

10 JUL 2013

Office of the
Director-General

Department of
Transport and Main Roads

Mr Howard Hobbs MP
Member for Warrego
Chair
Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane QLD 4000

Dear Mr Hobbs

Howard

Re: Response to Report No. 8 Inquiry into the Motorcycle Licensing Process in Queensland 2012

I refer to the above report that was tabled by the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee on 22 October 2012, the Queensland Government response tabled on 22 April 2013 and the subsequent briefing provided by the Department of Transport and Main Roads on 5 June 2013.

Thank you for your invitation for senior officers from the department to update the committee on the progress of the licensing reform currently underway. I trust that you were satisfied with the Government's progress on this important issue of motorcycle licensing.

As outlined during the briefing, the Queensland Government has recently considered a package of driver and rider licensing reforms. I am now in a position to enclose a detailed written response to each of the committee's 12 recommendations.

Of the 12 recommendations, I am pleased to confirm that the Government:

- supports 10 (noting that five of these require further investigation before a final policy position can be determined)
- does not support two of the committee's proposed recommendations.

A number of the supported recommendations will be introduced this year during phase one of the wider licensing reforms, including enhancing the motorcycle learner knowledge test and restricting Q-SAFE to areas where Q-Ride does not exist.

Supported recommendations that require further investigation are being considered as part of the Queensland licensing review currently being undertaken by the department. Due to the complexity of these recommendations, they will be included in phase two of the licensing reforms as they require extensive consultation with industry to assist in their development and delivery.

Should you require further information in relation to this matter, please contact Mr Mike Stapleton, General Manager (Transport Safety Branch), on 3066 3017.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Neil', with a horizontal line underneath.

Neil Scales

Director-General

Department of Transport and Main Roads

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QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT RESPONSE – TRANSPORT, HOUSING AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE REPORT NO.8
INQUIRY INTO THE MOTORCYCLE LICENSING PROCESS IN QUEENSLAND 2012.

Recommendation	Response	Comments	Implementation
<p>1. Research & Evaluation</p> <p>That the Department of Transport and Main Roads:</p> <p>(a) commission an independent evaluation to determine the efficacy of the Q-Ride and Q-SAFE motorcycling licensing system and that the findings be publicly released; and</p> <p>(b) undertake regular and consistent road safety research to identify and evaluate the benefits of enhancements and changes being made to the motorcycle licensing system.</p>	Supported in Principle	<p>(a) The government supports commissioning an independent evaluation to assess the impacts of enhancements made to the motorcycle licensing system. The Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) regularly commissions independent research into motorcycle safety, including licensing, to ensure that government is kept up to date with relevant information to inform future decision making.</p> <p>TMR has commissioned a number of research projects to determine the efficacy of the Q-Ride and Q-SAFE system since the introduction of Q-Ride in 2001. The outcomes of these research projects were presented to the committee during the course of the inquiry.</p> <p>Comparisons between the two systems have been inconclusive due to the small number of riders undertaking Q-SAFE since the introduction of Q-Ride and low crash numbers. This makes comparisons between the two systems invalid.</p> <p>The results of these evaluations are quite typical of motorcycle research in general, where evaluations have not been able to establish strong empirical evidence for changes to motorcycle licensing.</p> <p>However, the government agrees that evaluating the licensing system is important. As noted in the response to recommendation 8, it is proposed to restrict access to Q-SAFE. This will effectively mean Q-SAFE will be offered only where a person lives a lengthy distance from a Q-Ride provider. Therefore, TMR will aim to focus future evaluations on the Q-Ride program.</p> <p>Given the limitations noted above, TMR will seek independent advice on how the licensing system should be evaluated in the future. TMR will commission the development of an independent framework to assist in evaluating the licensing system. The objectives of the framework will be to develop statistically valid methods for measuring performance of the various components (including future reforms) of the motorcycle licensing system, in particular their effects on crash frequency and severity. Once the framework has been developed, TMR will use it to evaluate and gauge the effects of the changes to the motorcycle licensing system and implement appropriate measures in the future.</p> <p>(b) To evaluate the impacts of any changes to the motorcycle licensing system on road safety and rider behaviour, long term data collection and evaluation is required. The evaluation framework mentioned above will act as a guide and specify the data to be collected. To allow for pre and post initiative comparisons to be undertaken, this evaluation will take a number of years. Initial benchmarking data will be collected and the evaluation framework developed (see recommendation 1a) in preparation for an evaluation to be conducted.</p>	<p>Commission independent consultant late 2013 to develop evaluation framework.</p> <p>Commencing an evaluation of the motorcycle licensing system will be subject to the outcomes from the evaluation framework project.</p>

Recommendation	Response	Comments	Implementation
<p>2. Review Knowledge Test</p> <p>The committee recommends that the Department of Transport and Main Roads review the current rider knowledge test with a view to increasing the number of questions and broadening its scope to include an assessment of knowledge of broader motorcycle skills and attitude.</p>	Supported	<p>The government supports the view that an improved knowledge test is an essential tool to not only assess rider knowledge prior to issuing a learner licence but also as an opportunity to provide a foundation of theoretical knowledge before practical experience is gained.</p> <p>The existing motorcycle knowledge test will be revised to include road rules, risk taking and hazard perception. Additionally, in light of the numerous motorcycle licensing reforms implemented in Queensland over the past decade, updating the test to incorporate components from these reforms will further test motorcyclists' awareness of their obligations.</p> <p>Questions for the enhanced knowledge test will be drawn from the Queensland Motorcycle Riders' Guide. The Riders' Guide will be widely promoted and further enhanced to include more content about risk avoidance and hazard perception. The questions will complement what is then taught at the Q-Ride course and, in line with adult learning principles, will be used to help reinforce key safety principles delivered through Q-Ride.</p>	December 2013
<p>3. Pre-Learner</p> <p>The committee recommends that the Department of Transport and Main Roads introduce compulsory pre-learner off road training and assessment as part of the Q-Ride training and assessment process in Queensland.</p>	Supported in Principle	<p>Most jurisdictions have training requirements at two levels: competency-based training, which consists of basic training to obtain a learner licence; and advanced training to obtain a provisional licence. A pre-learner phase is designed to give novice riders the basic vehicle handling skills and knowledge about safe riding, in a controlled off-road environment. The objectives of a pre-learner phase are two-fold. Firstly, it should prepare novice riders for what is required, and situations that will be potentially encountered in the learner period. Secondly, it provides opportunity for wider preparation for when the rider is on their unrestricted licence.</p> <p>Queensland and Western Australia are the only Australian jurisdictions that do not offer structured pre-learner training as an option or requirement to obtain a learner licence.</p> <p>As an initiative of the <i>Queensland Motorcycle Safety Strategy 2009-2012</i>, the Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety - Queensland (CARRS-Q) was commissioned to look at the evidence for a pre-learner licensing requirement with the possibility of introducing a pre-learner phase in Queensland. This research was completed at the end of 2012 and was submitted to the inquiry.</p> <p>Based on the outcomes of the committee's inquiry and the motorcycle safety research conducted by CARRS-Q, the government supports the pre-learner concept in-principle. It aligns with graduated licensing principles and the idea of extending the learning period for new riders.</p> <p>TMR needs to establish the best way to implement a mandatory pre-learner phase. Development will require extensive consultation with the private sector industry regarding their capacity and capability to deliver a pre-learner program across the state, to develop the pre-learner course requirements and consider the impacts to the community.</p> <p>Given the current lack of research evidence, careful monitoring, piloting and evaluation will need to be undertaken to assess the effectiveness of any pre-learner interventions in reducing crash risk and their effects on the uptake of motorcycle licensing and unlicensed riding.</p>	This will be a phase two initiative. Implementation of phase two initiatives will commence in 2014.

Recommendation	Response	Comments	Implementation
<p>4. Pre-learner</p> <p>The committee recommends that the pre-learner training and assessment (proposed in recommendation 3) incorporate specific risk taking and hazard perception training and assessment as a required component.</p>	Supported in Principle	<p>The government recognises that the introduction of pre-learner training for motorcyclists has the potential to increase safety by providing learner riders with hazard perception skills and greater risk awareness alongside motorcycle handling skills.</p> <p>In light of the committee’s recommendations and the recommendations made in a body of research into motorcycle rider safety conducted by CARRS-Q, TMR will undertake an investigation of how best to incorporate risk management and hazard perception into the various stages of the motorcycle licensing process.</p> <p>Hazard perception training elements being investigated include recognising and predicting the behaviour of other road users, awareness of road-based hazards, road-craft, and selecting and implementing the most appropriate response to a hazard. To address risk awareness, training elements being investigated include protective clothing, motivations for riding and recognising, monitoring and self management of own behaviour/attitudes.</p> <p>Hazard perception and risk management is proposed to form a significant component of the pre-learner course.</p>	See Recommendation Three.
<p>5. Three Steps to Safer Riding Program</p> <p>The committee recommends that the Department of Transport and Main Roads support CARRS-Q to conduct further evaluation of the ‘Three Steps to Safer Riding’ program with the view to introducing hazard perception testing and attitude towards risk training as an adjunct to the Q-Ride training course and/or assessment.</p>	Supported	<p>The government supports the inclusion of training and assessment in the motorcycle licensing process of hazard perception and attitudes towards risk. The current Q-Ride course includes competencies that broadly address hazard perception and risk in the road environment.</p> <p>The Three Steps to Safer Riding program was developed by CARRS-Q as an adjunct to existing Q-Ride training to specifically address risk taking attitudes and behaviour of novice riders. The program uses riding scenarios and motorcycle crash reports to facilitate group discussions and raise awareness of risk taking for motorcyclists in an attempt to change their behaviours.</p> <p>TMR has been an active supporter of the Three Steps to Safer Riding project and is committed to continue assistance with the provision of data to CARRS-Q for the outcome evaluation of the program.</p> <p>As discussed in the response to recommendation 4, incorporating hazard perception and risk management training into the current licensing process will be considered during phase two reforms as part of the pre-learner initiative.</p> <p>Regarding the Q-Ride class RE and R courses, TMR will monitor the outcomes of the ‘Three Steps to Safer Riding’ evaluation. In the interim, existing Q-Ride competencies relating to hazard perception and risk management will be examined in-light of the committee’s findings, outcomes from the CARRS-Q motorcycle rider safety research and developments in other jurisdictions to identify potential elements that may need enhancing.</p>	<p>TMR is currently assisting CARRS-Q in its evaluation.</p> <p>With regard to pre-learner see Recommendation Three.</p>

Recommendation	Response	Comments	Implementation
<p>6. 'Ride On' DVD</p> <p>The committee recommends the Department of Transport and Main Roads include the Ride On DVD as a compulsory component of the proposed pre-learner off road training/assessment process and that there be a formal assessment of comprehension of the material contained in the DVD prior to a learner commencing training on a motorcycle.</p>	<p>Not Supported</p>	<p>In making this recommendation it is understood the committee viewed information presented in the <i>Ride On</i> DVD as essential to be delivered and assessed at the pre-learner phase. This information covers a range of topics focusing on managing risk and self control, hazard perception and motorcycle control skills.</p> <p>The government recognises the importance of attaining knowledge and skills on these topics not only at the initial stages of licensing, but throughout a person's riding life. In line with recommendations 2, 4 and 5, TMR will investigate enhancements to risk management and hazard perception training and assessment throughout the motorcycle graduated licensing system. It is anticipated that materials will be developed for riders aimed at providing information on risk awareness/management and hazard perception. Regarding general motorcycle control skills, novice riders are already required to develop and demonstrate attainment of these throughout the motorcycle licensing process.</p> <p>The government holds a number of reservations with mandating use of the <i>Ride On</i> DVD. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information that was current at the time of production is now out of date; there are no plans to reproduce it with updated information (the DVD is managed by the Australian Government) • Some content focuses on riding skills that may differ to the techniques taught by the individual Q-Ride providers under their approved training packages • The inclusion of road traffic environments not representative of the Queensland network. 	<p>Not applicable - not supported.</p>
<p>7. Further Assessment after 6 months</p> <p>The committee recommends that the Department of Transport and Main Roads introduce an additional requirement for riders to undergo a further assessment of their basic motorcycle skills by a Q-Ride registered service provider at least 6 months after receiving their RE licence.</p>	<p>Not Supported</p>	<p>The government acknowledges that in making this recommendation, the committee is concerned with the safety of novice riders and has identified that their safety can be increased through the provision of ongoing training/assessment at multiple points of the licensing process. It is recognised that the recommendation is intended to align with best practice adult learning principles, specifically, repeated exposure and learning over a period of time.</p> <p>While the government agrees with the committee's intention, at this time it does not support the introduction of a further assessment after receiving a class RE licence. It is believed that as a result of the proposed wider reforms the committee's objective of increased learning at multiple points in the licensing process will be achieved. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more extensive knowledge-based theory test (Recommendation 2) • Pre-learner off road training and assessment in basic vehicle handling skills (Recommendation 3 - subject to Government approval in 2014) • Inclusion of risk taking and hazard perception training and assessment at the pre-learner phase (Recommendation 4 - subject to Government approval in 2014) • Training and assessment at the class RE licence phase. 	<p>Not applicable - not supported.</p>

Recommendation	Response	Comments	Implementation
		Additionally, a further assessment for riders six months after they have proven they are competent to ride on the road would place increased financial burden on new riders for questionable road safety gain. This would especially be the case if a pre-learner phase is introduced, which will require learner riders to attend an additional Q-Ride course.	
8. Q-SAFE Restriction The committee recommends that the Department of Transport and Main Roads restrict QSAFE to areas that are not serviced by Q-Ride and that all riders be encouraged to undertake a competency-based training course wherever possible.	Supported	<p>The government agrees with the intent of the committee's recommendation, that Queensland motorcycle riders should receive an appropriate level of training and be assessed as competent before being licensed to ride on the road.</p> <p>A central focus of both the committee's recommendations and the recent research conducted by CARRS-Q is the incorporation of risk management and hazard perception training into the motorcycle licensing system. The government recognises that Q-Ride competency-based training and assessment provides the best platform to deliver information, particularly about risk taking behaviour and hazard perception. The government agrees with the committee and would like to formalise Q-Ride as Queensland's licensing system, recognising that the proposed enhancements to risk and hazard perception will make Q-Ride the superior licensing method.</p> <p>In line with this recommendation, it is proposed that Q-Ride will be Queensland's primary motorcycle licensing method. Q-SAFE will act as a way to enable access to the licensing system for those people who live more than 100 kilometres from a Q-Ride provider.</p>	December 2013
9. Q-SAFE Enhancements The committee recommends that the Department of Transport and Main Roads introduce the following additional pre-requisites for being granted a learner licence under the Q-SAFE system: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) pass the improved written road rules test; (b) be tested on comprehension of the Ride On DVD; and (c) pass a motorcycle specific Hazard Perception Test. 	Supported in Principle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Supported – It is proposed that motorcycle learner riders eligible to obtain their licence through Q-SAFE will be required to sit the enhanced rider knowledge test as outlined in recommendation 2. (b) Not Supported – As outlined in recommendation 6, the government supports reinforcing safety messages to novice riders, but not using the dated <i>Ride On DVD</i>. It is proposed to consider a range of other mediums and delivery methods to achieve this objective. (c) Supported in principle – Introducing a hazard perception test under the Q-SAFE system presents a number of issues. Firstly, there is no similar motorcycle specific computer-based hazard perception test currently used for licensing purposes in other Australian jurisdictions. As a result development, implementation and on-going administration of a new test would be costly. Secondly, only a small number of people choose to obtain their licence through Q-SAFE. With the proposed Q-SAFE restrictions that will be implemented these numbers will be reduced substantially further. As a result the benefits/costs of investing resources into the creation of a new test for Q-SAFE would need to be justified. Due to these reasons, the government has reservations about committing to a computer-based hazard perception test, as discussed by the committee, at this point of time. It is proposed that TMR will monitor developments in the use of on-line hazard perception testing for motorcyclists. In the interim, TMR will consider viable alternative options that may be suitable for enhancing hazard perception knowledge of all motorcyclists in Queensland. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) See Recommendation Two. b) See Recommendation Six. c) On-going.

Recommendation	Response	Comments	Implementation
<p>10. Returning Riders</p> <p>The committee recommends that the Department of Transport and Main Roads develop a public education campaign specifically designed for returning riders.</p>	Supported	<p>The government supports the committee's intent of raising the awareness of risks associated with motorcycle licence holders who are returning to ride after having not ridden for a period of time.</p> <p>TMR commissioned research in order to better understand the issue of returning riders. It was found to be very difficult to identify returning riders within the current licensing system and the research focussed on crash involvement of riders aged 30 years and older as an alternative approach. The research found that riders aged 45 years and over account for almost 44 percent of the active riders on Queensland roads therefore it is inevitable that they will have a greater likelihood of being involved in a crash. The report also found that although these riders represent an increased proportion of Queensland's active riders, they are less likely to be recorded speeding and they actually crash less often than their younger rider counterparts.</p> <p>TMR is not aware of any other strong evidence that demonstrates returning riders present a road safety risk. Due to the complications of knowing who in the motorcycle riding population are active riders, and who are dormant riders, there are limitations in researching this topic.</p> <p>The government notes the merit in raising the safety awareness of returning riders. As a first step TMR proposes to review the information contained on the Motorcycle Safety Website and the Queensland Motorcycle Riders' Guide.</p>	<p>Updates to the Motorcycle Safety Website and the Queensland Motorcycle Riders' Guide will be implemented by December 2013. Publicity will occur during 2014.</p>
<p>11. Returning Riders</p> <p>The committee recommends that the Department of Transport and Main Roads implement a mechanism or procedure to encourage appropriate skills refreshment for riders returning after an extended break from riding.</p>	Supported in Principle	<p>As noted in recommendation 10, there is no substantial evidence that demonstrates returning riders present a road safety risk. However, in principle the government recognises the merit in promoting refresher courses to returning riders to renew their riding skills.</p> <p>There is currently no way to identify returning riders through TMR's existing systems or processes. Motorcycle licences are a class on a car licence and do not expire unless the person's car licence expires. As a result there is no way to tell under the existing licensing system if a person has been riding or just maintained their motorcycle licence as a function of renewing their car licence. Additionally, registration of a motorcycle can not be linked to a person's riding status (whether they are an active or dormant rider). Therefore the effectiveness of this countermeasure to reach the target group is not measurable.</p> <p>Establishing a computer system mechanism or administrative procedure to notify all riders that refresher courses are available would be costly to implement, and the benefit would be difficult to establish. After investigation of these issues, it is proposed that the best approach to informing returning riders is through general public educational activities as outlined in response to Recommendation 10.</p>	<p>See Recommendation Ten.</p>

Recommendation	Response	Comments	Implementation
12. Reporting The committee recommends the Minister for Transport and Main Roads report to Parliament annually on the implementation of agreed recommendations in this report until such time as all the agreed recommendations are fully implemented.	Supported	The Minister for Transport and Main Roads will provide a progress report on the implementation of the supported recommendations to Parliament annually.	Annually.