

STATE & NATIONAL MOTORCYCLE REPORT

Branch member Shaun Lennard is president of the Tasmanian Motorcycle Council (TMC) and chairman of the Australian Motorcycle Council (AMC). He also represents Tasmania and the AMC on the Ulysses Club National Road Safety Committee and has provided this update on recent happenings.

It was November 2009 when I last provided a report at a monthly counter meal, and a lot has taken place both in Tasmania and nationally since then!

Amongst the key issues in Tasmania recently have been:

- establishment of the new Road Safety Advisory Council
- participation in consultation over point to point speed cameras
- reduction in crash numbers and MAIB claims in 2010
- 2011 started with a number of serious crashes in early February
- public consultation over a proposal to reduce rural speed limits in Tasmania

Shortly after the 2010 election, Lara Giddings became the state's Infrastructure Minister and one of her first announcements was the amalgamation of the Tasmanian Road Safety Council and the Road Safety Task Force into a single body – the Road Safety Advisory Council. I had been a member of the road safety council since late 2005, and was very pleased to be appointed to the new advisory council.

Of course since then Ms Giddings has become Premier and the Minister is now David O'Byrne. Members of the TMC executive had one meeting with Lara whilst she was Minister, and we're expecting to meet with Minister O'Byrne in the coming weeks.

DIER (Department of Infrastructure Energy and Resources) is currently investigating options for initial deployment of permanent point to point speed cameras in 110 km/h zones in Tasmania. The TMC has been involved in talks with DIER over these and we've also visited the two locations being looked at with the DIER people and the RACT. One section is on the Midland Highway and another on the Bass Highway. (Point to point takes a picture of your vehicle as you pass one point and then again at a second point some kilometres further along the road. If your average speed between the two locations is calculated to be in excess of the posted limit, the data from the photos will then be passed from DIER to Tasmanian Police who will send you one of those nice green letters... If you're not speeding, the electronic photo files are not kept.)

Most people would be aware that the Tasmanian road toll was down in 2010 from a spike in 2009. Pleasingly this was also the case for motorcycles, with a decrease in the number of serious injury crashes and associated MAIB claims. This meant that the anticipated increase in motorcycle MAIB premiums from December 2010 did not occur. (Premiums are set on a three year cycle, with 2009 the last year they were reviewed. The outcome of the 2009

review was an expectation that motorcycle premiums would increase slightly for each of the next three years. The first increase did occur in 2009, but we're "on hold" for this year.)

2011 has not started so well, with a cluster of single vehicle motorcycle crashes in early February, including two fatalities. The TMC joined with Tasmania Police in making a media statement calling on riders to take more care on the roads. The TMC welcomes being a part of this – this wasn't an "attack" on riders in general, but simply a chance to state some of the facts. Hopefully people might listen to what the TAMC has to say even if they're cynical about statements from police!

These crashes came straight after the TMC had made comments in the RACT's *Journeys* magazine opposing the proposed reduction of the rural default speed limit on sealed roads to 90 km/h. I won't go into the details of that article here – I'm sure that many of you will have already seen it.

One point I made was with reference to a more recent study that has become an international benchmark for motorcycle crash analysis across OECD countries. The Motorcycle Accident In-Depth Study (MAIDS – www.maids-study.eu) investigated 921 motorcycle crashes that occurred in France, Germany, Italy, Spain and The Netherlands in 1999 and 2000. 100 of these were fatal crashes. Only 7% of all crashes involved a speed of 90km/h or higher, with 75% of crashes occurring at speeds of 50km/h or less.

The TMC's next general meeting is at Richardson's Harley-Davidson café on Saturday 5th March, 3.00pm-5.00pm – it would be great to see some Ulysses Hobart people there (other than me!)

As chairman of the Australian Motorcycle Council, some of the highlights of the past 12 months have been:

- hosting the inaugural Members and Senators Motorcycle Ride, held in Canberra in March 2010
- making a presentation in June 2010 to the new National Road Safety Council on motorcycle safety – focussing on the recommendations from the 2008 Canberra summit
- participation in and making a presentation at the 1st International Motorcyclists Conference in Brussels, also in June 2010
- AMC annual conference in Adelaide (August 2010), with dinner guest speaker, motorcyclist Senator Cory Bernardi
- making a presentation on European motorcycle safety initiatives at the Australasian Road Safety Conference, held in Canberra in September 2010
- being invited to write a bi-monthly column for *2 Wheels* magazine; I've written three so far and the next will be in the April issue

Involvement with the international conference was personally satisfying, but more importantly should provide a springboard for launching a more unified international political voice for motorcyclists.

Amongst the highlights of the program were the sessions on the next generation of motorcycles and sustainable mobility. The new technology to tackle this challenge was showcased, with the latest developments deployed in zero emission motorsports and their potential in driving market innovation. I was lucky enough to be invited to ride the Mavizen TTX 02 – a production electric motorcycle in a KTM frame. It felt about as powerful a 600 sports bike, but the most impressive thing was the initial acceleration (it overcomes inertia instantly!) and the odd feel of not having a gear box; just a single ratio. It mightn't be the future of long distance touring, but I wouldn't rule out powerful electric motorcycles becoming a key part of commuter transport before too long.



Shaun gets the inside word on the Mavizen TTXGP from the bike's creator, Azhar Hussain, in Brussels.

I also represent both Tasmania and the Australian Motorcycle Council on the Ulysses Club Road Safety Committee, which was established in 2009 and meets each quarter. The minutes from all of our meetings are on the club's (national) website.

One of our key projects of the past couple of months has been preparing a detailed submission on the draft *National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020*. The bulk of the credit for this has to go to John Meara from Brisbane – it's a very detailed submission and is also available on the website.

We will be hosting a breakfast and road safety forum at the AGM on the Thursday morning (8.30am, 24th March), and I'd encourage anyone going to the Newcastle to come along for the forum.

Shaun
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