



Submission: ENQUIRY INTO MOTOR RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

As a stakeholder in the motor recreational activities in Queensland, the Roadrunner Car Club Inc. (RCC, or, Club) being under your Terms of Reference (a Social Car Club) would like to take the opportunity to have input into The Transport and Public Works Committee's Enquiry. The Management Committee of the Roadrunner Car Club Inc. has written this submission to form part of the final report to the Queensland Legislative Assembly on the contribution of Motor Recreational Activities (MRAs) in Queensland.

The Roadrunner Car Club Inc. is a Social Car Club based on the Sunshine Coast, in Queensland, and whose mission statement is:

"The Mission of the Roadrunner Car Club is to provide the opportunity and promote the social interaction of like-minded motoring enthusiasts of all ages, encourage members and their friends to participate in the social activities and events determined by the members, provide the opportunity for members to use and share their special cars and to promote the responsible use of motor vehicles."

Brief background of the Roadrunner Car Club Inc.

A group of people with extensive knowledge and experience in the management of car clubs formed a new car club to service the demand to have a purely social car club.

This group of people, with a wealth of experience of being on Management Committees of other car clubs, also have vast operational experiences and exposures in running their own businesses, and/or holding high level management positions in local and international companies, including publication and media. This is supplemented by an extensive Event Management experience, ensuring that such events are run in a proficient, safe, and legal manner.

A number of other people were interested in what this group were doing, and expressed an interest in joining this newly created car club. To test the waters, an initial event was

arranged – *Christmas in July 2018* – and was held at a local Noosa hotel where the 30 or so people who attended the event publicly committed themselves to joining this new club.

This initial event was followed by an organised day out in the following month at a restaurant in Montville, where after lunch, the group gathered to hold the initial General Meeting of The Roadrunner Car Club (unincorporated). The first Management Committee of the Club was duly elected by a show of hands, and the name was voted on and accepted.

The Club followed the required legal and necessary processes: establishing a bank account; writing a constitution (later ratified at a General Meeting of Members); and creating an ABN (# 19 794 116 469). On the 7th September 2018 following a members vote at a general meeting, the Roadrunner Car Club became registered as Roadrunner Car Club Inc., Incorporation Number: IA58134.

The logo and name were investigated to ensure that the Club could legally use the name.

A very smart and professional, effective website was created, which also incorporates an excellent back-end membership management system. Members can use the website to keep informed, and to look and see what events are planned, and to book and pay for those events which require payment in advance. The Club's webmaster also created a Facebook account which keeps members up to date with upcoming events. The club also invested in an SMS packaging system which reminds members about events, and if necessary, acts as an alert mechanism (eg. bush fire alerts, cancellation of events, if required, etc).

In addition to the website, www.roadrunnercarclub.com.au, the Club also produces a monthly, electronic magazine (called *Beep Beep!* – named after the roadrunner cartoon character), which keeps members up to date with past and future events, photos, articles etc.

The membership continues to grow at a healthy rate, averaging 9 new members per month. At the time of writing, the membership totalled 155. Not a bad achievement in just 15 months.

The Economic Impact of the Motor Recreation Industry (MRI)

The two premises which are central to this submission are:

- The MRI forms part of the outdoor recreation sector in Queensland;
- The Roadrunner Car Club Inc. falls under the general classification of Sport & Recreation/Social Car Club and meets the criteria of MRI.

Of the Australian population aged 15 years and over, some 60% (15.2 million people) have participated in some type of sport and recreation activity. However, participation generally decreases with age, with people aged 65 years and over having the lowest participation rate in organised 'sport'.

The RCC, like many similar car clubs, has members who largely fall into this 'over 65 years of age' bracket. People in this age bracket are generally 'empty nesters' with higher disposable income than other segments of the population. This allows for men and women to indulge in something for themselves, which in our Club's case is owning and driving a 'special car'. However, it is not necessary for current or prospective members to own a special car, or even any car at all; the criteria is just to have a social interest in mixing with like-minded people.

Some of our Club members are similar to the author: wanting to own and drive a car that they or their family had when they were much younger (a 'classic car', meaning the car is 30 years old or older). Other members prefer to own and drive a modern car today that offers higher levels of luxury (a 'marque', which relates to a car-brand long-associated with motoring successes). Interestingly, a couple recently joined with their new *Nissan Leaf*, an all Electric Car (EV).

The economic contribution to the community of the Outdoor Recreation sector – as a whole – is not widely known or understood because of the gaps in public information. Therefore, the economic impact of MRIs is similarly difficult to assess.

However, the following information is the collective thoughts of, and is endorsed by, the RCC Management Committee in an effort to help the enquiry to understand the sector, the activities within that sector, and the economic and other impacts to tourism, and the wider community making up that sector.

The contribution of the industry to Queensland's tourism sector

The RCC.'s contribution to the MRI sector is easier to talk about than the MRI sector as a whole.

As mentioned in the Club's Mission Statement (see page 1) in part states: "*...promote the social interaction of like-minded motoring enthusiasts of all ages, encourage members and their friends to participate in the social activities and events determined by the members...*".

In essence, this means the Club organises regular events wherein members can use their special or normal car to go to a pre-arranged place for coffee, a meal, or accommodation.

Each month, the men have a coffee morning, generally on a Monday – a slower day for many small coffee shops. Tongue-in-cheek referred to as *Secret Men's Business* (SMB), the ladies have an equivalent coffee morning which is called *The Handbrakes*. These events are informal and open to all respective members, on a turn-up basis. Both are well supported with the SMB regularly attracting some 30 members and the Handbrakes about 25 members. The different venues are selected by the Social Coordinator and are usually held on separate days but always support the local businesses as well as sponsors' outlets and venues.

The Club also organises monthly events, where members and their families or friends are welcome to attend, and where the venues could consist of many and varied destinations with different themes of purpose. Members, who have a special car, or Special Interest Vehicle (SIV), are able to use their special car to go to and from these events, and these events are listed in the Club's magazine, on the Club's website and/or social media page, and are listed prior to the event. This ensures that our members comply with the SIV conditions and restrictions of use as set out in Queensland Government's SIV Concession Scheme. For further information about this scheme, please see:

<https://www.qld.gov.au/transport/registration/fees/concession/special-interest> .

The current Events page as at time of writing (November) on the website shows all the planned events organised from November 2019 through to December 2020. A sample of this page is:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Destination</u>
1-3 Nov	Weekend Away	Lisson Grove, boutique resort, Mt. Tambourine
10 Nov	BBQ lunch	-Wappa Dam cancelled due to bush fires hazard
25 Nov	Secret Men's Business	Coffee shop in Eumundi
07 Dec	Club Christmas Party	Pier 11 Restaurant, Noosa Marina
09 Dec	Brabham, The Movie	BCC Cinema, Noosa, charity fund raiser
18 Jan	Trivia Night & Dinner	Cooroy RSL Club
26 Jan	Australia Day Celebrations	Buderim Tavern
07 Feb	Handbrakes Coffee	Yacht Club, Noosaville
15 Feb	Coffee, Cars & Lunch	Ginger Factory & Coolum Surf Club
02 Mar	SMB & Handbrakes	Rick's Café, Palmwoods
15 Mar	Coffees & Picnic Lunch	Steve Irwin Café & Ewin Maddock Dam

Note: The above is just a sample. For more detailed information, please go to www.roadrunnercarclub.com.au/events .

However, this list also demonstrates that the Club contributes to the local Queensland Tourism and small business sectors by supporting local food and beverage and accommodation outlets, as well as our sponsors' venues.

Worthy of note is one of the events previously shown in our Events list was the *Roadrunner Car Club Inc. – Charity Car Show* (August 2019). This very successful inaugural car-show event was held on 8th August 2019 and was run under the auspices of a local charity, *Katie Rose Cottage Hospice*, where all funds raised – some \$6,000 – was donated to this charity. This event was well supported by sponsorship from local businesses: Madill Motor Group, Noosa; the Noosa Shire Council and the Mayor; local vendors along with the Noosaville Lions Club; and the SES – who were also actively involved on the day for this great cause.

The legislative, regulatory and policy framework in which the industry operates in all levels of government, and options for reform

Queenslanders place a high value on sport and recreational activities. The Queensland State Government has many strengths, including its capacity to work collaboratively with organisations to achieve state-wide outcomes. In relation to these outcomes for sport and recreational activities, it is important that all relevant groups work cohesively together to achieve optimal outcomes from the investment of public funds.

The policy framework should be a guide for government activity and resource allocation. It must provide a mechanism for engaging the MRI sector in the achievement of goals for this sector. It should also set out the agreed roles and responsibilities of the government and the expectations of the state-wide MRI partners.

As a stakeholder in the MRI, our Club would want to see a holistic and strategic approach to the development of sustainable policy initiatives at both community and government levels.

As a proactive Club, we would like to see the establishment of an initiative wherein a policy framework is agreed to by all stakeholders, to help guide the development of an MRI policy and framework across Queensland.

The framework should not be considered as a 'policy document' but instead it should provide a guide for the *development of policies* by the Queensland Government. It should also be a 'living document', meaning it should be regularly reviewed/revisited and evaluated for successful outcomes vis-à-vis stated expectations. The coordinated strategies and

initiatives that flow from the framework should lead to a better alignment of any MRI funding and programs in pursuit of an improved Motor Recreational Industry.

Regarding the options for reform, the Club would like to see on-going interactions between active, non-political stakeholders with all agendas being transparent and set by the State Government with input from other stakeholders.

SIV Registration

One element that our Club would particularly like to raise in this new forum is to have a national Special Interest Vehicle (SIV) regulation/policy. Currently, each state government or territory establishes its own definition of what qualifies as an SIV. In Queensland, the age of the motor vehicle is set at 30+years; while other states and territories are 25+ years. For further information about this topic, please see:

<https://www.publications.qld.gov.au/dataset/classic-and-vintage-cars-and-street-rods-motoring-organisations-and-car-club-forum>

Building Employment within the Industry

Supporting the total Car/Car Club industry are a large numbers of specialised manufacturers/suppliers, covering the parts and services sectors required to keep these older cars on the road; not only vehicles that are over 30 years old but vehicles involved in historical displays or racing events. These businesses employ a lot of people and have a high involvement of employing like-minded younger staff as apprentices. The following two companies are just a sample of very successful businesses that started out as cottage industries and have grown into nationwide manufacturers and suppliers, helping keep this industry sector alive:

<https://www.rarespares.net.au/rarespares/>, and
<https://www.rodshop.com.au/>

Options to improve safety for all industry participants.

As regularly minuted in the Meeting's Minutes of the Motoring Organisation and Car Club, Road Safety is a very important ongoing agenda.

It goes without saying that safety for all people in any industry should be the highest priority of all participants, all organisations, and all governments.

It must be stated upfront that The RCC does not engage in, promote, or participate in motor sport/racing activities. The RCC only promotes the social interaction of motoring enthusiasts, and encourages members, their families and friends to participate in social activities. Whilst being rather benign in its objectives, it nevertheless always exercises and promotes safe practices in any Club organised event.

All Club general meetings start with 'House-keeping' elements: where the fire exits are located; where the fire-extinguishers are located; where the toilets are located; and to turn mobile phones to silent etc. Simple, but essential. All members attending know what to do in an emergency, and the Management Committee members take control – if necessary – to safely evacuate all persons present.

Otherwise, the Club whose membership is generally over 65 years, is similarly concerned with the welfare and health of its members. Currently, the Club's Management Committee has asked a couple of its executive members to source a defibrillator and First Aid kit to be available on all Club outings and meetings.

For small clubs with limited financial resources, these two items, with the approx. value of \$2,500, are a significant investment. It is hoped that part of this Government initiative will make some funding options available to small MRIs, wherein money could be available to purchase such potentially life-saving devices.

The impact on youth training and community engagement from motor recreational activities, including mental health outcomes.

The Management Committee of the RCC welcomes community engagement for youth training.

The Sunshine Coast region is indeed fortunate to have on its doorstep, a unique facility called *Roadcraft*. This facility, located at Gympie – a short 30-40 minute drive from the Sunshine Coast – specialises in driver training. Roadcraft's mission is to have more aware drivers by knowing, understanding and applying the key principles of low risk, defensive driving techniques. Their goal is to reduce road trauma by providing effective education of road users of all ages.

Any road trauma can easily produce mental health issues, not just for the unfortunate individual involved but also the members of the victim's family and friends. It also impacts the wider community, the Police, the SES, Ambos and others who are generally left to clean up after the incident, and these personnel can be subject to mental health outcomes.

Youth road trauma numbers are quite staggering...13.8% of licensed driver population is aged 16 to 24 years, but accounts for some 20% of driver/rider fatalities.

The impact of youth training and early intervention of driving skills in our younger community cannot be understated. Any community partnership which involves youth training should only be viewed as a positive step.

From the author's previous experience in another car club, the funding of such a course at Roadcraft Gympie had profound results. The local school students who attended this funded 2-day course, had changed their learner-driving habits using higher awareness, a greater appreciation of risks, and practical skills to avoid danger on the road. This was backed up by 'classroom' education of the theories underlying the practical aspects of safe driving techniques. This will, in turn, reduce potential road trauma incidents thereby reducing the impact to the wider community.

It is important for car clubs such as the RCC to encourage this type of activity. However, any initiative requires funding and such funding would need to come from State Motoring Organisations, along with both State & Federal Governments.

It is worth noting that whilst the RCC has many senior members (over the age of 60 years) the safety record of 'older' drivers – who have many years of experience on the roads, shows they are usually less impatient than younger drivers. Furthermore, older drivers have more experience in avoiding potential dangerous circumstances; experience garnered over many years of driving.

The impact of the industry on road safety outcomes

As mentioned in the previous section, road traumas on younger drivers is horrific. However, it is not only a problem relating to our young drivers.

Road safety outcomes are a subject that governments and communities alike must take on as a high priority. Anything that Clubs – such as ours - can do to reduce road traumas and make drivers generally safety aware, must be encouraged.

Conversely, anything which is negatively impacting on road safety outcomes, or any element that would adversely impact – not only on clubs such as ours – but on the Queensland and Federal governments, must be seriously investigated.

Road safety should be – and must be – paramount for all drivers...whether it be alcohol or drug related, irresponsible driving such as speeding or hooning, or mobile phone usage whilst driving... road safety must be the community's highest priority. The current advertising campaign of switching off mobiles whilst driving, and the police's Fatal Five campaign, should be supported and promoted more widely. It would be interesting to hear from this Enquiry how best to further promote safety outcomes.

Whilst the number of people killed in Queensland traffic crashes has hit a five-decade low, with the reduction thought to be driven by extra speed cameras, seatbelt wearing campaigns and a crackdown on drink-drivers, there were still 228 people killed on Queensland's roads in 2018-19. Put simply, at least 500 people were severely, and personally impacted in this period.

Challenges facing the industry and the role of government in supporting the industry to continue creating jobs for Queenslanders

Whilst the challenges are many and varied, it is still possible for positive outcomes to emerge to support the MRI and the Government in creating jobs.

However, it is important to remember that all governments face the challenge of a changing economy, which in itself has many elements. The digital age is here, like it or not, and many industries are battling to come to terms with new technologies and operating environments. The MRI, at least as far as the RCC is concerned, is not as dependent on technology challenge as many other sectors.

People with SIVs (cars which are over 30 years old) generally do not have electronic fuel injection: they have carburettors. Many mechanical workshops, especially those with a younger workforce, did not grow up with cars that did not have electronic fuel systems, and therefore, are not conversant with the older fuel delivery systems, and the maintenance thereof. So, there are possible areas of employment opportunities here: older or retired mechanics could be employed as teachers using their valued experience in adjusting 'manual' fuel delivery systems such as carburettors; and younger mechanics who could be trained and employed in adapting to, or adding to, their mechanical knowledge in this older technology.

It has been said that the motor industry, in general, has been described as “undergoing the most significant change since Henry Ford industrialised automotive manufacturing in 1908”. This extends to how vehicles are manufactured; who makes the vehicle; how the vehicles are serviced, and where; who owns and drives these vehicles; and most important of all, the amount of disposal income households will need to just ‘move around’.

One big challenge facing the industry is the governments' willingness – or not – to regulate and support the development of, and infrastructure in, this change. Also, private sector investment is vial, as is large-scale testing by an automotive industry largely in decline. It has been stated in the media that large, traditional automotive companies will be replaced by technology companies (e.g. Apple/Tesler) who would manufacture more like a ‘computer on wheels’, rather than traditional cars manufactured with internal combustion-powered cars. Electric vehicles have a small number of moving parts compared to over 2000 moving parts in internal combustion driven cars, but currently, the cost of ownership of EVs is high which could impact on the uptake of new EVs.

EVs will need to be fuelled (recharged). Will governments support, or be willing to support, a nation-wide policy of installing EV charging stations? Queenslanders, living in such a vast state with large distances between towns, will have some difficulties in justifying moving to EVs unless they can be assured that they will be able to recharge their vehicle when travelling around. This element is also important in the context of drive-to tourist markets/destinations.

It is interesting to note the evidence shows that *Uber* is the largest taxi fleet in the world...but do not own a single car. Similarly, *Air B&B* is the largest hotel in the world, but they don't own a single room. These are simply large software companies relying on outsourcing their respective products and making vast sums of money with little or no income-producing assets.

So, the question of ‘what is the role of government in supporting the industry to continue creating jobs for Queenslanders’ is one that *not* many people could answer at this point in time. However, change is very much “fluid” at present. The RCC believes that for the foreseeable future at least, the current situation and environment will remain status quo. In that context, the Queensland Government can continue to create jobs within the known/current environment and treat the MRI participants as helpful partners in the process, whilst keeping a eye on the development and take-up of new technologies.

The development of stationary power storage systems

One area of employment which doesn't currently exist in Queensland is the recycling of (used) EV batteries. EVs have a very large sized battery, and before the implementation of lithium-ion batteries in EVs, the older style lead-acid type batteries were used. However, the following comments relate to lithium-ion batteries in EVs.

When the battery packs in lithium-ion-powered vehicles are deemed to be 'too worn out' for driving, they still have up to 80% of their charge ability left. So, these batteries can be used to prop-up the grid, or, more importantly for Queensland, can be used in homes and other places to store surplus energy produced by solar.

This type of technology is already being used in Japan, where hybrid vehicles such as the Toyota Prius and Nissan Leaf have been around for longer periods than in Australia. Some of these 'old' EV lithium-ion batteries are used in a variety of applications in Japan. A joint venture between Nissan and Sumitomo Corporation will give these costly lithium-ion batteries a new life once they pass their peak performance for EVs.

In other words, the first batches of batteries from electric and hybrid vehicles are now hitting retirement age, but they aren't bound for landfills. Instead, they'll spend their 'golden years' chilling food at 7-Eleven stores in Japan, or, powering EV car-charging stations in California, or, storing energy for homes and grids in Australia and Europe. They can even power street lighting in rural and remote communities. The latter is already taking place in the town of Namie, Japan in Fukushima prefecture, north of Tokyo. The system uses 'retired' EV batteries in tandem with solar panels to power these new types of streetlights in the town. They operate off-grid, with no need to run additional cables, and they use the heavy batteries as a solid base.

Australia, having one of the largest natural resources of Lithium in the world, which is used to produce these batteries, should be a world leader in *repurposing* these older batteries, and Queensland has the ability to be at the forefront on this new development, which in turn would create more jobs.

The recycled-battery systems can store up to 10 kilowatt hours (kWh) of power. Lithium-ion car (and bus) batteries can collect and discharge electricity for a further 7 to 10 years after being taken off the roads in EV's.

Queensland could lead the other states in following this new recycling development, opening up new employment opportunities, especially in rural communities, as well as providing sustainable source of power for EV recharging stations and streetlights.

Additionally, employment opportunities would be generated to install and maintain this new power source. With the potential downturn in educating motor mechanics, younger students could be directed towards this exciting and innovative career. Indirectly, this would also create employment opportunities from within the community, such as retired electrical engineers.

By 2030, there will be a 25-fold surge in battery demand for EVs. Automobiles have overtaken consumer electronics as the biggest users of lithium-ion batteries. By 2040, more than half of new-car sales and a third of the world global fleet - equal to some 559 million vehicles - will be electric. By 2050, companies will have invested about \$AU749 billion (\$US550 billion) in home, industrial and grid-scale battery storage. All the time remembering that there's no doubt that Queensland is a solar energy powerhouse. ... 514 watts of solar power capacity installed per capita, versus Australia's average around 392 watts.

The RCC believes that the Government has the capacity to capitalise on these new technologies, and the potential opportunities they present.

end
