



TRANSPORT AND PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Members present:

Mr SR King MP (Chair)
Mr TJ Sorensen MP (via videoconference)
Mr CE Boyce MP
Mr BJ Mellish MP
Mr LR McCallum 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, 18 MAY 2020

Brisbane

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The committee met at 10.20 am.

CHAIR: I declare open the public hearing for the committee's inquiry into motor recreational activities. Thank you for your interest and your attendance today. I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land where we meet. My name is Shane King, member for Kurwongbah and chair of the committee. The other committee members in attendance today are Mr Ted Sorensen, member for Hervey Bay and deputy chair; Mr Colin Boyce, member for Callide; Mr Lance McCallum, member for Bundamba; and Mr Bart Mellish, member for Aspley. Mr Robbie Katter, member for Traeger, is unable to join us today.

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 and, in doing so, look at the volume and range of MRAs currently practised by and available to the people of Queensland.

The committee's proceedings are proceedings of the Queensland parliament and are subject to the standing rules and orders of the parliament. The committee will not require evidence to be given under oath, but I remind witnesses that intentionally misleading the committee is a serious offence. You 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 you will be provided with a copy of the transcript. For the benefit of Hansard and other witnesses, please identify yourself each time you speak and speak clearly and at a reasonable pace.

Media may be present and will be subject to the chair's direction at all times. The media rules endorsed by the committee are available from committee staff if required. All those in attendance should note that it is possible you may be filmed or photographed during these proceedings. The proceedings are also being broadcast on the parliament's website. I ask everyone to turn mobile phones off or to silent mode. I also ask that if you take a question on notice today you provide the information to the committee by 4 pm on Monday, 25 May 2020. The purpose of today's hearing is to assist the committee with its inquiry.

AMISS, Mr Roger, Treasurer, Queensland Superkart Club (via videoconference)

ENGLISH, Mr Shaune, State Technical Adviser, Karting Queensland (via teleconference)

SKENE, Mr Terry, Managing Director, Kingston Park Raceway (via teleconference)

CHAIR: Welcome. Do you have a brief opening statement about your operation and how you are going?

Mr Amiss: I do. My name is Roger Amiss. I am the race secretary and treasurer of the Queensland Superkart Club. Whilst the Queensland Superkart Club shares a common interest in karting with Karting Queensland and Kingston Park Raceway, we have quite different track requirements. Our racing is what is commonly termed as long-track racing. As such, we compete on circuits such as Phillip Island, Eastern Creek, Tailem Bend, Winton, and in Queensland at Morgan Park, Queensland Raceway and Lakeside Park. Each state in Australia has at least one high-quality venue. Victoria has three, with Phillip Island, Sandown Park and Winton; South Australia has Tailem Bend; New South Wales has Eastern Creek; Western Australia has Wanneroo; and Northern Territory has Hidden Valley.

The basis of our submission today is the requirement for the provision of a high-quality permanent venue in Queensland that will attract competitors, businesses and visitors alike. I believe that the development of a motor racing precinct covering a range of motorsports has advantages economically such as the one at Willowbank which, with expansion and improvement, could well be a starting point to achieving the outcome.

The one problem in the past with the motor racing circuits has been the noise factor that such a facility brings. When a residential development is allowed to encroach upon such facilities, history has proven that it is always the racing circuit that suffers. There is a long list of racing circuits
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worldwide that have closed due to this factor alone. Wherever this facility is constructed, there must also be the ability to protect investment into the future by allowing an effective buffer zone to prevent its closure.

As to what we bring to Queensland as a sport, that was covered in the submission with juniors and a wide range of cost-effective racing. Thank you.

CHAIR: While we wait for Mr English and Mr Skene to join us via teleconference, we will go to questions for Mr Amiss.

Mr BOYCE: Mr Amiss, you have stated that these recreational facilities quite often suffer from urban encroachment and so forth and that it is the facility that suffers rather than the urban development. Can you identify any preferred sites that you may have in mind as to where a future development might occur?

Mr Amiss: To me there are probably three possibilities. Willowbank, which is existing, is probably the best option because there is a large facility there already which can be improved upon. The second one would be Morgan Park. It is in an area where noise may not be such a problem. The third one would be Norwell, where there are existing facilities and a buffer zone may be able to be applied.

Mr BOYCE: Are there any facilities that exist outside the south-east corner?

Mr Amiss: There could well be. I do not know whether it would attract the volume of people, with Brisbane being the major centre and travel being a problem. It is like in Victoria: the Phillip Island racetrack is a brilliant facility but it is three hours drive from Melbourne. They do not get the crowds down there because people do not want to do a six-hour round trip in a day to watch racing. Yes, there could well be facilities further north of Brisbane that I am unaware of.

CHAIR: I know of a great little kart track at Proserpine just near the Whitsunday Airport. I have Lakeside raceway in my electorate and the noise restrictions have proven difficult over time. The operator and others are working through those at the moment. With regard to urban encroachment, in my opinion there should be a historical factor of who was there first. People move to the area to be close to these facilities. I could not agree more that urban encroachment has become the problem. I welcome Mr English on teleconference. Do you have an opening statement?

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Mr English: I have a couple of things to add to the written submission. By way of background, Karting Queensland is affiliated with Karting Australia and we are recognised by Motorsport Australia as the peak body. Having said that, we are definitely not the only karting organisation in Queensland or Australia. A lot of us are going through the same issues. It sounds like a common one is urban encroachment, which you may have heard already this morning. A couple of other things surround the economic benefits. In my submission I spoke about the events that we conduct, but I overlooked the support services that have built up around karting. As an example, I am in Gladstone and there are four kart shops that operate just in this facility and 12 Karting Australia tracks in Queensland. Each of those has those support businesses if we are looking at the economic benefits to the state.

As far as benefits to the community go, in my day-to-day job I am in road safety. I have seen kids as young as 10 put karts sideways around a track and recover them. That sort of experience and knowledge that they gain at that age is phenomenal. Trying to gain that knowledge on a road is a recipe for disaster.

In terms of urban encroachment, I will give you the example of our Townsville kart track. Over the last 18 months to two years they have been fighting an application from a property developer to basically have them shut down or restricted. That has cost that club \$80,000 and, like I said, 18 months to two years in trying to defend their right to continue the sport in their current location. The process has actually resulted in them not being able to use the track for all the things they used to do. They used to do Q-Ride and the police used it for driver training as well. Now they can only use it for karting activities.

CHAIR: That is disappointing. This is, once again, my opinion, but these venues should be utilised for multiple purposes. That is the reason for them being there.

Mr McCALLUM: Mr Amiss, thank you for your opening statement. Your submission identifies the differences between superkarts and karts. Could you please elaborate on this, including whether or not there is any crossover of participants in both forms of motorsport and advise of the typical profile of a participant in your sport?

Mr Amiss: I will start with the first point. The differences are that we compete on a long track. They have a six-speed gearbox. They are a very fast machine kart capable of speeds up to 250 kilometres per hour. We use Willowbank, Tailem Bend, Eastern Creek and Lakeside Park—those Brisbane

style of tracks. There is crossover between what is known as sprint karting and us, which is superkarting. We have a particular class, which is the Rotax non-gearbox class where you can just pluck your kart off a sprint track and put it onto a long circuit and compete. We have another junior class, which is an 80cc gearbox class, which is similar to what Karting Queensland are running. It gives juniors a chance to get speed out of their system before they get a car licence.

The typical profile ranges. We have fellows that are 18 years old in a non-gearbox and we have a 70-year-old who still runs a 125cc. It is definitely a family oriented sport. What do we bring to Queensland? It is the same as any other sport: when we go somewhere we spend money. It is as simple as that.

Mr McCALLUM: In terms of the speeds that superkarts reach around tracks, does that lead to any particular requirements in terms of safety, run-offs et cetera for your sport in terms of the venues that you use?

Mr Amiss: It is no different to a car on the same track. We utilise all the same safety features. We do have high speeds. The crossover class does about 160 on a track but the non-gearboxes—the big 250cc machines—are very, very fast. They hold most of the lap records around the place. What we do require is a smooth surface, and with Willowbank and Morgan Park becoming rougher we are having difficulty.

CHAIR: I appreciate the profile about the varying age ranges of your members. It is a feeder into car racing; it has long been thought of that way. Would it be a correct assumption that karting is important as a feeder for other forms of racing as well? Everyone please comment on this one, one at a time.

Mr Amiss: From a superkart point of view, yes, most definitely. People in superkarting sometimes tend to work up through the categories in superkarting up to 250cc. Karting Queensland probably have more of a feeder into cars because a person gets to an age where they want to go do something different.

Mr English: If you look at most of your Supercars or Formula 1 drivers, they have all come up through karting.

CHAIR: Mr Skene, do you wish to make an opening statement to set the scene?

Mr Skene: Sorry about those difficulties earlier. I was listening to myself on the replay. Apologies. My position in the go-kart industry is that we run recreational karting. I have been in this business since 1997; I have been involved for 23 years at the coalface. Currently, we employ 33 people when we are open. Obviously with the closure due to COVID at the moment we are on stand-down. Under normal operations for us we have three tracks and 70 karts, and we are situated on a 15-acre property. I give you this for a mental picture to understand that we are heavily committed to the industry of recreational karting and have invested a lot of time and money into it. In the Logan region we contribute about \$3.3 million a year to the local economy, so we are a big part of our local economy through wages and spending.

I did hear the gentleman speak earlier about how karting influences the economy and influences the community. Go-karting has a far wider appeal. It transcends different demographics and different ages; it appeals to so many people. As you pointed out just now, Will Davison, Craig Lowndes, Mark Webber and many more national and international champions have all come from go-karting. Go-karting is a very important part of Australia's DNA, as is motorsport; I think we all agree with that.

Recreational karters also deal with tourism and the motorsport industry. Go-karting fits nicely and dovetails into all of those activities I have heard you talk about leading up to this. As I said, I started in this industry in 1996 and in 1997 I took over. The issue that we have is that the Australian government and in particular Workplace Health and Safety Queensland and the Australian standards board, as I said in my submission, look at recreational go-karting as an amusement ride. In my submission I compared the two—the amusement ride versus the sport. Should I go over that again, or are you clear on my point on that?

CHAIR: We have it, but it is obviously a valid point. Please feel free if you want to add to it.

Mr Skene: I have a couple more things that I will add to it that will help put a picture to the words. Back in 2003 the go-kart industry really started to grow in Australia. When Workplace Health and Safety had to do any inspections, when they had to go to any tracks, the best reference tool they had at the time was the AS 3533 Australian standard for bumper cars. You can imagine walking into my place, which is a motorsport facility, and telling me I have to operate under a bumper car standard. We have had many head crashes. I got so involved I ended up with working with AALARA. They are the peak body in the amusement industry that talk direct to government.

Through AALARA, in 2014 I was voted a director of the board and eventually formed a go-kart recreational industry committee. That was a big coup because we had the opportunity then to talk with government with some respect at a level that they could listen. We pointed out to WHS Queensland—at this stage I only thought it was a local problem—that you cannot judge motorsport, go-karting, as an amusement ride. They agreed and then opened up a committee called 3533.4, which is an extension of the amusement industry committee, for hire karts. We took that opportunity and we rewrote that standard twice in five years. In fact, it needed to be rewritten a third time. It takes a long time to move an elephant and we had to educate them that we are a sport, not an amusement ride. Every time we got to the point of educating them we moved another inch. It is going to take a lot more work before we get to that next phase.

Where are we right now? There is a standard out there. It is not a perfect standard and it offered some form of direction for regulators, because regulators had no idea what they were auditing. They would come in to do an audit and they would ask where the bumper rails were—true problem. Operators were actually getting in trouble because they did not have track perimeters. Can you believe that? That was 17 years ago.

We now have a standard that talks about recreational go-karting, but it has lumped indoor and outdoor together. My point here is, and it is a valid one—first off, I must talk about this before I go to the speeds. The states in Australia consider it differently: Workplace Health and Safety Queensland consider it an amusement ride; in Victoria an amusement ride; in South Australia the same. However, in New South Wales and Western Australia they are run under sports and recreation. As the guys from Karting Australia and the guys from Willowbank would know, sports and recreation operate and control motorsport. If there is an incident in motorsport, the first person they call is the police to see if there is criminal negligence or some negligence on behalf of the operator. In Queensland if we have an incident, straightaway we call Workplace Health and Safety, who come and measure us against an amusement ride.

We are not an amusement ride because no amusement ride in the world gives you control of the pedals, the brake, the accelerator and the steering wheel and says, 'Off you go.' We are a sport. We are at a recreational level. We are not Karting Australia but we are a feeder; we feed the people that are interested in that activity into the sport at a very affordable price, and price is obviously a problem. Just to support what I am saying about us being a sport and not an amusement ride, the average speed of a go-kart on our track is 45 kilometres an hour. That is 11 metres per second. That means in three seconds it is going to travel 33 metres. If you are not on your game and you are not concentrating on what you are doing, you are going to go off the track and into another kart or into the wall. What I am saying is that you can hurt yourself. There is some risk associated with karting. Fair enough? You understand that.

Of course, if we are an amusement ride, then 70 kilometres an hour is an extremely high speed to put people in a kart and call it an amusement ride. The known risk factor—we can talk about the two sides here. The amusement ride says that no guests should be injured. The amusement ride says that you put people into the ride and you control all aspects of that ride and it has a safe outcome. Unfortunately—and I have said this to all of them—I cannot give you a 100 per cent guarantee that there will be a no-risk outcome if I let you drive, steer, accelerate and brake. That is why we are not an amusement ride. We are a motorsport at a lower level, but we are a motorsport activity.

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CHAIR: It interests me that they have lumped you in with indoor karting, which does have rubber bumpers. I would not have called it an amusement ride because you do have control of those karts. Outdoor karting should be completely separate. It surprises me that they are lumped in together.

Mr Skene: And difficult to operate under.

Mr MELLISH: Thank you, Mr Skene, for the background on how you are dealt with in different states. As someone who has been a very poor go-karter only recreationally over the years, it has always been interesting to me that it is one of the few motorsports where you can turn up on a day and get straight into it and also that it has links to other forms of motorsport. Is there a state that has good model legislation for assessing your sport against workplace health and safety that Queensland should be following? Is there a state that has gone through this process and that we can essentially learn from?

Mr Skene: In New South Wales the Office of Sport manages recreational go-karting. One of the challenges I had when working on the standard was that some states are committed to workplace health and safety and others are not. Everybody wanted very different rules.

CHAIR: I should have let the other witnesses comment on whether they think karting is an amusement ride or a motorsport. I am pretty sure there would be a consensus on this. If other witnesses would like to comment on that, feel free.

Mr English: It is definitely not an amusement ride.

CHAIR: Definitely. We confirm that.

Mr English: It is big money that people spend on that amusement ride.

CHAIR: I think the point was highlighted properly by saying that with an amusement ride you are buckled in and someone else is in control. That is very different to you sitting in something and you having control, no matter the speed. I agree that there is a big difference. With bumper cars there is a certain element of control or out of control, but they are very different to a go-kart. Member for Hervey Bay, do you have any questions? Do you have a karting facility in Hervey Bay?

Mr SORENSEN: We do have a karting facility, but I would never have thought it would be considered an amusement ride because they travel pretty fast around those tracks. That was very interesting. It seems ridiculous that the bumper cars that we see in the shows that go around are considered the same as karts going around a racetrack.

CHAIR: It is very different.

Mr SORENSEN: Very different; you can say that again. Thank you for that information because I did not know that.

Mr Skene: It has been a big struggle to get government to understand this. The problem we have is that government made up its mind about this 20 years ago and this really needs some money put into it. Every time I end up in front of an inquiry or in front of a board, the first answer I get is that we do not have the money.

Mr SORENSEN: Do motor mower races come under amusement rides as well?

Mr Skene: I think you will find they are probably under motorsport. Standards Australia has a motorsport standard. When I went to Standards I will tell you a couple of things they did. Standards did not crash test the go-karts. If you look at any amusement ride, any standard has crash testing and engineering requirements. The standard we were given does not have any of that. They did not impose any age restrictions and they failed to correctly differentiate between indoor and outdoor karting.

One of the most important things was that it failed to enforce seatbelts or rollover protection. If we were an amusement ride we would definitely have those requirements. I think in the background everyone was thinking, 'This is a motorsport and what are we doing here?' so they allowed engineers to work with operators to circumvent the requirement for roll bars and seatbelts. All they did was write a report and that excused operators from the requirement.

It was not treated in the true sense as an amusement ride and it should never be. I will outline the consequence of being considered an amusement ride. I will not re-read my submission, but you would all know what PIPA is. When a guy walks into a solicitor and says, 'I hurt my finger on a go-kart,' for \$70 he can start an insurance claim against the go-kart operator. It will go to \$10,000 in a blink and straightaway up go the excesses for operators, up go the costs of policies for the operators and the whole thing becomes unruly to manage. That is just because it is considered an amusement ride.

Mr McCALLUM: I want to try to paint a picture of your businesses and clubs around the cost of participation and how that might be offset for individuals in terms of sponsorship, whether that is for competition or particular participants, with a view to informing the committee about the economic contribution of the sporting activities.

Mr Skene: That is a wide question.

Mr Amiss: I can answer that from a superkart point of view. We do have sponsorship involvement. It is reasonably minimal. It is left to the individual to gain their own sponsorship, if possible. A lot of the sponsorship actually comes from the companies of the people who run the karts. As to the cost of the sport, all motorsport is expensive. We are with what they call Racers, which is Queensland Raceway and Lakeside Park. They sell us a category for a race meeting at 4½ thousand dollars. It is up to us to then sell that on to our members through entry fees. It is a good working model because it encourages clubs like ours to build membership to make things more viable. I am not sure whether that is what you are after. Is that the sort of thing you are looking for?

Mr McCALLUM: That is. The only thing I would add to that is: what is your typical cost per race for a participant?

Mr Amiss: For a complete race meeting, it depends on the class. If someone has a Rotax kart they are paying a \$250 entry fee. They are paying a bit of fuel because they do not use a great deal. A set of tyres on one of those things can last several meetings. That is basically the cost. If you go to a 250, which is holding lap records everywhere, you are looking at about \$1,000 a meeting.

CHAIR: Mr English, did you wish to add anything to that?

Mr English: Probably it depends on what level you are at. When I started I think I paid about \$3,000 for a second-hand kart and to get my son fitted out with all the safety equipment. It is about \$200 for a set of tyres which could last you two to three meets. For club level meets you are looking at an entry fee from \$60 to \$80. At the base level it probably costs \$100 to \$150 a meet once you outlay the initial amount for the kart. If you are looking to get yourself set up with a brand-new kart and a brand-new engine which is ready to go, you are probably looking at in the vicinity of \$10,000 to \$15,000 depending on what you are looking at. If you are looking at the top-level karts with the shifter, you could probably add a fair bit more to that.

If we are looking at the national rounds, the Australian Kart Championships, the entry fees are about \$300 or \$400. They travel around the country. People tend to spend a bit more money on those because of the level of competition and getting their teams and everything there. At the entry level it is reasonably cheap for a motorsport, but at the top level it starts getting expensive.

Mr Skene: Obviously we are entry level. The average spend for my competitor is \$100 for four races. They will come in and spend two hours with us—15 minutes on track and 15 minutes off; two races an hour. For \$100 they will get two hours entertainment, a lot of experience and a lot of fun.

CHAIR: I seem to remember in a previous life some corporate racing at Kingston Park. That would be interesting because you would have a wide range of people from different fields of work coming onto the track.

Mr Skene: And varied skills and abilities we say. That is our challenge.

CHAIR: That is a better way to put it.

Mr Skene: That is our challenge. As part of our business, team building is what we do. Go-karting might be the catalyst but we have the general manager go-karting with the cleaner. When they go back to work they have something in common to talk about. Go-karting is a great team-building tool. For corporates it is a wonderful thing.

CHAIR: There being no further questions, we thank you for your submissions. As we progress with this inquiry, would you be open to us sending a question without notice to you if we come up with anything else?

Mr English: I am happy to answer any questions you have.

Mr Skene: No problem.

Mr Amiss: Yes.

CHAIR: Thank you all very much. We appreciate your time today.

Proceedings suspended from 10.56 am to 11.16 am.

005 **BUCHANAN, Mr Ray, Manager, Queensland Moto Park; Organiser, Australian Dirt Bike Adventures (via videoconference)**

DOYLE, Mr Peter, Chief Executive Officer, Motorcycling Australia (via videoconference)

MILTON, Mr Ian, Vice-President, Queensland Early Motorcycle Sports Club Inc. (via videoconference)

ROWCLIFFE, Mr Kim, General Manager, Motorcycling Queensland (via videoconference)

CHAIR: Thank you for your interest and attendance. I invite you to make a brief opening statement to supplement your written submissions. We might start with Motorcycling Queensland.

Mr Rowcliffe: I am more than happy to do that, Mr Chairman. I am the General Manager for Motorcycling Queensland. I have also invited Mr Peter Doyle, who is the CEO from Motorcycling Australia, to be in attendance today and pull me up on anything that perhaps I do not cover off on correctly. I will make a brief opening statement to give everyone some context as to who I am, who I represent and what we do.

We are the state controlling body for motorcycle sport and recreation in Queensland as recognised by the relevant Queensland state government department—Housing, Homelessness and Sport within the Department of Housing and Public Works. It is a bit of a mouthful. For ease, I just abbreviate that to sport and rec because everyone seems to easily understand that is where motorcycling fits in. We are affiliated with Motorcycling Australia, the nationally recognised peak body for motorcycle sport and recreation. They, in turn, are recognised by the Australian Sports Commission and by extension the Federation Internationale de Motocyclisme, FIM.

Motorcycling Queensland is a company limited by guarantee incorporated under the Corporations Act 2001. What do we do? Quite simply, we aim to professionally manage and develop the business of motorcycle sport and recreation. The organisation is governed by a board. We have six full-time staff members and two part-time staff. We have a network and array of sport-specific subcommittees. We have about 75 affiliated clubs throughout the state as well as a variety of affiliated private promoters. The other key thing is that we provide insurance coverage to our riders, clubs and promoters, including personal accident insurance, public and products liability insurance and directors and officers insurance, via the organisation's own insurance company Motorcycling Australia Insurance Ltd, MAIL.

Finally, relevant to what this particular committee is all about, we, like many other sports, have noticed in the last five to 10 years the dramatic trend away from structured competition sport to much more recreational 'when it suits me' type activity. That has required us as an organisation to be agile to keep up with the trend in the way people participate. Recreational activity now equates to 50-plus per cent of our motorcycle participants. If we have 60,000 participants in Queensland annually, more than half of those will be participating on a recreational basis; hence, our obvious interest in this committee.

CHAIR: That is much appreciated. Mr Buchanan, do you have anything you wish to add?

Mr Buchanan: I manage and developed the Queensland Moto Park for Motorcycling Queensland which is run under the SEQ Council of Mayors. It is the first time the government has put a large block of land aside for recreational activity. Also, for a number of years, under Australian Dirt Bike Adventures, I have been running community fundraising trail rides—mainly in northern New South Wales but I have run a number in Queensland using a combination of state forests and private land. I have vast experience in dealing with forestry and local government in going through all the hurdles to run those events.

CHAIR: That is much appreciated. Mr Milton from Queensland Early Motorcycle Sports Club?

Mr Milton: I am the Vice-President of Queensland Early Motorcycle Sports Club Inc. We call it QEMSC. QEMSC is primarily a motorcycle racing club. However, most of our members also ride road registered motorcycles and usually own a number of motorbikes. Therefore, we also have an interest in the SIV scheme. As you can imagine, it is very costly to maintain the registration on many bikes. Consequently, we ask government to introduce a fairer scheme similar to those in other states. After all, we can only ride one motorcycle at a time.

We provide training at our racing events for novice racers. This in turn makes them safer riders on the road. Competition is both healthy and expensive. One of our largest costs is track hire. Coupled with the cost of track hire is track availability. There are simply insufficient road-racing circuits available in Queensland. What we refer to as our home track is a very small racetrack called Carnell Park at Stanthorpe. Unfortunately, that track is limited to 12 events per year. We are lucky if we can run two events per year there. It is simply unaffordable for us to race at the likes of Queensland Raceway because of our small numbers and the type of racing that we do. There is no sponsorship. There is no money involved. Consequently, it is all self-funded and it is very expensive.

In summary, more and more affordable tracks are necessary in Queensland. In my submission No. 29, the original submission, I outlined some of the reasons for that—economic reasons not just for the sport of motorcycling but particularly the economic benefits it brings to those towns that have a racetrack. Warwick, for example, has Morgan Park. Every time there is a race meeting on at Morgan Park, whether it is cars or bikes, you cannot get a motel room in that town. Every restaurant is full. The RSL and every hotel benefits from it. Thousands and thousands of dollars are injected into that community whenever we run race meetings. The proof of the viability of the sport is there.

Unfortunately, to build racetracks is an expensive thing to do. If a private entrepreneur were to build one—and we have seen many instances in Queensland in recent times. People talked about it on the Gold Coast and Beenleigh et cetera. It never comes to fruition because it is horrendously expensive. There are also the environmental hurdles they have to jump over. If they were to succeed in building a track then it would simply be unaffordable for us amateur road racers because they need a substantial return on their investment. We have seen in it at Eastern Creek in New South Wales, for example. I think it is something like \$20,000 a day to hire the track. It is simply unavailable to small amateur clubs for club level racing. We would ask that the government consider supporting and funding a number of rural tracks in Queensland. Mr King, I live in your electorate and I am more than happy to discuss this matter at length with you at any time. Thank you very much for inviting me.

CHAIR: Lakeside raceway is nearby.

Mr Milton: It is my home track actually, yes.

CHAIR: I would be happy to have a discussion with any of my constituents about motor recreation. I am an enthusiast and I declared that at the outset of this inquiry. This is not about me today, but I am motorcycle-less at the moment because of two shoulder reconstructions, but it will not be long before I am sure I will be back on a motorbike again.

Mr SORENSEN: Many years ago the motocross used my property for a motocross track. One of the things I learned in doing that was the amount of land you had to have for car parking around those sporting venues. Do any of you have any idea of the size of the area you need around those tracks? That was something I learned—the amount of land you have to have for parking cars. It is unbelievable. A crowd of only 4,000 to 5,000 would turn up but everybody has a car.

Mr Milton: Lakeside motor racing circuit is only a little over 100 acres—I think 116 or 114 acres. I personally own 130 acres of land at Rush Creek just east of Dayboro. If the government were to support me financially somehow and Motorcycling Queensland and Motorcycling Australia would cover me for indemnity insurance, I would be more than happy to make that available to any form of motorsport. The trouble is, as a private landowner, there are huge monetary risks involved in allowing somebody on your land to ride a motorcycle. The offer is there. I am happy to share it.

Mr Rowcliffe: Without telling anyone something they already know, motorcycle activity by its very nature is not like playing tennis, where we can go to our activity with five people in our car and five tennis rackets and some balls. By the very nature of the activity, we transport a fair bit of gear with us. I think one of the advantages of that—and also because people often travel significant distances because of the sparseness of venues—is that people tend to travel as a family, especially to big events. I know this is more about recreation. Groups of families tend to travel en masse. They bring all their gear with them, so they tend to take up a fair bit of room at a track. We are not a small moving activity, if you will. We travel en masse. We have gear to take with us. Therefore, we take up a bit of room.

Mr SORENSEN: You mostly have big trailers and everything, haven't you?

Mr Rowcliffe: You do not have to, but some of the pro riders perhaps travel with an equipped or fitted out vehicle and they take all of that with them as well. You can quite easily do it with a trailer, for instance, if you really want to do it on a budget.

Mr SORENSEN: Yes, I know. The professional guys who travel the countryside usually do have a big trailer. It is all undercover and all of that type of thing. They nearly have a mechanic's garage with them as well sometimes.

Mr Rowcliffe: Yes.

Mr Milton: But they are not going to attend club level racing events.

Mr SORENSEN: No, but a lot of these races are still run by the clubs. I know when they used to have it in Hervey Bay it was a club that was running those races and they would attract people from all over Queensland and even sometimes overseas racers as well.

CHAIR: It is good for the community then, member—bringing a lot of money into the community.

Mr SORENSEN: Yes, it does. It is unbelievable.

Mr BOYCE: Mr Rowcliffe, at the moment I am dealing with a really big issue that I believe will affect motorcycling and all aspects of it—that is, the supply of four-wheeler motorbikes. Come 20 October 2021, the major suppliers around the world—Honda, Yamaha, Polaris, for example—will pull out of the Australian market due to the safety issues in rollover protection that are supposed to be supplied now on these motorcycles. I have in my electorate motorcycle dealerships that turn over \$2.5 million in motorcycle sales, with 60 per cent to 70 per cent of their business in four-wheeler motorcycles to the agricultural and recreational industry. Their businesses will close if the supply of four-wheeler motorbikes is not brought to Australia. Is Motorcycling Queensland aware of this issue and would you have any comment to make on that and how that affects motorcycling in general in Queensland?

Mr Rowcliffe: We are certainly aware of it. I wonder though, Pete, whether you perhaps would not be more appropriate to respond to that.

Mr Doyle: I can elaborate on that. I spent 25 years working in the technical area. I was national technical manager for Kawasaki both here in Australia and in Japan for a while. It is a major issue. The manufacturers have withdrawn from the Australian market. It is specific to the Australian market and it is in relation to, essentially, product liability of having to fit aftermarket rollover protection devices to their products which they are not designed to have. It came to a stalemate. The manufacturers did threaten to pull out. Ultimately the government called their bluff and the manufacturers are withdrawing. My contact with the manufacturers is that they will be reducing their stock over the coming 12 to 18 months, and I believe somewhere towards the end of 2021 they will no longer be able to be sold in Australia without rollover protection. I do not see that turning around anytime soon. However, knowing the motorcycle industry as I do, there may be some light at the end of the tunnel should some of the manufacturers develop and design a unit that may satisfy the government requirements, but at this stage I do not see that being the case.

CHAIR: I remember the Honda Odyssey. It was more of a recreational vehicle. It had rollover protection.

Mr Doyle: For example, Kawasaki have a unit called a mule, which is one of those four-wheelers. They are all called side-by-sides nowadays. Many of the side-by-sides, and especially the original ones, whilst they had big roll cages over them—or it appeared to be a roll cage; that is actually the air intake so they could run them through water – were not actually rollover protection compliant. There are huge issues in that area and I do not see a short-term fix. I had experience in the Queensland market with a few farms and what they used to do with these four-wheelers up there was incredible. You just would not believe what they used them for. A big gap is going to be left with the end of the ATVs.

Mr BOYCE: My biggest concern is: if we see the closure of motorcycle businesses, particularly in rural Queensland, the service of recreational vehicles—race motorbikes, road motorbikes et cetera—will become extinct in rural and regional Queensland. For me, that is a big issue that will affect every little town, every farmer and every recreational user of a motorcycle.

CHAIR: It is a bit beyond the control of this committee, but I think it does need to be highlighted with the federal government. In our report we can definitely make a recommendation around that.

Mr McCALLUM: The Motorcycling Queensland submission mentions the need for additional research into the benefits associated with motorcycling. Could you elaborate on that for us, please?

Mr Rowcliffe: I certainly can. What is only ever discussed anecdotally but is very difficult to point to any hard evidence of is the idea that kids in particular who take up motorcycling at a young age become better, more aware, safer road users when they are older. As I mentioned before, is it not unusual for families to travel significant distances to attend events. It is nothing for the kids who have just got their licence to jump in their van after they finish work on Friday in Brisbane and be in Rockhampton for an event on Saturday and Sunday and then turn around and come back again.

What I would love to know more of is: do these guys and girls who have been exposed to motorcycling at a young age therefore become acutely aware of things like spatial awareness and consequences associated with actions? I would love to know, I would love to have the ability to perhaps conduct some longitudinal studies that actually say, yes, that is fact rather than it being presented as an emotional argument from people within the organisation, because we believe it to be true but I think it needs to be demonstrated to be true through evidence and data and research, not through emotion.

CHAIR: Mr Doyle, do you wish to add to that?

Mr Doyle: In some of the discussion that has taken place there was mention about Morgan Park and the economic impact. We actually run one race meeting there from Motorcycling Australia each year—the Superbike Championship—which has become their largest event to date. The economic impact for that one race that we run there for three days is \$2.8 million to the local area.

In regard to Queensland motorsport venues being referred to the road-racing side, Queensland has probably the largest recreational capability in the country but from a motorsport venue side is definitely down the bottom. We have a facility at Broadford in Melbourne, the Bend is building on up in South Australia, there is Barbagallo in Western Australian and the Sydney Motorsport Park. These are all multidiscipline motorsport venues—karting, road, dirt, drags, speedway—depending which one of those you go to. There is nothing like that that is accessible in Queensland. Morgan Park is what we refer to as a good regional facility. Lakeside is just far too dangerous for the majority of motorcycle use and the Ipswich precinct is unfortunately controlled by private entities and is far too expensive. They do not want to comply with any peak body's regulations that are out there so it is a bit of an issue.

Mr McCALLUM: Motorcycling Queensland's submission mentioned the issue of security of tenure for existing facilities. Could you elaborate on that, please?

Mr Rowcliffe: Through our own research with the clubs we have identified that in club land that probably has not been prioritised highly enough. When you talk about these volunteer clubs you get the changeover of committees. They come and go and often focus on a 12-month period or what is happening with the next event rather than on long-term security or tenure of the venue that is going to enable them to be there in five or 10 years time—to enable them to work in with any new planning legislation that is coming out, to enable them to be aware of their environment, to ensure long-term sustainability. There have been far too many examples of venues that have not kept their eye on the ball and as a consequence have closed down or cease to exist. For some of them it is completely logical, through urban expansion, urban sprawl. We understand it is not ideal to have facilities located smack bang in the middle of metropolitan or CBD areas so we accept that we are not that type of activity, but Queensland is a big place. We know that we have a community of participants who are willing to travel to a location. If they can gain security of tenure in a location, that means they can start to invest in that venue and start to have a conversation around things like lighting and improving the facility to ultimately attract more and more people to the venue. That is what I am getting to there about security of tenure. I suppose it is our job as the controlling body to be thinking differently to the clubs, but often clubs get caught in what is happening next month or in six months and not thinking about where are they going to be in five or 10 years time. Some of them do but not all of them.

Mr MELLISH: Mr Doyle and Mr Rowcliffe, I saw in the submission that Queensland Moto Park partnered with yourtown to do a Skilling Queenslanders for Work program. I think that is a really good initiative and it sounds like you got some good results from that. Is there any scope to broaden that out to the industry more broadly? It focused on fencing, planting, irrigation and erosion, but is there any way to link it to apprenticeships or link it to motorcycle maintenance or that sort of industry?

Mr Rowcliffe: The short answer, quite simply, is yes. Again, we are fortunate in that we are an activity where if you are learning how to drive a machine, for example, you are not going to do too much damage out at a motocross track or an off-road facility, so it is a great opportunity for those types of programs to occur. We were really fortunate that about three years ago we took on a staff member who had a background with Boystown, now yourtown. We did that strategically, because we were aware of these opportunities but we probably were not accessing them regularly enough. Through his understanding of how that sector works, we have started to create some new opportunities. They are just unlimited, mindful of resources to manage them. As I was saying before, at the moment we have a full-time staff group of six. In between everything that goes on, that becomes quite a specialist arm. Absolutely that is something we could explore further. I know that we already have some other programs lined up at Queensland Moto Park. Ray, do you want to elaborate on that?

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Mr Buchanan: They are conducting interviews today at the park for the next group to start, which I believe is before the end of the month. I am not sure of the numbers, but I think they are talking around about eight to 10 participants again. We will be looking at a variety of chores for people to do—

Mr Rowcliffe: Not chores, learning experiences, Ray.

Mr Buchanan: Sorry, that is right: learning experiences. They are chores for me.

CHAIR: Mr Milton, you mentioned the SIVs scheme for motorcycles. That piqued my interest. You mentioned that other states have schemes. Are there in particular that you think are done well?

Mr Milton: I think Victoria is probably one of the better examples. I have not checked it recently. I believe that in Victoria you can have four motorcycles registered under their scheme, whatever it is called, and you have to keep a logbook on it. You can ride each one of those motorcycles for up to 90 days per year. Here we are very limited. You can only use your motorcycle for a very small distance unless you are taking it to or from a place of repair. In the UK there is a scheme where the owner is registered a licence and not the bike, so if you own 100 motorcycles you can ride any of those as long as they are logbooked and registered to you as the owner. As we all keep saying, you can only ride one machine at a time. I personally have a fairly substantial collection of motorcycles. I have about five or six registered. It keeps you poor. I think Victoria is probably one of the better examples in Australia that is worth having a look at.

CHAIR: That is interesting. During the course of this inquiry the SIVs scheme has come up in relation to cars. The suggestion of registering the owner came up as well. As we ponder all of this it is interesting. We also had a lot of pushback on a logbook scheme. People like the Queensland scheme where you can drive a certain distance unless you are on a club sanctioned drive and that sort of thing. It will be interesting when we have a look at what the majority of the recommendations are.

Mr Milton: May I also add to what Kim Rowcliffe said in relation to the longevity or sustainability of tracks. In Queensland we have very few, as people here have pointed out. The sustainability of Morgan Park, for example, is virtually guaranteed because my understanding is that it was a grant from Mr Morgan to the people of Warwick and it is protected by the council, so it looks like it is basically there forever. The little track at Stanthorpe has its share of problems. It is out by the tip, of all places. You may or may not be aware that some of the locals who moved out there decided to build nice homes and then complained, and it was subject to a state government inquiry. It is a privately owned track by the local car club, the Stanthorpe & District Sporting Car Club. They are a very poor little club. It is a very small track. Some call it a Mickey Mouse or go-kart track. We have a lot of fun there, but it is a very poor little track. For the time being it is allowed to have 12 meetings a year—12 weekends—which does not sustain it. Who knows how long it will last there as more residents move in and more complaints are made? I believe that Lakeside is under a 99-year lease from the state government.

CHAIR: It is actually owned by Moreton Bay Regional Council and it is a 30-year lease with an extension. If it was owned by the state government maybe we would be able to see some different things there.

Mr Milton: The only other bitumen racing tracks in the state are, as was alluded to, at Ipswich with the raceway—it is highly unaffordable for a lot of people and the lessee will not dry hire it to clubs—and the new track at Townsville, which may as well be in Tasmania if you are in Brisbane. There is a small track outside Proserpine. Some local people got together and through the power of the people they actually built a little track there by the airport. That is it for the whole of Queensland.

CHAIR: Thanks for clearing that up about Proserpine. I was just talking about that earlier. I thought that was a kart track. I have driven past there on the way to the airport several times and thought what a nice looking track it was.

Mr Milton: It is a great little track, yes.

CHAIR: You mentioned Carnell Park. Who mandates that you can only have a certain number of meetings there?

Mr Milton: That went to the Planning and Environment Court, I believe, a couple of years ago. The track was supported by the local council, which is now the Southern Downs Regional Council. The people who complained had a fairly strong case and it went to the Planning and Environment Court. They wanted it closed completely. That is what they tried to achieve. The upshot was that the club was allowed 12 events per year. It almost does not make it viable. They have no money to expand it or to improve upon it.

CHAIR: It is the same sort of thing that Lakeside Park is going through with council regulations, but that is being looked at at the moment.

Mr BOYCE: This question is to Motorcycling Queensland or anyone else who may like to comment. In my electorate there are many school P&Cs that run trail bike rides as fundraising activities for their local schools. Just about every weekend of the year these events attract several hundred bike riders who come from the greater metropolitan areas. There have always been ongoing issues with insurance and those sorts of things because they are run on private land. Would you care to comment on how that might be made better?

Mr Rowcliffe: I can only comment on events that choose to run their activities through Motorcycling Queensland. There are some other providers out there who offer an alternative to what Motorcycling Queensland does—or, in our view, claims that they offer an alternative. We argue that there are quite a few things that do not marry up to our standards. Through our insurance we provide that protection to landowners. They are indemnified for a Motorcycling Queensland event as part of the permitting process. If that were not the case, we would have even fewer venues we could run these activities at.

You are right: those trail rides are a prime example of a recreational activity done well. They make money for local schools and they attract people to the area. We often joke that to make the money some of these P&Cs do by running a trail ride you would have to run a meat raffle nearly every day. It is just incredible. They can do in one weekend what they might otherwise do over the course of a year as far as fundraising is concerned. The flip side to that is: if they have bad weather, whether it be particularly dry or particularly wet, the event is cancelled and sometimes not rescheduled. Certainly for Motorcycling Queensland permitted events we provide landowners with the coverage.

Mr Buchanan: We have been running trail rides, as I said, since about 2003—private property and also with state forests. I run under either Motorcycling Queensland or Motorcycling New South Wales. There have been questions asked by landowners at times, and I have provided them with all of the documents and they have taken it to their lawyers, and they have been very happy with the coverage that is offered and it has not presented a problem. There is also the same issue with state forests. They want to see all of the documentation with insurance coverage.

I limit trail rides to 500 adults and that is normally booked out. Normally you use the local showgrounds. I am not sure of the acreage, but I would imagine 10 acres would probably be around the number. As you say, everyone turns up with a toy haul or a caravan these days. An incredible amount of money is invested in the sport. I think there were some estimates. I invited Queensland sport and rec down to Woodenbong one time in the early days when we probably had 300 to 400 riders, and they estimated it injected \$50,000 into the town for each event. Now that we are at 500 adult riders it is probably \$100,000 into the town for that weekend plus other entertainment. I put on fireworks. I put on a band. It is really a community event.

Mr Doyle: In relation to insurance, Motorcycling Queensland will have a product that suits essentially any sort of recreational or competition riding in Queensland. For anybody who is looking for a program, or if you have a trail ride program going, we have a product that will work for them.

CHAIR: There being no further questions, thank you all very much for your time today. We really appreciate it. A transcript of these proceedings will be available on the committee's webpage in due course. I declare the meeting closed.

The committee adjourned at 11.55 am.