

**Submission
No 7**

MOTORCYCLE SAFETY IN NSW

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Submission on Motorcycle Safety

Thank you for the opportunity to make this submission. I write as a past rider, a driver with 40 years accident and infringement free record and 30 years experience as a Shire Engineer.

Motorcycles may be disproportionately represented in vehicle smashes for several basic reasons:

1. Due to the exposed nature of riders non reportable accidents in car only crashes become injury based reportable incidents when a car and motor cycle crash.
2. The shear physics of a motorcycle / car crash determines that the rider will suffer significant injury. When a person puts themselves in a disproportionately dangerous situation perhaps they should accept some responsibility for crash outcomes. It is sad that irrespective of any legal outcomes the riders will suffer far greater personal consequences.
3. Motor cycles are not very visible as evidenced by the common sorry mate I did not see you.
 - a. This should raise issues other than motorists should look closer.
 - b. Dark machines and dark clothes don't help. Perhaps a small strobe light flashing to 30 degrees might greatly improve visibility in the manner that raised rear brake lights in cars reduced rear end crashes.
 - c. They can generate massive acceleration and put them into places of danger within a very short time. In a similar way the same applies to their ability to stop rapidly.
4. Car drivers have to wear seat belts and there is a significant amount of safety gear that riders can wear to reduce crash consequences. Thongs, shorts, singlets and cotton jeans and open faced helmets seem inappropriate.
5. The following vehicle is always in control of pending situations, for a motorcyclist travelling in blind spots or close to the vehicle in front is potentially suicidal irrespective of who has right of way. The motorcyclist's survival chant might well be "When it comes to right of way if they don't give it I have not got it."
6. There has been research into older drivers that show older drivers lose significant mobility making it increasingly difficult to look around as drivers age. There is also a reduction in time on distance perception which can lead to emergency situations. This process commences from the mid 50's which means they may be active on the roads for another 30 years. There are plenty of stories of family members having renewed licences when they should basically have a carer. With poor public transport systems and an increasing aging population there going to be a greater proportion of aged drivers. Perhaps simple empirical tests should be introduced such as awareness of rules and stopping a vehicle from 50kph within the 1.5sec travel distance.
7. One of the appeals of riding a motorbike is the sense of freedom and when all is going well invincibility, especially when young. Motorcycles are also able to increase the radius of a curve because of their smaller dimensions. Often this leads to excessive speed on curves which leads to more hazardous road conditions.
8. There are also the middle aged riders trying to cling to youth by buying high performance machines and emulating the one percenters. However they have also lost some of the reaction times of when they were younger.

Motorcyclists are part of the road transport system and it is their marketed image and manoeuvrability that both increases their appeal and risk.

Minimal cost defensive riding facilities should be available to allow riders to reinforce formal training.

Education in the costs of crashes (personal, time and financial) for both parties with emphasis that the only winners in crashes are the lawyers.

Thank you

Peter Lenaghan

