Still raw with grief, Ms Clark has moved from Dover, where she grew up and her late parents lived, to the East Coast and runs a cafe in Launceston. "I still to this day

call dad's voicemail just so I can hear his voice," she said last month as the driver involved in her father's death received a three-month suspended jail sentence and was fined \$1200.

Ms Clark said she had visited motor home offices and was surprised there were scant details given to tourists about driving on the left-hand side of the road.

"I understand that man didn't set out to kill someone that day. But that is not going to bring my dad back," she said.

"I worked at a fish farm where we had a lot of internationals and I've seen them crash on the roads at Dover because they don't understand our roads.

"We put our kids through how many years of driving to get a licence and you can just get an international licence without a driving test."

She said her father worked two jobs as a school bus driver and welder and was a "really good driver".

"He would have been able to drive that road (where he died) with his eyes shut.

"He really had no hope against a four-and-a-half tonne vehicle."

Seven people were killed on Tasmanian roads between December and January last year prompting the Australian Road Safety Foundation to urge drivers to take more care.

susan.bailey@news.com.au

Hobart's Sunday Mercury. December 11, 2022.

**UNRIDERS**

Cost and difficulty getting a motorcycle licence cause more people to ride road bikes illegally. They are called unriders. The road safety partners refuse to flag unriders in crash data. This distorts statistics making legitimate motorcycling appear more dangerous than it is. There are undrivers too. These road users often have no training or knowledge of road law.



36.

The Tasmanian Road Safety Advisory Council “Full Gear” program is positive. It helps would-be riders get into legitimate motorcycle & scooter riding. Victorian councils and the State Government should adopt these programs.

November 2022.

Please read the attached article and editorial from yesterday’s Melbourne Herald Sun (October 31, 2022). The attitude is pretty negative. Blame the victims. I think it is a small step but an important one. I think a significant number of unriders are people who would ride legally if it was not so expensive/difficult to be properly trained and licensed to ride.

Damien Codognotto OAM  
MRAA Spokesperson

What the articles don't tell you is the number of unriders. In ~2001 it was ~35% in quiet years it drops to 10-12% i.e. Similar to cars. There is some upward pressure on the fatalities because the number of riders keeps increasing i.e. Simply keeping the number of fatalities at the same level as previous years is an underappreciated achievement.

Dr Michael Czajka PhD  
MRAA Road Safety & Research Officer

ROAD SAFETY ADVISORY COUNCIL  
**TOWARDS ZERO**

GLENORCHY CITY COUNCIL  
BUCAAN

**RIDE TO MAKE IT HOME**  
FULL GEAR – YOUTH MOTORCYCLE SAFETY PROGRAM

To discuss eligibility for the Full Gear program, contact:  
Conrad Gilbey at Glenorchy City Council **03 6216 6766** or Claudia Taylor at Launceston City Council on **03 6323 3219**.

The Full Gear Motorcycle Safety Program is sponsored by the Road Safety Advisory Council.

Photo: Brad Harris

From the RACT magazine Journeys. June 2022.

heraldsun.com.au NEWS 11

# It's no licence to kill

## Bike death toll skewed

**IAN ROYALL**

THE high number of unlicensed riders on the high death toll of motorcyclists in Victoria this year has prompted a call to review how road statistics are kept.

Twenty-one of the 46 riders who have been killed in 2022 were unlicensed, latest statistics show, and the toll even includes the death of an e-scooter rider.

Victoria Police has identified "extreme behaviour" by young males, riding unlicensed often on unregistered motorcycles built up areas and not wearing protective gear beyond a helmet.

But the Victorian Motorcycle Council said that while it had sympathy for them, "rogue risk-takers" were not part of the riding community and that thousands of responsible riders were unfairly connected with deliberate rule-breaking.

"It's been a source of concern for years that they shouldn't be lumped in with general statistics," VMC spokesman John Caird said.

"Those who wear their sense of duty takes plus the ease of riding a motorcycle without a licence makes them far more vulnerable to the outcome that somebody who steers a car and is therefore protected from their stupidity by air-bags, steel cages and crumple zones."

Assistant Commissioner for Road Policing Glenn Weir said it was alarming to have unlicensed riders seen on the road.

"(They) have complete disregard for the road rules and the safety of other road users," he said. "Riding a motorcycle is a complex task and requires a high degree of skill and experience, which is why obtaining a motorcycle licence is so important."

Some of the victims held a car licence but did not have a motorcycle licence or permit.

"Having a car driver's licence does not suffice for operating a motorcycle. Penalties for unlicensed riding include a significant fine and imprisonment of the motorcycle," Commissioner Weir said.

Police also said a trend to encourage new riders in a recreational or group ride, mainly in rural Victoria, dying in typically single-bike crashes. The annual figures also showed that the licensed rider was at fault in 31 of the 46 deaths.

And 22 - almost half of the crashes - involved the bike leaving the road and hitting an object or parked vehicle.

Since the data was analysed, three more riders have died in Victoria. **28-year-old** **25-year-old** **28-year-old** **37-year-old** **31-year-old** **33-year-old** **21-year-old** **29-year-old** **26-year-old** **24-year-old** **27-year-old** **30-year-old** **32-year-old** **34-year-old** **35-year-old** **36-year-old** **38-year-old** **39-year-old** **40-year-old** **41-year-old** **42-year-old** **43-year-old** **44-year-old** **45-year-old** **46-year-old** **47-year-old** **48-year-old** **49-year-old** **50-year-old** **51-year-old** **52-year-old** **53-year-old** **54-year-old** **55-year-old** **56-year-old** **57-year-old** **58-year-old** **59-year-old** **60-year-old** **61-year-old** **62-year-old** **63-year-old** **64-year-old** **65-year-old** **66-year-old** **67-year-old** **68-year-old** **69-year-old** **70-year-old** **71-year-old** **72-year-old** **73-year-old** **74-year-old** **75-year-old** **76-year-old** **77-year-old** **78-year-old** **79-year-old** 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HERALD SUN, PAGE 20

## Riding to extremes

**O**NCE again this year too many motorcyclists are dying on Victoria's roads. And more fatalities at the weekend has the 2020 toll approaching 50 lives.

That's compared to 33 at the same time last year. And of course, one death is too many.

Victoria Police analysis of the first 46 death crashes up to the middle of October revealed a high number of deaths caused by what Road Policing Assistant Commissioner Glenn Weir described as "extreme behaviour".

That is, many deaths, as tragic as they are to families and friends, are the result of crashes involving typically young unlicensed males, riding unregistered motorcycles and not wearing protective gear beyond a helmet. The Victorian Motorcycle Council said these "rogue risk-takers" were far removed from the real riding community and were known as "non-riders" and also distorted government policy making and public perception of motorcyclists.

While fast and furious car thieves can be hurt in an accident, the likely crash outcome for an unprotected motorcyclist is much worse.

The council has every right to call for an overhaul of how road toll data is kept - to lead to a better understanding of the problems and cause of road trauma.

If nothing else, the call for a review has merit if only to consider how an e-scooter is in the same category as a high-powered Harley-Davidson.



The Melbourne Herald Sun. 2022.





Community

Changing course on **bike safety**

An expanding motorbike program is helping young Tasmanians avoid accidents and injuries, writes the Road Safety Advisory Council.

**M**otorcyclists are extremely vulnerable road users because there is very little to protect them and in the event of a crash, they are more likely to be seriously injured or killed than passengers in a car.

The Full Gear motorcycle training program was launched by Glenorchy City Council and Bucaan Community House in 2017 in response to concerning road safety statistics that showed young people were over-represented in serious injury crashes and fatalities, as well as community concern about unlicensed and dangerous riding.

Full Gear was co-designed by young people and encourages participants to engage positively in motorcycle road-safety education. In exchange, participants receive help to overcome the cost of a motorcycle licence and associated safety equipment – a common barrier for many young people.

The program, which is for 16- to 24-year-olds, aims to reduce risk-taking behaviours on the road, increase licensed motorcycle riders, and improve attitudes to road safety and educate the community.

By helping young people get a motorcycle licence, the program gives them the independence

to get around without the need to rely on lifts or miss out on opportunities. It also teaches them how to be respectful and responsible road users and that illegal or hoon behaviour should never be tolerated.

Full Gear graduate Jenimah worked casually in a shopping centre before the program and now works full-time in aviation safety at Hobart Airport. She holds a full motorcycle licence and commutes daily on her bike. "None of that would have happened at all without having a learner's licence to start with," she says.

After four years of success, Full Gear has expanded to the north of the state. The trial expansion will be run by the City of Launceston in partnership with Starting Point Neighbourhood House and the Northern Suburbs Community Centre. The trial will run across Ravenswood Community Shed and King Billy Shed in Rocherlea.

The Launceston program will be coordinated by Strength 4 Life mentor and motorcycle enthusiast Jon Evans. With six one-hour training sessions over six weeks, the program covers key topics including road-craft, protective gear and crash risk factors.

Jon says Full Gear is way more than just a motorcycle safety program. "It is an enabler. Young people are also developing essential life skills such as communication, time management, health and wellbeing, and taking responsibility.

"A motorcycle licence enables a young person to have freedom and independence for transport to/from education, employment and social activities. I'm proud to see young people taking control of their lives through this great initiative."

For more information, contact **Conrad Gilbey**, Full Gear Project Officer at Glenorchy City Council on **03 6216 6766** or **Conrad.Gilbey@gcc.tas.gov.au**, or **Claudia Taylor**, Community Development Officer Youth at Launceston City Council on **03 6323 3219** or **Claudia.Taylor@launceston.tas.gov.au**

Despite representing only **5%** of vehicles, motorcyclists make up approximately **25%** of serious casualties on Tasmanian roads.



39.

### THE TRANSPORT ACCIDENT COMMISSION (TAC)

The TAC is a Victorian Government owned insurer with a monopoly on a compulsory product. It has no need to promote itself. Its' primary role should be to care for and rehabilitate victims of road crashes. Its' secondary role should be to promote road safety.

The TAC's employees who work with crash victims do a superb job.

The Board of management however, are administrators with little or no expertise in road safety or transport. It has a high turnover as professional directors find other positions. The Chair, Mr Joe Calafiore, recently left. At the time of writing the TAC Board Chair was vacant.

All attempts to have a member with road safety expertise appointed to the TAC Board have failed. It is a closed shop. An executive leadership team reports to the Board and oversees the TAC's operations.

The TAC takes vast amounts of money from Victorian road users. Compulsory third party vehicle insurance premiums may not be the TAC's only source of income. This money should be used to care for and rehabilitate crash victims first and foremost. It should not be used to sponsor bicycle races, golf tournaments and sporting activities or facilities.

From the TAC website. May 2023. ***"Victorian clubs rewarded for road safety commitment. The Transport Accident Commission will give thousands of football and netball clubs across Victoria an opportunity to share in \$600,000 for kicking road safety goals this season."***

From the TAC website. ***"Quality and safeguards. The TAC recognises that universal human rights and protections apply to all TAC clients and we support our clients to exercise these rights."*** If that is so, how does the TAC justify the motorcycle safety levy?

The levy is a targeted tax. It applies only to road registered motorcycles & scooters. Motorcyclists who know about the TAC tax say it is a universal human right not to be discriminated against by the Victorian Government.

The TAC tax was introduced without consultation some twenty years ago. It was \$50 a year on each registered motorcycle or scooter. It was later indexed and in 2023 it is around \$75 for the first machine. No other transport mode is discriminated against in this way.

The TAC tax is hidden. It does not appear on vehicle registration renewals. The exact amount a rider pays is not obvious. This may be to avoid negative reactions from riders who pay as much or more than car drivers to The TAC through VicRoads registration renewals. The MRAA complained to the **Ombudsman** that the TAC tax should be clearly itemised on the renewal form. A private company would not get away with adding a hidden cost to a bill.

40.


Also on the renewal form should be the statement that the TAC tax was only payable on one registered machine. It is not. TAC/VicRoads claim to have a system in place to ensure riders do not overpay but it is near impossible for stakeholders to check how well this system works. Stories of the difficulties in getting a refund abound.

From the 2012 Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into Motorcycle safety. ***“The two terms of reference dealing with motorcycle compensation and the safety levy drew strongly argued submissions and witness statements. The Committee was presented with seemingly persuasive arguments both for and against increases to the accident premium paid by motorcyclists. However, the Committee found that increasing the premium paid by motorcyclists could not be justified on the available evidence and in any case went against the purpose and structure of the accident compensation scheme. The safety levy is a contentious charge and represents the only example of a levy applied to a specific road user group. The issues identified by the Committee with respect to the levy were multifaceted. They ranged from the oversight arrangements applied to its’ use, through to the effectiveness of safety levy projects and the effectiveness of the levy overall. Important findings included the absence of project evaluations and qualitative reviews which make it difficult to measure its effectiveness.”***

***“Recommendation 25: That the motorcycle safety levy be abolished.”***

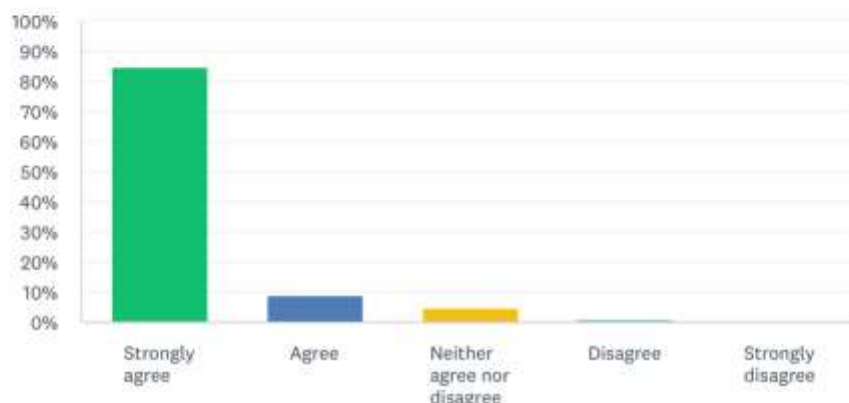
The TAC does not spend all of the TAC tax it reaps each year. When TAC does spend it, it does not necessarily spend it on motorcycle safety projects. Consultation is minimal.

Q11

 [Customize](#) [Save as ▼](#)

THE 2012 VICTORIAN PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY INTO MOTORCYCLE SAFETY (PIMS) RECOMMENDED THAT THE TAC TAX (SAFETY LEVY) BE ABOLISHED. THE VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT SHOULD ABOLISH THE TAC TAX.

Answered: 728 Skipped: 2



To May 12, 2023, respondents to the MRAA compulsory third party insurance survey numbered 742. Most were Victorians. The survey is ongoing.

41.

The TAC tax is part of the anti-motorcycle culture in TAC. The concept of improving motorcycle safety by reducing exposure to motorcycles is real. The TAC tax is not just unfair and discriminatory, it deters novice riders from buying protective clothing and better equipment.

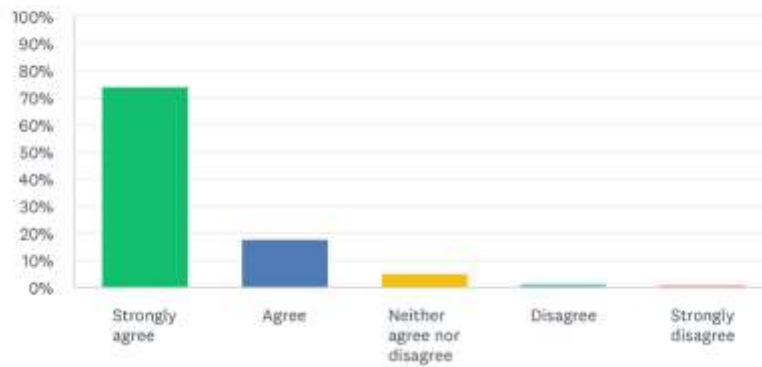
Instead of sporting sponsorships a better, fairer way to reward safe road use would be no-claim-bonuses. In 2023 many Victorians are struggling with financial hardship. No-claim-bonuses make CTP insurance cheaper for responsible road users. Why should a 50-year-old who has never made a CTP claim pay the same premium as a 25-year-old who has?

Q7

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### TAC AND MAIB SHOULD INTRODUCE NO-CLAIM-BONUSES LIKE COMMERCIAL VEHICLE INSURERS.

Answered: 730 Skipped: 0



Hobart Airport car park. February 9, 2022. To promote protective clothing for commuters TAC should sponsor lockers at park & ride facilities.



42.

The TAC spends huge amounts of money on media campaigns. Video ads cost a lot to make and more to broadcast. There have been several TV ads that have had serious errors. A bicycle rider in a no bicycle zone, a motorcyclist doing more than the speed limit, another motorcyclist taking a corner in a dangerous manner on the Black Spur. The Black spur ad had to be withdrawn and re-edited because the TAC officials ignored motorcycling experts' advice on taking the corners safely.

A central Victorian highway was closed for 3 days to film a wire rope barrier promotion by crashing an SUV into a centre-of-the-road installation. The claim being that this kind of fence prevented head-on crashes and did not sling cars back into same direction traffic. It was false and misleading. The SUV was driven by a stuntman wearing a helmet and controlling the speed and steering of the car. In most real crashes the SUV would be travelling at highway speed. This crash was slower. Depending on the reason for the crash the driver would not be able to steer. At the end of the ad what appears to be an actor speaking a scripted piece to camera about how wire rope barrier had saved his life in a similar crash.

The Transport Accident Commission  
Mr Joe Calafiore  
Chief Executive Officer  
February 2022

<https://youtu.be/Kxkxx1iR7CE>

In reply to a Freedom of Information request VicRoads wrote that this TV ad, made in 2017/18, cost \$1.6 million. This amount did not including the VicPol operation closing the highway for three days. VicRoads also wrote that paperwork related to spending this \$1.6 million did not exist. We took it that they could write this because the Transport Accident Commission (TAC) paid for the TV ad in question.

What funds did the \$1.6 million come from? That is, did TAC use compulsory third party (CTP) insurance premiums, the Motorcycle Safety Levy (MSL) or TAC investment returns? We understand that a Geelong based company, MAX ACTION VEHICLES, was paid to make the TV ad. Is that correct? If so, how much was Max Action Vehicles paid? How much did the VicPol operation to close the Central Victorian highway for three days cost?

Regarding the current TAC campaign promoting road motorcycle protective clothing on TV and other media. How much has TAC spent? Where did the funds come from, that is, CTP insurance premiums, MSL or TAC investment returns? Does TAC and/or VicRoads have any plans to make other items of road motorcycle protective clothing compulsory?

Damien Codognotto OAM  
MRAA Spokesperson

THE MRAA felt the TAC wire rope barrier ad was misleading. We asked what independent organisation would have an unbiased look at our complaint and make a fair judgement. The ACCC would not consider the MRAA complaint, nor would the Ombudsman or Advertising Standards. It's important. It's road safety. Four years later the Department of Transport's Rebecca Skelton finally confirmed what we suspected. **There is no complaints system for VicRoads/TAC media output.**

[https://www.linkedin.com/posts/transport-accident-commission\\_behind-the-scenes-of-tac-motorcycle-safety-activity-6897341542269272064-IUGM](https://www.linkedin.com/posts/transport-accident-commission_behind-the-scenes-of-tac-motorcycle-safety-activity-6897341542269272064-IUGM)

43.

Compare this video of a real crash at Johns River, NSW, with the TAC wire rope barrier TV promotion.

<https://youtu.be/FDtXm3J0dDM>

The Department of Transport was aware of the danger to road users of the exposed ends of wire rope barriers from around 2011 because the manufacturers told them in writing. It was the end of the wire rope barrier at Pyalong that killed 4 young men.

In 2022/23 a shock/horror protective motorcycle clothing ad cost around \$2 million. These ads have limited effect over a short time. \$2 million could buy novice riders protective clothing that would work and last longer than a video of a rider being ripped apart. A better use of our money would be discounting quality protective clothing. Australia has a motorcycle clothing rating system – MotoCap. A person pays for learner permit training. They get a receipt which gets them a discount. One star 5%, two Stars 10%, and so on. Riders with quality gear take pride in it and look after it.



The Melbourne Sunday Herald Sun. May 7, 2023. The TAC has become a giant cash cow for the Victorian Government at Victorian road users' expense.

## RESEARCH, INQUIRIES AND ATTITUDES

In 1903 the first motorcycle shop opened in Elizabeth Street, Melbourne and the Automobile Club of Victoria (RACV) was founded by 3 motorcyclists.

Between the world wars motorcycle and sidecar outfits were affordable and acceptable family transport. Victorians built motorcycles. Victorians excelled in motorcycle sports. Motorcycle races drew bigger crowds than the cricket. Doctors and nurses visited patients on motorcycles and the RACV service vehicles were sidecar outfits..

After WW2 Australian Governments decided to build a car industry. To sell cars motorcycles were portrayed as dirty and dangerous. Mothers were told motorcyclists were evil. That prejudice has cost many lives and shattered many families. It has increased road rage and thwarted unbiased research. It lingers in 2023.

From the 1993 Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into Motorcycle Safety. Preamble 2, 3 & 4.

***"In July 1989, the Motorcycle Riders Association published Motorcycling is Magic and claimed that:***

***The Victorian Government had a negative attitude towards motorcycling and no written policy about motorcycles; and***

***Attitude was a major factor in road trauma and road user education could change attitudes. Therefore, VicRoads should adopt a written policy 'to encourage the use of VicRoads rider training facilities.***

***The Motorcycle Riders Association also suggested that financial incentives should be introduced to encourage the use of the State's rider training facilities. For example a 30% discount on the Transport Accident Commission charge for one year for riders who produce a certificate from an approved rider training school. ...***

***The Committee is aware of the negative attitude of many Victorians to motorcycles and motorcycle riders. It is the view that this opinion has been engendered by the adverse publicity given to the non-riding behaviour of some motorcycle user groups, occasional irresponsible and frightening riding behaviour, the physical appearance of some motorcycle riders and the relatively small number of motorcycles on the road. This attitude has been reinforced by the natural emphasis of some road safety experts on serious road injury and death without consideration for the economic and social benefits of motorcycle use for those who ride safely.***

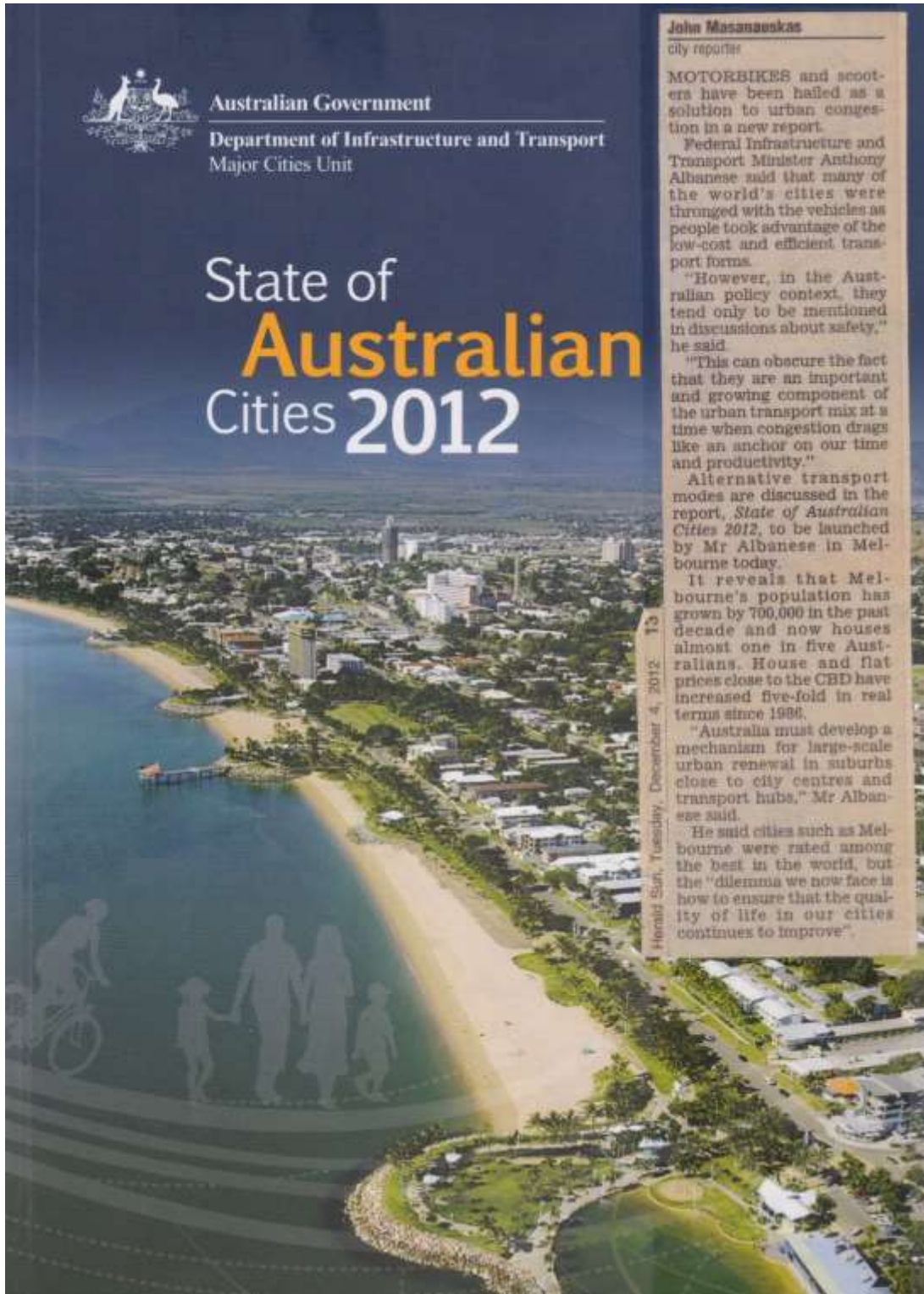
See quotes from Dr Nimmi Candappa, then at Monash University Accident Research Centre on page 20.

In the 2020 Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into the Road Toll Increase report section 6.6 is on motorcycling: ***"... the Committee repeats its' disappointment with the lack of cooperation from Victoria's road safety partners and calls for a cultural change as a matter of urgency."***

It seems there is little text and no photos of motorcycles in car driver training manuals online or in print. This leads car drivers to believe motorcyclists are of little importance.

45.





The Melbourne Herald Sun. December 4, 2012. Then Federal Transport Minister Anthony Albanese told John Masanauskas. **"... in the Australian policy context they (motorcycles) tend only to be mentioned in discussions about safety. ... This can obscure the fact that they are an important and growing component of the urban transport mix at a time when congestion drags like an anchor on our time and productivity."**

The Melbourne Age. July 15, 2011. Ian Munro reported. ***“ ... As a state parliamentary inquiry uncovered almost 20 years ago, the state roads, licensing and registration authority, VicRoads had a policy of ‘not implementing any programs that could be construed as encouraging motorcycling’ Having decided that motorcycling was inherently risky, VicRoads thought it best to do nothing to make it safer in case this encouraged more people to take it up. VicRoads has formally abandoned the policy, but in the licensing system its legacy seemingly lingers. ...”***

From the 2012 Parliamentary Inquiry into Motorcycle Safety pages xx and xxi.

***“ ... more can be done and needs to be done. ... During the course of this Inquiry, injured riders and their families and those who have lost loved ones as the result of a motorcycle crash, shared their experiences with the Committee. As one participant stated to me, ‘the legacy left behind when a motorcyclist dies on Victorian roads lies not with them but with their partners, children, parents and other family, and community. It is these people who will benefit from improvements in motorcycle safety, as well as the motorcyclists themselves.’”*** Mr Murray Thompson MP.

The road safety partners’ and media’s anti-motorcycle culture has affected more than on-road behaviour. It has affected funding decisions and research decisions in negative ways.

***“ ... The first and arguably most important theme was the lack of accurate and robust data both for crashes and trauma. Many arguments, proposals and observations made in submissions and witness statements were based or justified on crash and trauma data. However, the significant data issues identified by the Committee meant much of the evidence presented to the Committee was difficult to verify. Therefore, reliance on this data for the purposes of introducing new interventions was in the Committee’s view inappropriate. In the absence of conclusive data it was not possible for the Committee to make definitive findings or recommendations. Addressing data issues is the single most critical aspect of our future response to motorcycle safety.”***

Since 2000 most of the papers/research Australian road authorities quote to justify restrictions and taxes on road motorcycling are more than 20 years old. Too often they are just opinions on papers written far away and long ago. A lot has changed on Australian roads since 2000. Steve Bardsley MBA writes about Australian motorcycling in the 2020s. He is a member of the Motorcycle Riders Association Australia Executive.

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Since 2019 little has been done to reduce road trauma in Victoria. The road safety partners policies obviously fail year after year. They resist change and continue to blame the rising road toll on the victims rather than address well documented systemic problems particularly with data collection and assessment.

## Recommendations

1. Establish a crash/traffic data office, independent of Victoria's road safety partners, with at least 6 regional units. 2012 Parliamentary Inquiry into Motorcycle Safety. *Recommendation 1: That an independent office of road safety data be created which will be responsible for collecting, collating, interpreting and publishing all data relevant to road safety. ...*
2. Instruct crash investigators to identify and record road barrier types involved in, or adjacent to, crashes in *all* crash reports.
3. Remove VicPol as official advisors to the Coroner to avoid conflicts of interest.
4. Abolish the discriminatory TAC tax. 2012 Parliamentary Inquiry into Motorcycle Safety. *Recommendation 25: That the motorcycle safety levy be abolished.*
5. TAC should subsidise rider training, retraining and licencing to improve road safety and to reduce the number of unriders. Rider training and licencing to be widely available on weekends and holidays. Experienced riders are safer car drivers.
6. TAC to subsidise protective clothing using MotoCap rating system.
7. TAC to subsidise lockers for protective clothing in secure parking areas.
8. Make compensation paid to crash victims, or their loved ones, transparent.
9. Compensation paid to crash victims or their loved ones must not be paid on the condition that confidentiality agreements are signed and/or waive their right to legal action against a road authority.
10. Flag unriders in crash data and statistics.
11. Commission a search of videos, photographs and media stories on Australian crashes involving road barriers over the last five years.
12. Commission a positive driver awareness campaign for TV, radio, print and online featuring the benefits of road motorcycles & scooters for all road users.
13. Include text and photos of motorcycles in online car driver training manuals and print books.
14. Establish a committee of elected representatives (MPs with staff) to write the Government responses to Inquiry Committees' recommendations to avoid conflicts of interest.

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