



TRANSPORT AND PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Members present:

Mr SR King MP (Chair)
Mr TJ Sorensen MP
Mr BJ Mellish MP

Staff present:

Ms D Jeffrey (Committee Secretary)
Ms M Telford (Assistant Committee Secretary)

PUBLIC HEARING—INQUIRY INTO MOTOR RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

MONDAY, 17 FEBRUARY 2020

Brisbane

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The subcommittee met at 10.30 am.

CHAIR: Good morning. I declare open this public hearing for the committee's inquiry into motor recreational activities. Thanks for your interest and your attendance here today. I want to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet. My name is Shane King, the member for Kurwongbah and chair of this committee. Other committee members present here today are Mr Ted Sorensen, the member for Hervey Bay and our deputy chair, and Mr Bart Mellish, the member for Aspley. The other committee members, sadly, cannot be with us today, but I can assure you that they do have a keen interest in this.

On Monday, 21 October 2019, the Transport and Public Works Committee resolved to inquire into and report to the Legislative Assembly on the contribution of motor recreational activities to Queensland.

The committee's proceedings are proceedings of the Queensland parliament and are subject to the standing rules and orders of the parliament. We will not require evidence to be given under oath, but I do remind witnesses that intentionally misleading the committee is an offence. Witnesses have previously been provided with a copy of instructions to witnesses, so we will take those as read. The proceedings are being recorded by Hansard and witnesses will be provided with a copy of the transcript.

The purpose of today's hearing is to assist the committee with its inquiry. Media may be presented and will be subject to my direction at all times. The media rules endorsed by the committee are available from committee staff if required. All those present today should note that it is possible you might be filmed or photographed during the proceedings. If anyone takes a question on notice today, I ask that you provide the information to the committee by 4 pm on Monday, 24 February 2020.

This hearing is the first the committee has held for this inquiry. Information about upcoming hearings and the inquiry is available on the committee's web page, so I will stress that there is more—a lot more. For the record, there are more public hearings coming. We have noticed on the web page some conspiracy theories and such. This is self-initiated. This committee resolved to hold this inquiry because people who wanted to come to the parliament and present to MPs were approaching us about motor recreational activities and their benefits. This committee thought that this inquiry would be the best way. Once we get the benefits and the report done, it is on the record forever and anyone can use it in the future—it is a public document—and we thought that that was the best way to do it.

With regard to the reason these hearings are not being held on a weekend and people cannot attend, regional members of this committee—Robbie Katter is one who cannot be here today—come down here for parliamentary sitting weeks, so we generally travel during the week. In terms of the weekend issue, there is nothing there. With regard to all of your written submissions—and for anyone watching—written submissions carry the same weight as verbal submissions. When I invite you to make an opening statement you should know that your written submission has already been noted—we have them—and your opening statement is just to add anything to your written submission for the sake of time, because I imagine there will be a fair bit of questioning and stories told today that we need to capture.

ADAMS, Mr Graeme, Vice-President, Roadrunner Car Club Inc.

CONNOLLY, Mr Jack, Treasurer, Roadrunner Car Club Inc.

JACOBSON, Mr Frank, Vice President, Triumph Sports Owners Association of Queensland

JONES, Mr John, Gold Coast and Tweed Motorsporting Club

PARRY, Mr Bill, Treasurer, Northern Motoring Club Inc. (via teleconference)

REID, Mr Gary, Gold Coast and Tweed Motorsporting Club

SPIDEN, Mr Malcolm, Honorary Secretary, MG Car Club of Queensland Inc.

WOODWARD, Mr Paul, President, Brisbane Sporting Car Club

CHAIR: I welcome representatives from the MG Car Club of Queensland, Roadrunner Car Club, Gold Coast and Tweed Motorsporting Club, Triumph Sports Owners Association, Northern Motoring Club on the phone, and Brisbane Sporting Car Club. I invite each of you to make a brief opening statement just to add to your written submissions.

Mr Spiden: I tried to answer your questions about creating jobs for Queenslanders. Unfortunately we are a very small player and we are a not-for-profit organisation, but we have been active in motor sports since November 1954. We held our first race meeting at Strathpine in October 1955 and we have been promoting motor sport ever since then. We try to encourage young people to participate and try to teach them the right things to do. Rather than hooning in industrial areas, we try to encourage them to come to an organised event and go through the proper procedures—look at the competition rules and the supplementary regulations to them and have your vehicle inspected by an independent scrutineer as a second set of eyes to look at it. We had a ‘come and try’ event on a Saturday where we look at it, we tell people what we are going to do, they walk the track to look at the contours of the track itself and the experienced teachers will say, ‘This is how you manoeuvre your car. This is what you should be doing.’ You set in their minds how to look at the event, not just, ‘Let’s see how fast we can go.’ We are trying to do it properly. I have given you information on costs and jobs created done by Ernst & Young.

If we had a wish list, we would like a training circuit or a training track, and I have some information here. Wodonga TAFE have a testing track where they can teach people. Clubs can go and use it at an affordable cost, because that is another consideration. We are not at the top end; we are really at the bottom end—the lower end—of motor sport. It is 1.6 kilometres long and 11 metres wide, so it is not a racing circuit—it is a training circuit—and they have a sealed patch for motorkhanas and khanacrosses 200 metres long by 50 metres wide which is enough in that you can train young people. Really at that level you are at very low speeds but you instil in them how you accelerate, brake, clutch control—how you manoeuvre the car to set it up. Is that enough? Have I bored you enough?

CHAIR: No, and that is all relevant.

Mr Spiden: I can give these to the committee.

CHAIR: Yes, we will table that document in addition to your submission. I will seek leave to table that. Is leave granted? Leave is granted. Thank you very much. We will now hear from Mr Connolly.

Mr Connolly: I initially want to thank the committee for giving us the opportunity to talk to you personally. I am the treasurer of Roadrunner Car Club Inc. We are probably the youngest car club in Queensland, but here are some very quick facts. We are a social car club. We were formed on the Sunshine Coast on 30 July 2018. Today we have over 160 members and we are averaging some eight new members a month. That has been pretty consistent since we have been in vogue. The foundation members of our club have extensive knowledge and experience in the management of other car clubs as well as experience in event management, and this is on top of experience in owning small to medium businesses or holding senior executive positions in large multinational corporations.

The club was formed to service an increasing demand on the Sunshine Coast to have a purely social car club. My colleague and I have read many of the submissions, including all of those clubs represented here today as well as the other ones save for the two confidential submissions. Like many of these other car clubs, we also commented on the common items that were in your stated terms of reference such as the contribution to Queensland’s tourism and small business sector; the special interest vehicle, or SIV, scheme as it exists in Queensland; the safety issues and outcomes of drivers, users and the community at large; and the impacts on youth training and community engagement. These are considered to be very important issues to many of the car clubs and they should be important to the community and to all levels of government.

The approach we took in our submission was essentially twofold: one was to try to give the committee a little background information as seen from our car club’s point of view about the MRA sector in general; and, two, to adopt a more forward-thinking approach, particularly in respect of today’s technology and the future of the motor vehicle industry. Therefore, our submission also considers the electric vehicle, the EV, and its seemingly unstoppable adoption by the world with particular emphasis on the impact of the broader Queensland community, the MRA sector and the Queensland government. Interestingly, our club just recently welcomed a new member who has an

all-electric Nissan Leaf which we are sure is the first of many such vehicles that we will see with our members and future members in the not-too-distant future. They will come in all sorts of brands and guises. There will be pure electric vehicles, there will be hybrid vehicles and probably—or hopefully—some hydrogen powered vehicles.

One element that we put in our submission that we see as an exciting opportunity is for the re-use of electric vehicle batteries when they are at the end of their life in an electric vehicle. We believe this emerging element can have a positive impact that will support the Queensland government's objective in particular—that is, the creation of new employment opportunities not only in the cities but in rural areas as well. I have additional information at hand should the committee wish to avail themselves of it, but in closing I would like to say that the Roadrunner Car Club considers itself to be a stakeholder in the Queensland MRA. Our club would like to see a holistic and strategic approach to the development of sustainable policy initiatives for the MRA sector as well as benefits to the community and the government at all levels. Our club would like to work collaboratively with similar clubs in partnering the government in the achievement of these goals for this sector. Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you very much. Funnily, you touched on technology. This committee has another self-inquiry that we started ourselves—the member for Aspley started it—with transport technology and looking at where we are going around the world and what is happening. We keep wanting to wind it up and then something else happens. It is a never-ending feast, so that one has been a very interesting journey for us.

Mr Connolly: Good luck with that!

CHAIR: Yes. We will now hear from Mr Adams.

Mr Adams: I am the vice-president of the Roadrunner Car Club. I am here in conjunction with Jack today. He has run through the presentation, so thank you for your time.

CHAIR: Thank you. We will now hear from Mr Reid.

Mr Reid: Thank you. I am representing the Gold Coast and Tweed Motorsporting Club today. With me is our President, John Jones, and I would like to thank the honourable members of parliament for this opportunity and particularly for organising this inquiry because motor sporting is a tremendous industry for Queensland and we are passionate about it and want to see it succeed. Our club is primarily involved in dirt road rallying, but the development stream we have for that is in driver training, khanacross, motorcross and then rallying. That development stream is very critical for the developmental skills of young people as they progress through that, and I want to talk about that today.

We are part of a club—and there are a number of clubs across Queensland—that organises the Queensland rally championship, as well as club-level championships. Those events are held anywhere from the Tweed all the way up to the Whitsundays. Those rallies, when they occur, bring enormous benefit to the rural areas that they are held in. If you can imagine 30 or 40 or 50 competitors, their service crews, 100 to 150 officials required to run a rally and spectators descending on those small country towns, it provides a huge economic benefit to those communities.

The biggest issue that the rallying industry or the rally community faces is actually getting access to roads and working our way through the very complex permitting process. You have to get permits from local council, from government, from the police, from emergency services—fire and ambulance—and it is a very long process. It takes our club around 12 months to arrange a single rally. It is quite challenging because of the lack of access now with increasing urbanisation to get in good rally roads. A lot of the state forest and national park roads have been closed to rallying, as well.

The other part of the thing that we do—and I want to tell a little bit of a story about this—is driver training. We do not have any facilities for driver training on the Gold Coast anymore. Our club has been involved with the Murwillumbah Car Club, down on the Tweed. They got government funding and have developed a driver training program with the local high school. They have bought two cars. They are just standard road cars. They train the high school kids. They bring those high school kids to the events that we run in conjunction with them—the khanacrosses, which are conducted on a grass track, which is nice and slippery so that they can develop their skills. It is fantastic to see those young people developing their driving skills and eventually going on and buying their own cars and bringing them to the khanacrosses. They are learning how to drive safely, in a controlled environment and getting all of that youthful enthusiasm out in a safe environment, under strict controls and being taught by experienced competitive drivers. That is a fantastic initiative that they have been able to do. We want to replicate that on the Gold Coast.

Those are the sorts of things that our club has been involved in. There are two big issues we are asking about. Firstly, support for rallying and navigating our way through the very complex permitting process, which is becoming harder and harder, and getting access to state roads and shire roads. The second thing we are asking is that we would like to establish a motor training facility where we can run khanacrosses and motocrosses on the Gold Coast to develop the young people and give them a pathway into motor sport, and also allow them to develop those advanced driving skills in a safe environment. We are looking for a parcel of land with some degree of tenure. We have the money to develop a circuit; we just do not have a venue. We want to get access to government land and get some security of tenure. Other clubs on the Gold Coast have that sort of thing and we are looking for the same to develop this facility. That is the thrust of our submission.

CHAIR: Thank you very much. Triumph Sports Owners Association?

Mr Jacobson: I am Frank Jacobson, the Vice-President of the Triumph Sports Owners Association. Firstly, our club is basically just a social club. We have members who are involved in motorsport, probably amounting to about 20 per cent of members. Our main contribution to the community is simply by virtue of the fact that our activities are all in the public eye. We are on display for most of the things that we do. In saying that, I think it sends a good message out to the community, and particularly young people, that any motorised activity can be well conducted in a safe manner and enjoyed by anybody who has an interest. For instance, we conducted a drive day yesterday. Twelve cars spent two hours on the road from Samford to Woody Point. There is a lot of traffic around on a Sunday afternoon, so there is a lot of exposure there. Of course, members value their licences. In saying that, that is part of the reason why we act responsibly; that is part of setting a good example.

Apart from what is included in the submission, the other point is that we have a concern about the ease of making venues available for any sorts of activities. At the present time, we are fortunate in that we have access to the Belmont rifle range for our max annual event, which is a car display. It attracts a lot of interest and a lot of public visitation. It is a very convenient arrangement. We feel that more of this sort of shared venue that can be helped by government is a good thing. Certainly it makes it available for a lot more interaction for recreational activities. That pretty well covers the main thrust of what we do.

CHAIR: Thank you, we appreciate that. We will go to the phone and the Northern Motoring Club. Can you give us a brief overview of the world where it sits for you?

Mr Parry: Good morning. My name is Bill Parry and I am the Treasurer of the Northern Motoring Club Incorporated, with membership based in Far North Queensland. The NMC Incorporated was founded in 2017. We have 144 members who collectively are custodians of over 160 special interest vehicles.

Vehicles first registered in Australia since 1968 must comply with the Commonwealth's Australian Design Rules, the ADRs. Each state or territory has individually developed their own legislation covering vehicle modifications, individually constructed vehicles and after-market products allowable within their jurisdiction. Vehicles engineered and registered within one state or territory are ID plated, confirming that the vehicle is compliant with that state's or territory's rules. That vehicle can be legally driven throughout Australia, but cannot be reregistered within another state or territory without going through the expensive and time-consuming bureaucratic process of being reengineered within the new state or territory. Each state's or territory's engineering and safety legislation requirements are additional to the ADRs requirements, and with state and territory (inaudible), I would suggest that a uniform national individually constructed vehicle code, that is, a vehicle modification code, should be adopted by all states and territories.

The other concern that we have is that Queensland's current special interest vehicle registration system checks to ensure vehicle owner compliance when the vehicle is first SIV registered, but there are no compliance checks during registration renewal. Most states and territories have introduced a logbook SIV registration scheme that places a compliance requirement on the incorporated clubs administering the logbook. Compliance requirements monitored by the club with logbook are: one, the vehicle is over 30 years, two, the owner remains a financial member of an Australian incorporated club; and three, the vehicle is used in the approved manner. This registration scheme has no additional costs or (inaudible) to the state or territory. The logbook system for SIV registration could be in either the electronic app format or a paper book, and be expanded permitting the owner of multiple vehicles to use a number plate transferrable between the roadworthy vehicles owned by him and as recorded in the club's records. That is similar to the current trade plate use. On behalf of the Northern Motoring Club Incorporated, thank you for the opportunity to contribute to this inquiry.

CHAIR: Thank you very much. It is funny that you mention compliance with every state. We have just gone through the Heavy Vehicle National Law, to recognise modifications to trucks coming from the states that do not participate in the Heavy Vehicle National Law. That is a very good point. Thank you for that. We will move to the Brisbane Sporting Car Club and Mr Woodward.

Mr Woodward: My name is Paul Woodward and I am President of the Brisbane Sporting Car Club Limited. I am also the Chair of the Motorsport Australia, Queensland State Council. I hold gold level event command and noncompetition area official's licences from Motorsport Australia and have had over 45 years of experience as a rally competitor and organiser. I have swallowed a bit of dust in my time.

The submission by the Brisbane Sporting Car Club specifically aims to provide the committee with an oversight of the extensive regulatory environment that impacts on car rallying as a sport within the Queensland context. It also provides data to clearly show the high focus on safety within the sport and the actions that are taken to plan and deliver successful and safe motorsport. As Frank Jacobson has just said, one of the issues with the vehicles has been that, with competition numbers on them, they are always in the public eye. It has been a very beneficial thing of late that, with the focus on safety, the police in many areas have reported that they have never booked a rally car on a state or a club championship event. They have booked a few others in and around for speeding, but with the fact that we are in the public eye we focus very much on how we behave.

The submission also highlights that the Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads allows special conditional registration for CAMS approved rally cars under the Rally Vehicle Registration Scheme. This is an advance on the special interest vehicles one, and it focuses particularly on vehicles that have undergone thorough scrutineering and eligibility checks by registered inspectors. This conditional registration scheme has proven to be very successful. I believe that the progressive fine-tuning of some aspects of the guidelines, including potentially reduced registration fees to match the SIV-type registration and increasing the distances that a rally car can be driven in testing, will improve the scheme.

In summary, the submission by the Brisbane Sporting Car Club provides evidence that, contrary to the views of some critics of motorsport, rallying is not an opportunity to drive irresponsibly or to hoon, but that the current sport of rallying is one that is conducted under some of the most strict regulations and safety standards. It brings economic benefit to the state and provides sound development of driving skills to its participants. I can say that the current Queensland rallying champion is 22 years old. He is probably one of the best drivers that I have seen for many years.

I believe it will be in the interests of the state if this committee makes positive recommendations on the support and viability of this sport and of motor recreational activities generally.

CHAIR: Before I cross to my colleague the member for Hervey Bay—

Mr SORENSEN: No, I could not. As a motor enthusiast, you take the first question.

CHAIR: This is more a statement than a question. It has kept coming up and I will ask everyone. Some have commented on hooning and the fact that motor recreational activities, in all their forms, seek to counter that, given a controlled environment. I am fortunate where I live to have a great facility. We always say when we meet with the police: no-one has any excuse in our area; you can do it in a controlled environment and not risk losing your car, crashing your car, harming others and the cost of it is money better spent than on other activities that teenagers may be doing. If there is any comment to add to that, feel free, although no-one has to. I know, Mr Spiden, you have already stressed that.

Mr Spiden: I agree. When we go on day runs or a social event, you have a line of MGs. You are in the public eye. If you do anything wrong, your contact or email contact is easily found. People can report you to the police and you can trace it down from there.

Certainly I agree with you. I think the motorsport—I will say industry—people would like to see more of the younger or even older lads who think they do have skills go to any form of motorsport, whether it be like a motorkhana which is very low speed—a khanacross is the same thing—a hill climb or a sprint or even venture higher up the ranks to show their skill or be involved in that controlled area that teaches them to look at the competition rules, look at the supplementary regulations, understand what you are doing, understand how you prepare the car, have the car checked by a qualified scrutineer, the second pair of eyes looking at the car rather than saying, 'Yeah she's right'. How do you know? I think we all try to instil in people who may consider it safe, do it in a controlled environment. The trouble with saying a saying 'a controlled environment', is that it automatically puts people off. They say, 'I am not going to do that!'

CHAIR: A safe environment perhaps.

Mr Spiden: Yes, a safe environment. You would never say you were crowd control, you were a spectator safety person. I agree with the comments like that. We do need some areas, like Gary said. Grass area motorkhanas are a great avenue for people to learn that a car does not actually go sometimes where you want it to go when you do things and if you do that at a low speed all you are doing is get embarrassed rather than a bent car or bending someone else or hitting someone else.

CHAIR: That is the thing.

Mr Spiden: Yes, that is the thing. That is a point to consider, please, and also what I have given you from the TAFE people, I think that is a worthy area. You have looked at the price list. It is affordable to car clubs to hire a venue but not if you go to a race circuit and put everybody out. One of the other real issues you are really aware of is the speed differential between cars. If you have got a new person out who is not sure with more experienced people, unless they are aware of the speed differential there can be some difficulties. Is that enough?

CHAIR: Yes, I was after any brief comment. On the collaboration you are talking about between different forms of motor recreation, if we step back and have a look at what we are trying to achieve and collaboratively get more people involved in the sport, to learn to drive safer seems to be an outcome and to quell hooning, and no-one could argue with any of those.

Mr Spiden: Just one further comment, I was talking to a chap late last night. His eldest daughter is now driving. A lady from England said she was astounded that the parents can teach their children to drive with their learners. You get your driver's licence and there is no more training really. If you go to work there is usually ongoing training at some point in your career. With a driver's licence, 'There it is. Off you go.', unless you go for a truck licence and you relearn that or participate in something.

CHAIR: It is good to harness teenagers while they know everything before they realise they do not. I have had a teenage son. Mr Connolly, do you have anything to add?

Mr Connolly: Firstly, I agree with most of the comments that have been made here this morning. Roadcraft Gympie offer a very good training facility with tarred roads and they have wet surfaces and they teach mainly younger people but also elderly people how to drive and anticipate the road conditions before they get themselves into trouble. The school that I sponsored with this had a number of comments come back. Even the teachers who did the course said, 'I never knew that. I never knew what to do.' One of the staggering numbers that I found out about road trauma was that 13.8 per cent of the licensed driver population aged between 16 and 24 years accounts for 20 per cent of road trauma fatalities. I think that if the youth of today can be taught properly in controlled environments and know what to do, not only on the track but also the theory behind it, it can only bode well for the future.

Mr Adams: I will just add that Roadcraft are actually the official trainers of ambulance drivers and fire engine drivers. They are a very highly accredited company. The things that we did there, a lot of it was ABS breaking on wet pads and a bit of light drifting around cones and all that sort of stuff. We got a little bit of funding when we did it with another club, but it is certainly an area that is set up, it is very professional, they have a lot of land, and for clubs like us being small, we are happy to host schools and youth, but we need the funding. We cannot just pull a thousand bucks out of our pocket to top it up. It is a venue that is there, highly accredited and I think we need to make more use out of it.

CHAIR: And the venues that we do have need to stay there, that is my opinion, not the government's opinion. We will see where we go.

Mr Reid: I have an anecdote really. During the recent very wet weather on the Gold Coast I drove from my house in Oxenford to Sanctuary Cove and there are four roundabouts and there were three car accidents on those roundabouts. All of them were people who had skidded, either understeered or oversteered off the roundabouts, and I thought as I was driving through that I am so lucky that I have been involved in motorsport and know how to handle that exact situation. I was looking at these cars, and they were mostly young people's cars, and I was thinking the development of motorsport and the training we give through the motorkhanas on the grass, which is low speed and giving these kids skills, have a very positive outcome in avoiding those very accidents that I witnessed that day.

Providing a safe environment for people to learn that a car does not behave the way you think it is going to behave and what to do when it does that at these sorts of facilities is absolutely critical for the future of the young people learning their skills as drivers and then developing on and becoming

Queensland rally champions. One of the friends that I used to rally with in my 20s was an Australian rally champion. He is still rallying in the historic rallying industry. I think all of us in those days had access to roads and access to things where we could develop these skills that just are not there now. That is the critical issue facing, I think, the young people today.

CHAIR: I think we would all concur with that. It is not about my story at the moment, but I have got my own along those lines exactly as you are saying. Any further comments before we go to questions? I note we are running out of time.

Mr Jacobson: Just quickly a comment and an observation. I noticed from the submissions that there were a lot of clubs that I am aware of that did not provide a submission. I wonder whether the time frame was a concern there. The important thing is that I think a lot of them share the same views that we have heard here today.

CHAIR: We have a list of stakeholders that we send things out to. The committee secretariat worked pretty hard on research and on Facebook trying to find groups and then groups would identify other groups and we would get in touch with them, but I am sure there are some that were missed. That is why we are having quite a few of these public hearings, to see if there is anything else, but we are sensing a very common theme from the clubs and it is a good theme. We would hate to miss something. The time frames, sadly, are what we all work and live under. We did extend the time frame for submissions, but this inquiry is far from over.

Mr Jacobson: An extension of that—a question: just ordinary ownership and use of classic motor cars, does that come within the context of the inquiry because at our annual event we have people visit but they are not a member of any club, they do not do anything except drive? They own a car, they drive a car.

CHAIR: But they still participate in motor recreation because they have that car just to drive and that is why we have left the terms of reference quite broad so that we can capture that. I do not think anyone on the committee would say that there is any closed doors to this. Anything that is a motor recreation. I do not know if we have had a written submission yet on drone racing, but that is a motor recreational activity technically and we should put that in there.

Mr Jacobson: I think there is a big population out there that do not fit any category.

CHAIR: This category will accept them. The people on the phone may wish to add something. Northern Motoring Club, do you have anything to add on the hooning?

Mr Parry: No. It is interesting listening to what is going on. Thank you.

Mr SORENSEN: I would like to thank all the motoring enthusiasts out there who support charities. One only has to look at the Variety Bash and things such as that. Hervey Bay itself had a carnival that filled up the whole school oval with different cars. The amount of money that you guys bring in for charities through things like Variety Bash is great, but it is all the other ones as well and the pleasure you give to a lot of children and support to the community by way of carnivals and street parades. The contribution you make to our society has to be recognised as well. I know this is more of a statement than a question, but if anybody wants to mention anything on that because car clubs out there are great charitable organisations. You put a lot of effort into it. You support a lot of charities. Would you like to make any comment on that?

Mr Spiden: Some car clubs will state what they do. I was speaking with Mark on Saturday night. He said they do it but they don't tell anybody. They give to the Children's Hospital. Over about 10 or 15 years they have raised \$50,000 for them. If you had an advertising person there would be a banner, but most of us do it and you walk off and say what is next to do sort of thing.

CHAIR: We have captured in the submissions, and it is noted, that contribution to charities from a lot of motoring groups. Then you may have a motoring group that is a just a social one but you go on a run and you go to a local pub or somewhere like that and they benefit. The member for Aspley did have a question. I note that we are running out of time.

Mr MELLISH: I will try to keep it brief. Thank you very much everyone for coming along. Whether you have put in a submission or have attended it is really great that we have heard your contributions. As a car enthusiast myself it is good to see fellow car enthusiasts pushing for their members and the benefit of the industry. Before the committee started, Mr Reid, we had a conversation about supercar teams down the Gold Coast and how a lot of them have moved to Victoria or New South Wales. I am fortunate to have had the tour of Triple Eight Racing at Banyo. It is fantastic the fact that they manufacture everything from scratch. It is really high tech manufacturing jobs that the state can really do with more of. Do you see anything the states should be doing or can be doing to attract more of these not just supercars but all motorsport industry jobs back to Queensland?

Mr Reid: As a former employee of the automotive industry, working for Ford, BMW and Toyota, myself and seeing those industries leave our shores is distressing. As you say, the advanced technology that the automotive industry brings—the next level up is the motorsport industry which is a testing ground, if you like, for a lot of technologies and a lot of applications that eventually find their way into our everyday cars, things like ABS braking—to see that leaving is distressing.

I know that most of the supercar teams have received government incentives to relocate. Government needs to weigh up the benefits versus the costs of those incentives. I was talking to somebody before whose daughter is an engine engineer for one of the motorsport clubs. To see those skills leaving the state is distressing. We need to focus on bringing those back.

I am currently building an historic rally car. I have had to source components from Victoria and New South Wales because I could not get them in Queensland. Nobody knew anybody who could make them up here. It is a major issue. It is the case with the high end of motorsport and those with high-tech skills right down to the apprentice training and TAFE colleges. There is a lot of work to be done to get those industries back. Providing incentives to motorsport teams to be located here is part of it.

The other issue they face is having suitable venues for testing their cars. It is an issue we all face in developing our cars. I will hopefully have my car finished in the next four weeks and I will want to test it. There is nowhere for me to test it other than to enter an event. That means I am going to be driving a car I have never driven before and just finished building in a competition. I have nowhere to test it. They are the issues that the industry faces. It is the issue of government support but also having places to test your vehicles.

Mr MELLISH: You mentioned before that in northern New South Wales it is potentially a lot easier to find locations than in Queensland?

Mr Jones: We get a lot of help from down there.

Mr Reid: Last year we ran the Working Dog Rally which is a joint round of the New South Wales and Queensland rally championship. It was voted the most popular rally amongst competitors last year. We used to run our rallies in South-East Queensland but then we could not get access to suitable roads so last year we had to run it down just west of Casino. We had tremendous support from the local shire, the local police and the local farmers whose access roads we closed. It has become increasingly difficult in South-East Queensland with the pressure of urbanisation.

Mr MELLISH: I will ask this question of the Northern Motoring Club which is on the phone. I know others are interested in special interest vehicle licensing, but that group mentioned it in their opening statement so they might be keen to talk a bit more about it. On our committee over a number of years we have looked at heavy vehicle licensing and how we can standardise that across the states. It seems for special interest vehicles that in one state a car that is 27 years old will qualify but in another state it will not. I want to hear people's views on whether special interest vehicle licensing and, further, vehicle modifications would be better done nationally than on a state by state basis?

Mr Parry: Yes, there are a whole lot of variations from state to state in terms of vehicle modifications—whether it needs suspension, braking or steering and even the height of vehicles. Unfortunately, that results in a lot of cars being modified that are not certified. They sneak through the back door and get registration somehow. That is the case for those who do not have clubs looking after them. They are doing their own thing.

In terms of SIV registration, some states have adopted the logbook system. The club I am involved with is the Compact Fairlane Owners Club and it is based in Victoria. The members are in favour of the logbook system because basically they are scrutinising the vehicles officially for the department of transport. There are obviously safety benefits as well as compliance benefits with having SIV logbooks.

CHAIR: Sadly, time has beaten us. We will close this part of the hearing. There have been no questions taken on notice. We really appreciate your time. Stay tuned, there will be many more of these hearings. We are looking forward to getting a great outcome.

Proceedings suspended from 11.20 am to 11.30 am.

O'NEIL, Mr Terence, General Manager, Recreation and Events Competitive Resources & Services Pty Ltd

TETLEY, Mr John, Chief Executive Officer, Recreation and Events Competitive Resources & Services Pty Ltd

CHAIR: We now welcome representatives from Recreation and Events Competitive Resources and Services. Before we ask for a brief opening statement, RACERS has given us a document which they seek leave to table. Leave is granted so we will table that document. Would you like to make a brief opening statement?

Mr Tetley: There is an awful lot I have learned in the last 20 years about trying to make a racetrack successful as an MRA venue. One of the things I put in our submission is, 'Why do we need more MRA venues?' It is because people do not buy a car to drive it: they buy a car to enjoy a recreation. The most owned piece of recreational equipment in the world today is the motor car. When you see an advertisement for a motor car, when do you see people sitting in traffic? You buy it so you can take your family to a picnic; you buy it so you can do something you enjoy with it; and most of all, you buy it so you can go somewhere sitting down. That has been an objective of human beings since forever. Why did we build chariots? So you could go somewhere sitting down. Why did we go and chase a horse around a paddock for an hour? So we could ride to church. That is the same theme that we are dealing with today.

People do not want to drive a car. How do we know that? You have just brought in the most horrendous fines if somebody touches a phone while driving. What does that mean? It means that people do not want to drive the car: they want to be on their phone. But because of the technology that we have come up with in the last 100 years, people are now stuck sitting in a car, possibly in traffic, bored and looking for something to do. That is the challenge we have to face up to when we talk about recreational activities. How do we get people to accept the fact that when they are sitting in traffic getting angry there is something for them to look forward to that will not make them angry, that dissipates their anger. That is the real importance of MRAs as I see it.

For 20 years now I have been doing this. People say, 'How come you haven't lost the passion?' Three occasions have given me that passion. On one occasion we had just started up the Friday night drift practice at Queensland Raceways. We had about 100 young men out on the track burning rubber. It was fantastic to watch. There was a bloke standing next to me who was bigger than Shane. He turned around and in a very gruff voice said, 'Are you John Tetley?' I said yes. He grabbed me by the shoulders, started pumping my hand up and down, nearly tore my arm off, and said, 'My son's out there and he was at Archerfield last week. Now not only can I see what he's doing but I can help him do it, and he's doing it somewhere where people are relatively safe.' That was a life-changing moment.

We go forward to one of Shane's favourite subjects, which is Lakeside. The first race meeting at Lakeside Mike Charlton was with me. This was it! This was the first time in seven years we had cars back on that track. Another huge bloke with big ginger hair came running over, he recognised me, and he grabbed me again and started shaking my hand and said, 'I never thought my son would see Lakeside, would see what I saw and would enjoy what I enjoy.' They are kind of important things.

The most recent one was 1 September last year when we ran the Fair Dinkum Father's Day out at Lakeside. At that meeting we put out a survey for people to give us an idea as to what—sorry, I choke up on this one still—they would like us to do. One of those survey forms, which is in the front of that folder I just gave you, was filled in by a guy who said, '100 per cent thank you so much. For a single father with two sons, what a great day out.' I have been a single father with two kids trying to find something to do, and I've got to tell you that is important. It is a lot more important than some harping old harridan who's just been complaining for 10 years. If people do not think that is more important, then I think we need to reassess our values, quite frankly.

Pardon me being contentious, but when a person can put in 1,000 complaints and still be heard and still have people running around after her there is something wrong. That is an actual situation that we have had to fight at Lakeside for going on 13 years now. As you know, that came to a head last year. Last year we had to cancel one of our favourite events, which was the Lakeside Classic. We announced that it had to be cancelled. We announced the reason for that, which was the outstanding fines we were facing from the council. Over 500,000 people responded to that post. I think that puts the position of recreational motorsport. They didn't carry on about V8s not being there or anything like that. That was the major thing they were going on about.

Could you imagine anything more boring than applying for a ministry infrastructure designation? We decided we would put that up as a post last week. I just got the numbers here from Neil. It went up two days ago with the topic as Lakeside. The reach was 99,000 people, there have been 291 posts, 1,200 'likes' and 451 shares in two days. To my mind, that indicates the level of emotion that sits there behind these motorised recreational activities.

I am sorry, but so far we have only been talking about cars. When are we going to start talking about motorbikes? Very few people use a motorbike for anything other than a recreational purpose, so when are we going to take that into account on our MRAs?

CHAIR: A future hearing will be pretty well attended.

Mr Tetley: Thank you, and I would be happy to contribute to that one as well. I guess the point that I am trying to make is: yes, there is a whole lot of good stuff that goes on out there. Why doesn't it get recognised? People say, 'You're a dirty, smelly sport and you shouldn't be in it.' Well, I have news for you: there are a lot more hours of a diesel engine driving a mower or a whipper snipper in this state than there are cars being driven around racetracks. That needs to be taken into account somewhere along the line too. Sorry if I am being a bit contentious, but you get to this stage and you go, 'Hang on, guys. Let's get on with this.' How do we get longevity into our motorised recreational activities?

I just saw a bunch of guys sitting here. What was the average age? How old do you reckon they were when they started? They've done 50, 60, 70 years or something like that. We have something called GEAR, which is a product we brought in for old guys with old race cars who cannot race who just want to practise, have a fang around with their mates and so on. Sitting behind me are the guys from QEMSC who have the same thing with motorbikes, so we have classic bike days for these guys to come out. They are very well attended in both sets. There are about 12 of those events per year so it is on their social calendar. Those again are motorised recreational activities that I can influence, and we do.

Which also leads me to this whole thing about SIVs. It is about time somebody recognised that the people who collect old cars are in fact keeping the history of Queensland motoring alive. They are museum curators by any other name, so why don't they get that recognition? I do not see anybody running around with 30-year-old refrigerators or something, but you certainly do see people who love these cars. To keep those cars in good order they need to be driven reasonably often. Why are we going around with a mechanism that says every individual car needs to be serviced? You have to have a rego for this, this and this.

The smart way to do this is—and I have to say that I have a vested interest in this because I have a number of old cars—you say to JT, 'All right, it's going to cost you \$1,500 a year to have an SIV licence, and you have to go to PPQ and get a plate and every car carries that plate.' With the highway monitoring systems that you have nowadays it is not going to be too hard to see how many times that plate has been used. But I can only drive one car at once anyway, and if I am the only person who is allowed to drive that car—given the impoundment laws in this state, I can assure you it would stay that way—why would you want to go and register every individual vehicle? You do not care.

At the end of the day, what use is that information to SIV? What you do want to know is if somebody is going to take one of those vehicles out, they are going to use it properly. Fair comment? That is where I think you need to go with SIVs. Revisit the whole thing and get back into what we are trying to achieve here and not just a revenue source for the government. All too often I hear, 'It's cheap insurance and therefore we have to restrict the use.' I am sorry, but when it is 35 degrees out there and there is a hot wind blowing I am not going to get in my MG TF with the top down. It is as simple as that. Let's move on from that one.

I think I have hit most of the important things. The high-tech industry that's been build up around motorsport internationally is amazing. In the submission I mentioned how a new record for Pikes Peak was set by an electric car. It ran 15 seconds faster and that was the first time that car had ever been to Pikes Peak. That, whether you like it or not, is a point of flexion. In fact, it was a point of flexion that caused me to go out and buy a Tesla. I am not going to start talking about that because all of my time would be blown out on that.

We talk a lot about training for skills. I feel that what you need to do before you give somebody a skill is to give them an attitude to that skill. We do not do that. We say, 'We'll teach you how to skid.' Well, what was the line out of *the Karate Kid Part II* where the kid says, 'What's the best way to avoid a punch?' and the mojo says, 'Easy: don't be there.' What's the best way to avoid a skid? Don't have it. That will handle it every time. If you are going to look at training, how do you get that attitude into the kids before you then say, 'Righto, now we are going to try going sideways.'

I can speak with some authority on that because I deal with the 70-odd young people who are going to take seats like you guys have today. My attitude is about 20 of the kids who get a licence are never going to break the law; 10 per cent are ratbags who in my opinion should be taken out of the gene pool—but on the other side of things, it is the job of the police to fix that—so there is 70 per cent in between. I have given you calendars that show we are running about 250 events. You need to come out to some of these events and see what the young people are up to. If you come out to a Friday night drift you will find there are a lot of females there. Why? Because they are the blokes who are going to go somewhere. They are out there: they are not sitting in a bedroom playing with their video games and stuff like that. These are the young men who have some push in them and want to go someplace. I am not being sexist: that is the reality. That is who we have as a customer. Yes, we do have some girls come out too, but by and large it is young males and it is used as a social meeting ground. Some may say that motorsport has never been a social meeting place, but I have news for you. If it is a recreational activity like that, then it is a meeting place.

CHAIR: You touched on mowers and the green credentials of motorsport, which is something that I think should be recognised. I know have you a wealth of knowledge and I wonder if you would care to comment on that.

Mr Tetley: There is a write-up on the front page there. Unfortunately it is a topic I can speak to for over 20 minutes without even trying. No other sport has acted to clean up emissions as much as motorsport. On any given weekend there may be 500 to 1,000 cars on a racetrack and 7 million cars on the road. Every one of those race cars uses a process called lean burn to try to get the maximum amount of power out of a piece of fuel, the reason for its development. That process is now used in road cars, keeping our atmosphere cleaner.

My wife drives a little BMW 123 diesel. She subscribes to the belief that the less time you spend on the road the less likely you are to be booked. It is a worry and she does get caught occasionally. However, that car goes so well, it burns 6 litres per 100km. The technology in that car is the reason why we do not have big smoky trucks anymore. It is called piezo injection. It is a very precise injection of the amount of fuel needed.

Trucks can now travel 30 per cent to 40 per cent further on a tank full of fuel than they used to in the old days because it is just burning what it needs; it is not pumping it out as black smoke. Where did that technology come from? Audi. Audi wanted to win Le Mans. Diesel fuel has approximately 35 per cent more calorific value than petrol, therefore you should be able to go a third further on a given number of litres of fuel that you had to carry. Remember, weight is very important. Aside from that, the driver can start cutting down on pit stops. In a 24-hour race, how long do you think you might spend in the pits, even if nothing goes wrong? Audi said, 'Let's figure out how to make a diesel engine run with high performance.' They came up with this system and they won Le Mans with the R10 four years in a row. That technology is used in trucks today. There are more cases like that which I can bring out for you.

CHAIR: Thank you for that.

Mr Tetley: Those are our green credentials. Honestly, I think they are quite exceptional. Very few people see it. They see a car going out on a racetrack or they might see somebody doing some drifting or something similar. It is unfortunate that they do not see that we have those other credentials operating at the same time. I suppose you want to ask me some questions.

CHAIR: One of the key issues you have raised is noise levels. Without targeting individuals, can you comment on the work that is being done? What would you like to see done in this area? This is a subject I am particularly passionate about.

Mr Tetley: I have a problem with the word 'noise' levels. They are sound levels. What is sound to you is music to somebody else and noise to somebody else. There is an emotive overtone when you use the term 'noise levels'. Can we talk about the amount of sound you should be able to make? The sound levels that should be tolerable, in my opinion, are those that do not intrude on your wellbeing. When you hear something, you make a value judgment as to whether it is noise and you are going to get aggro about it or whether, as we well know, most of the neighbours around Lakeside will say, 'Oh, gee, we love Lakeside. Whenever we hear that noise we think it's just great.' They will drive into events to then sit up on the hill to watch what is going on for an hour. Obviously daytime TV is not always as good as Lakeside which is kind of gratifying. That is the situation you are facing. I made the comment before that it has been one woman who has been firing up everybody else around that place.

Mr SORENSEN: It only takes one.

Mr Tetley: It only takes one. I am sure there is some sort of legislation out there, but it seems like politically it is very difficult to turn around. People say, 'It is your democratic right.' Democratic means for the people and not the person. Those people are interpreting democracy as being for the person; that is not right. We are here to service the entire community. On the subject of charities that we were discussing earlier, about three years ago we were running a blind driving day. That particular lady had a complaint; I cannot remember what it was now. We put blind people in the driver's seat so they can drive around Lakeside. It is a fantastic experience for them, something that they would never normally encounter. That is an example of what you can do when you have those sorts of dedicated facilities. There are a lot of community activities that are built around these sorts of places that need to be looked at. Queensland Raceways can hold 70,000 people. It can run V8 Supercars but only on one weekend a year, satisfying only 30,000 people at best—once a year.

These days we can put 40,000 to 50,000 people on that track to do all sorts of activities, some of which are quite social and some of which are quite competitive. We run racing events all the way down to what we call happy laps. In happy laps, we encourage road drivers to come out and drive around a racetrack at 110km/h in a road-registered car to feel the freedom that they thought they were buying when they purchased the vehicle. That experience was invented out of nowhere. We sent out invitations to various social clubs, for example, the Hewlett-Packard engineering services social club, to say, 'Come and have a look at this.' Clubs come out and participate. We give them a thoroughly disgusting breakfast, then put them on the track for 20 minutes. They all go away happy. They experience what it is like to drive without worrying about a policeman or a camera, or something like that.

CHAIR: Can you suggest any solutions to the issue of sound levels? From what the committee has heard and from my personal experience—and I do not hide from that—these facilities are getting harder and harder to replicate. Lakeside Raceway is now in the Queensland Planners as a facility that is hard to replicate elsewhere.

Mr Tetley: Yes.

CHAIR: The subject of sound levels seems to be something that is constantly on people's lips with those who do not appreciate these facilities and surrounds. Take Suncorp Stadium, for example. People are made aware that there are a certain number of times per year where a concert can be held there. I am not putting words in your mouth, but do you have any comment to make?

Mr Tetley: There is some pretty good prior art out of New South Wales on this. I do not want to go too far into the details, but there is an allocation of so many days at this level, other days at this level and other days at this level around which can be built a business and a set of events. Every now and then the wind will blow the wrong way so that the people downwind will experience a higher volume of noise than the people upwind. Therefore it is reasonable to say, 'If I have gone over down there, I cannot go over down there more than twice' or three, five, 10, whatever. We have to consider that because it is not a noise management issue we are dealing with, it is a neighbour management issue. That is why we need to set the right expectations. There are people that have moved closer to Lakeside since we re-opened it so they can be there and they receive neighbours' privileges and things of that nature.

CHAIR: The circuit is not alone in being targeted over noise. There is a ski club on the adjacent lake. That was shut down but has since re-opened. There are outboard motors being operated all day which present a certain noise level as well. It had been there for 50 years. It is now back.

Mr Tetley: You have to work out what motivates these people. They will not sell their houses. We suggest, 'We will have a look at buying your house to on-sell it to see what we can get for it, so you can easily move on.' Pardon me for using a term like 'vendetta', but to constantly complain almost becomes a reason for somebody to live, thinking they are doing good deeds on the way through.

CHAIR: As the local member for the area, I receive so much support for the activities, not only on the lake but also at Lakeside Raceway. My view is that if I do not like the sound of waves crashing, I would not move to the ocean front.

Mr Tetley: It is interesting that you should use that example. There was a person who moved to Main Beach on the Gold Coast. They complained about the sound of the waves and wanted the council to build a breakwater.

CHAIR: There you go. Are there any further questions?

Mr SORENSEN: It always amazes me how a facility such as an airport can be built and everybody wants to live around it, but then they start complaining about it. I have had that experience. It only takes one. We have to look at the town planning issues on a lot of these projects in the future.

If we build a facility like this, we should not allow anyone to build around it to protect the interests of the original inhabitants. Developers will go to court over town planning issues, but facilities such as this should be protected to stop people from building too close. I apologise—that is a statement, not a question.

CHAIR: That is alright.

Mr SORENSEN: With regards to Brisbane Airport, they are building all the facilities out there now. At the end of the day, it is totally ridiculous. What would we do now without the airport out there? We have to protect those areas. The same applies to motorsport and the big sporting grounds; we have to protect them. If you want to live there, you have to put up with what comes.

Mr Tetley: I do not have a problem with people complaining about something, let me say that, but I take issue with the ability to serially complain. Every complaint has to be evaluated. Right now I would suggest that the Moreton Bay Regional Council has probably spent \$200,000 to \$250,000 of ratepayers' money servicing those complaints. My belief is that everybody has the right to complain, but limit people to three complaints a year. If those three complaints are upheld, you can then have a fourth and a fifth, et cetera. However, once you have exhausted your three freebies, it would then cost \$200 or \$250 to lodge a complaint. If the complaint is found to be not justified, that \$250 is then used to pay for the evaluation process. That is what I would like to see.

Mr MELLISH: As someone who has been to plenty of motor racing venues over the years, I certainly see that prior use is something that people should take into account when they are moving into an area. I know it is a long time, but further to that point, is it worth putting on the record, for the benefit of the committee, how long Lakeside, Queensland Raceway and Willowbank precinct have had motorsport-related activities run on them? They are not new entities. It is not something that people should be surprised about on hearing it.

Mr Tetley: Lakeside opened in March 1961 so it is coming up to its 60th anniversary next year. The first operations at Willowbank were in 1985, that is, 35 years since the drags opened up. QR was built there and opened in 1999.

Mr MELLISH: Once again this is a comment rather than a question: it has been in operation for a long time, providing a lot of joy to a lot of people.

Mr Tetley: They do. Ipswich is still trying to come to terms—and I hope nobody is listening—with the fact that its greatest tourism asset is Willowbank. That precinct should have been developed 20, 30, 40 years ago into what it could be so that today there would be a Gasoline Alley industrial complex et cetera that would have all of those other facilities that you were talking about. It is just a shame that it was never allowed to coalesce into something that could be driven forward.

CHAIR: I have one final question, given that time is beating us. Perhaps in a little bit of detail, can you tell us what you are doing with safety in the events you support?

Mr Tetley: Firstly, can we just get a couple of things right? Safety is between the ears. There is no safety outside of that. Everything outside of your ears is injury mitigation. When you put in an arrester bed, it is to reduce the likelihood of an injury. Airbags are not a safety device; they are an injury mitigation device. I mentioned earlier how important attitude is. We work very hard on getting the attitude into the heads of the people to go out there. Then usually they do not bother to do something stupid. Yes, there are some in that 10 per cent who sneak through and, unfortunately, they can cause us some grief on occasion, but by and large that is not the case. Once you explain to young people that, 'These are the rules, because we want you to come back. I am a mercenary man. I want your money. If you are dead, I do not get it, so come back, alright?' When you start pushing that into them, they think, 'I do want a career. I have a girlfriend and she wants me to go home tonight,' and stuff like that, I find that they are very responsive and responsible to that type of approach. 'Mate, it is on you.' That is why we do not have competition rules. We do not talk about regulations and things like that. We have a code of conduct. Everybody who goes on the track has to read and agree to the code of conduct. The code of conduct is about behaviour, ergo safety. It is not about a concrete wall that would potentially kill somebody but save a spectator who is not there anyway.

CHAIR: Thank you. Are there any more questions or final statements?

LEWIS, Mr Keith, Roll Racing Australia

CHAIR: Would you like to come forward Keith?

Mr Lewis: My name is Keith Lewis. I am previously from Queensland Raceway and now from Roll Racing Australia. Lakeside's noise issues have been well discussed. Unfortunately, a number of other venues around Queensland have the same problems. It is important that the noise issue is not Brisbane

handed just to Lakeside. Can we find a resolution to save places like Cornell Park? The people behind me use Cornell Park. The economic benefits of some of these smaller facilities in regional areas must be huge, but we cannot shut them down because their noise is impacting on the economic benefits of small towns and regions around Queensland. The noise issue needs to be looked at not just in Lakeside but in all of these smaller regional areas as well to allow them to continue to operate.

CHAIR: Thank you very much for that. We need to capture that. I really appreciate it. Any further comments? Thank you for your attendance here today. A transcript of these proceedings will be available on the committee's web page in due course. I declare the hearing closed.

The committee adjourned at 12.03 pm.