



**Submission to:** The Transport and Public Works Committee

**From:** Motorcycling Queensland

**Re:** Motor Recreational Activities Inquiry

**Date:** Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> January, 2020

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### **Who we are:**

Motorcycling Queensland (MQ) is the state controlling body for motorcycle sport and recreation in Queensland, as recognised by the relevant Queensland State Government Department, the Department of Housing, Homelessness and Sport & Department of Housing and Public Works.

We are affiliated to Motorcycling Australia – the nationally recognised peak body for motorcycle sport and recreation as recognised by the Australian Sports Commission, and by extension to the Federation Internationale de Motocyclisme (FIM) the internationally recognised controlling body for motorcycle sport.

Motorcycling Queensland is a company, limited by guarantee, incorporated under the Corporations Act 2001.

### **The objects of Motorcycling Queensland:**

1. To promote, regulate and administer MQ sanctioned motorcycle sport and other motorcycling activities conducted in Queensland.
2. To cooperate with MA to maximise the success of MA sanctioned multi-state or Australian championship motorcycle events conducted in Queensland.
3. To conduct, encourage, promote, advance, control and administer motorcycle sport and other motorcycling activities throughout Queensland in consultation with MA for the mutual benefit of MQ, MA, MQ members and motorcycling generally.
4. To constantly use best endeavours to regulate and administer all MQ sanctioned motorcycle sport and other motorcycling activities in a manner that seeks to achieve the following:
  - Maximise the safety of participants, officials, spectators and the public.
  - Ensure, to the maximum extent possible, that MQ sanctioned motorcycle sport is competitive, fair and fun.
  - Continual improvement of standards and quality of MQ sanctioned events.
5. To maintain and enhance the reputation of MQ, motorcycle sport and motorcycling generally by continually improving the standards and quality of MQ sanctioned events for the benefit of MQ members and motorcycling generally.

6. To promote mutual trust and confidence between MQ, MA and MQ members.
7. To promote the economic and sporting success, strength and stability of MQ, MA, each SCB and each MQ affiliated club and to act cooperatively and interdependently with each of these bodies.
8. To develop, use, protect and improve MQ intellectual property.
9. To collect, distribute and publish information in connection with motorcycling in Queensland.
10. To seek government, commercial and public recognition and support of MQ and MQ sanctioned events.
11. To assist with the development, management and regulation of MA sanctioned motorcycle sport and other motorcycling activities in Queensland consistently with the rules, policies and regulations of MA.
12. To seek, pursue and develop commercial arrangements that promote these MQ objectives.
13. To facilitate and manage the mediation or determination of disputes between MQ members.
14. To recognise and implement policies promulgated by MA including those in relation to sexual harassment, equal opportunity, equity, drugs in sport, health, safety, junior and senior programs, infectious diseases and other matters as arise from time to time as issues to be addressed in relation to MQ and MA sanctioned motorcycle events.
15. To select and support teams and squads to represent Queensland or MQ in Australian championships and international events.
16. To represent the interests of MQ members and of motorcycle sport and recreation generally in any appropriate public forum in Queensland.

**What we do:**

Motorcycling Queensland professionally manages and develops the business of motorcycle sport and recreation. The organisation is governed by a board and consists of six (6) full-time staff members, ten (10) sport specific subcommittees, 75+ affiliated clubs, as well as a variety of affiliated private promoters.

We provide insurance coverage to our riders, clubs and promoters, including personal accident insurance, public & products liability insurance and Directors and Officers insurance, via the organisations own insurance company – 'Motorcycling Australia Insurance Limited' (MAIL).

Our organisation also:

- issues licenses to participants
- issues permits (and insurance) to event organisers (clubs and private promoters)
- conducts Venue & Track inspections to ensure compliance with national guidelines
- conducts nationally accredited officials and coach training programs for volunteers
- develops and manages an annual calendar of events consisting of 900+ events annually
- facilitates club development, recruitment and 'Come & Try' programs and initiatives
- media and promotional activities
- direct communication strategies to members
- governance processes to effectively manage both sport (competitive) and recreational activities
- facilitates annual zone meetings and conferences for club representatives
- support of national programs and ambitions, including the Motorcycling Australia Alliance
- manages Queensland Moto Park

**Key statistics from The Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries (FCAI) – Directions for the Motorcycle Industry 2017 – 2020 Report (published November 2016):**

-There are more than 40 brands of motorcycles and scooters imported in Australia. They are sold by authorised dealers across Australia, supported by other motorcycle-related business such as workshops and sellers of clothing and accessories.

-Both new and second hand motorcycles are sold and serviced through approximately 880 motorcycle services businesses, employing approximately 4,000 people, including 1,700 motorcycle mechanic's.

-These business have an annual turnover of \$1,8 billion, making a profit of over \$102 million and paying wages in excess of \$184 million. Overall they contribute \$340.5 million to the Australian GDP or 0.02%.

-There are in excess of 200,000 (new and second hand motorcycles) sold annually in Australia.

-There are in excess of 1.05 million motorcycles across Australia.

-As at the time of the report there were 2.2 million people in Australia holding a current motorcycle licence.

**Queensland Moto Park**

Motorcycling Queensland holds the Operators Lease for Queensland Moto Park (QMP) - a dedicated 745 hectare off road recreational riding facility (Ride Park) located in Coulson, near Boonah.

QMP is the only motorcycle facility of its type in Queensland that has been established with the support of two different levels of government (local and state) and the state controlling body of motorcycle sport and recreation – Motorcycling Queensland.

The SEQ Council of Mayors recognised the need for a dedicated (off road) trail bike facility as a way to protect the environment and to reduce trail bike related deaths and injuries, and, to give off road motorcycle enthusiasts a facility that was opened on a regular basis (ie mid week). As QMP has a small number of permanent staff it can be opened during business hours, as opposed to most of our affiliated clubs venues which are only opened on weekends, when volunteers are available to manage their facility.

QMP operates under the policies and procedures, rules and regulations similar to those that MQ affiliated clubs and events operate under. Safe and professionally designed tracks are a feature of QMP tracks and facilities, with all tracks and facilities built to Motorcycling Australia's national standards.

QMP has received visits from delegations from various Regional Queensland Councils (and other interstate representatives) interested in understanding how the 'QMP model' could be replicated in their areas.

In 2019 Queensland Moto Park partnered with Yourtown (formerly BoysTown) to conduct a 'Skilling Queenslanders for Work' program at QMP. The program saw 8 young people, aged 17yrs-25yrs, engaged in meaningful employment and training activities in the landscape, construction and horticulture fields over a 6 month period.

Participants undertook tasks in areas such as: fencing, planting, irrigation, erosion control, building, and maintenance to name a few. The program required Queensland Moto Park to provide the venue, resources and projects, and in return Yourtown provided qualified supervision and training as well as welfare needs of the participants.

We believe that the motorcycle industry generally, would be a great environment to deliver more of these types of employment engagement programs.

A separate submission will be sent to Committee focussing on QMP from QMP management.

### **Statement regarding the importance of recreational (non-competition) activity to motorcycling:**

Whilst international motorcycle events such as the MotoGP (Melbourne) and World Speedway Grand Prix (Melbourne) are renowned for bringing international and interstate visitors to their events, it's the growth in popularity in localised recreational motorcycle activity that breeds sustainability.

Motorcycling Queensland, like many other sporting bodies, has observed in recent years the increased popularity (trend) towards recreational (non-competitive) forms of the activity as an overall percentage of Motorcycling Queensland's business.

We understand that this trend is common across many (if not all) sporting activities with participants gravitating towards an unstructured 'when it suits me' mentality as opposed to regular / organised sporting events / competitions.

By definition, MQ caters for the following types of recreational (non-competition) activity:

- Off road trail riding
- Recreational road riding
- Practice
- Coaching
- Come & Try Days
- Demonstration

The features of recreational (non-competition) activity vs competitive activity is that recreational activity means:

- no winners (therefore no losers)
- no mass starts
- participation focus (as opposed to winning focus)
- zero emphasis on competition
- skill acquisition (coaching and practice)
- all about being outdoors enjoying riding bikes with family and friends
- cost effective (no need to purchase / be the holder hold an annual licence, as a rider can purchase a 'short form licence' in order to participate)

For the calendar year 2018 Motorcycling Queensland recorded 53,577 participants across all of our motorcycle permitted events and activities. Of this 30,184 (56%) of these were participants at recreational (non-competition) events and activities.

When we add the Queensland Moto Park participation (17,620), all of which is exclusively recreation, for the year 2018, this overall percentage of recreational participants increases to 67% of all participants being recreational riders.

It should be noted that state-wide recreational motorcycle participation would actually be significantly more than this, as not all recreational motorcycle recreational activity is managed under the auspices of Motorcycling Queensland – ie unaffiliated motorcycle events and activities.

This in itself presents an issue, as it therefore makes it difficult to present a comprehensive overall 'full' picture of recreational motorcycle activity in Queensland, ie Motorcycling Queensland can only report on events and activities under our jurisdiction / management.

This was an issue as highlighted in the Queensland Outdoor Recreation Federation (QORF) report 'Measuring the contribution of the Outdoor Recreation Sector in Queensland', May, 2012 where they identified the following:

"The present contribution of the Outdoor Recreation sector to the community from an economic, social and environmental perspective is not widely understood because of gaps in public information. Consequently, the hundreds of thousands of Queenslanders who regularly engage in outdoor activity (including motorcycling) understand the benefits they derive but not specifically how the community, economy and environment are benefited".

## Recreational Trail Rides (Off Road):

“Off road motorcycles are one of the most popular categories in Australia, accounting for some 43% of bike sales. This segment is an important one for the industry, with direct sales and associated expenditure making a significant contribution to regional and state economies” (Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries – Directions for the Motorcycle Industry 2017-2020’).

Trail bike riding is a legitimate outdoor recreation activity with increasing demand.

Illegal recreational trail bike usage, particularly in bushland areas near private residences, can present a range of interrelated problems for participants, adjoining landholders, Local Governments and State Government agencies in Queensland and elsewhere in Australia.

As such Motorcycling Queensland in conjunction with the national body – Motorcycling Australia as well as the various other state controlling bodies have developed nationally recognised and accepted guidelines and policies for the safe conduct of off road trail riding and Guided Tours, on both private and public land.

The following are feelings and emotions that are associated with participants at Trail Rides and Guided Tours:

- Fun
- Freedom
- In touch with nature
- Family friendly
- Community getting together
- Open spaces
- Value for money
- Healthy
- Fundraisers

A number of the Trail Rides held in Queensland each year are conducted as fundraising activities for local schools. With funds being used to purchase new play and sporting equipment for those local schools.

Trail Rides bring local people in an area together for a common goal to: plan, organise and set up the venue and conduct the event. These events are usually always run by volunteers. Trail Rides can involve marked out loops of anywhere up to (and sometimes in excess) of 50km. Often volunteers will spend many weekends in the lead-up to an event marking out, clearing and generally preparing Trail loops, as well as negotiating with land owners. Once the events is completed volunteers will then undertake a process of rejuvenating and ‘pulling down’ any evidence of the Trail Ride ever happening.

Most, if not all Trail Rides are held in country or (semi) remote areas meaning a majority of all participants are required travel to the event. Participants will regularly purchase goods and services from local towns, and utilise accommodation services in local towns.

Depending on where the event is being held (and size of the land available), Trail Rides can accommodate anywhere from 50 – 1,000 participants. Participants at Trail Rides are very environmentally conscious – they understand, and, are extremely



conscious of the fragility of the land they ride on and that without access to such land they have no opportunity to pursue their passion. Participants at a trail ride adhere to noise restrictions of 112dba.

Trail Rides work best when held on terrain consisting of natural obstacles such as hills, gullies, tightly treed areas, rocky areas, streams and open paddocks.

Government can assist with identifying any suitable state owned land that could be used by promoters of trail rides, particularly areas of land closer to major cities, and minimise 'red tape' associated with utilising such land.

Motorcycling Queensland issues approximately 60 Trail Ride permits annually.

### **Recreational Ride Groups (On registered roads):**

"Motorcycling is a smart and affordable way to travel, ideally suited to the Australian lifestyle. Motorcycles come in many shapes and sizes, from trail bikes to cruisers to touring bikes and scooters. They have lower travel costs, produce less CO2 emissions, reduce travel time and traffic congestion in urban areas. The smaller, more efficient engines also have less impact on urban air quality. Riding motorcycles and scooters encourages outdoor activity and a healthy lifestyle" (Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries – Directions for the Motorcycle Industry 2017-2020').

Motorcycling Queensland issues approximately fifty (50) event permits to recreational ride days / events annually.

Affiliated clubs include: Ducati Owners Club of Queensland, Kawasaki Z Owners, Ellaspede, Downs Motorcycle Sporting Club, BSA Owners Club and Vincent HRD Owners Club.

Clubs such as the above exist to:

- bring groups of like minded individuals getting together and pursuing their chosen passion (motorcycling) in a safe and inclusive environment;
- often includes 'destination tourism' particularly in regional areas via organised rides riding to a pre-determined destination and have lunch, morning tea therefore economic benefits;
- conducting activities where members can gain knowledge and information to enable them to maintain their machinery and riding skills at a high level;
- fundraising rides;
- share stories and experiences associated with 'ride destinations';
- promote social activities between other social ride clubs;
- riding together to keep safe (safety in numbers).

A large majority of participants in these activities are mature aged individuals (40yrs+), many of whom continue to participate well into their 70's and 80's. Often participants own more than one machine and are individuals with a certain amount of discretionary income to enable them to maintain their passion. Whilst the majority of participants in these forms of activities have historically been male, there has been in recent years a noticeable increase in the number of females participating.

Activities can include 'on road' destination riding as well as static displays (eg Show & Shine, bike shows, etc).

A significant number of these activities happening on any given weekend, not necessarily always under the auspices of Motorcycling Queensland. Nonetheless, the events happen due to the enthusiasm and commitment of individuals or groups of individuals, usually driven by their own unique personal experiences.

Recreational Road Rides bring people together in a spirit of friendship and camaraderie.

### **The Club Model:**

Variously, there are about 75 motorcycling clubs affiliated to Motorcycling Queensland on an annual basis. These clubs are spread broadly throughout the state.

Motorcycling Queensland affiliates clubs who conduct different types (disciplines) of competition and non-competition events and activities, including: Motocross, Supercross, Stadium Motocross, Endurance racing (Enduro), Dirt / Long Track circuit racing, Road Racing, Speedway, Trials and Supermoto.

Within these disciplines there are events of classes for juniors / seniors, male / female, as well as versions of Classic or Historic activity for older competitors or machines.

In recent years, Motorcycling Queensland has observed a trend away from our traditional club based competition events and activities, and an increasing move towards unstructured / recreational / 'when it suits me' types of riding (practice days).

One of the key challenges facing many clubs is 'security of tenure' in relation to their venue/s. In recent years South-East Queensland clubs such as Wheelstanders Junior Motorcycle Club (Oxley) and Gold Coast MX Club (Reedy Creek) have had to shut down due, in no small part, to urban sprawl and these clubs not having long term lease arrangements in place.

Additionally, clubs such as Mike Hatcher Junior Motorcycle Club (Labrador), Albert District MX Club (Stanmore) and Tivoli Raceway (Ipswich) are all examples of South-East Queensland area clubs / venues that are constantly under community pressure regarding their operations.

Often motorcycling venues are put under pressure by a small percentage of a community who seem to have an ability to influence key decisions makers within an area, hoping to reduce or shut-down legitimate motorcycling activities.

MQ understands the sensitivity of the community to noise associated with motorcycling activities and has established nationally accepted guidelines for facility operations, particularly in regard to noise levels.

What motorcycle clubs who manage their own venue need is strong support from Local Government Authorities, and the best support can come from clear lease conditions (for those venues that lease) and clarity around issues such as hours of use, and, support from LGA and State Departments that well organised motorcycling



activity is a legitimate recreational activity and is supported by the relevant authorities.

Information regarding complaints about club activity should be immediately provided to the respective club management in this instance where such complaints are legitimate so they can be actioned quickly.

We understand that land use pressure on the urban fringe can lead to conflict between different user groups and residents. It is important to note however that a large majority of off-road motorcycle enthusiasts care deeply about the environment in which they operate, crucially, they understand that failing to implement good facility management practices will ultimately be at their own detriment.

Motorcycling, like many other recreational pursuits needs to cater for the increasing demand for uncommitted, short-term and unstructured participation, as well as providing more appropriate opportunities during Queensland's hot spring and summer months in which to be active.

The ability to provide permanent lighting to motorcycle venues would greatly assist clubs increase patronage of the venue, and thereby increase the opportunity for Queenslanders to actively recreate.

Often, motorcycle venues are underutilised, and this is due, in part, to the fact that not enough of them have lighting that enables them to conduct activities at night.

Inclusion of lighting for evening operations is considered essential to the long term viability of motorcycle facilities. This is particularly relevant in relation to accessibility of the site for users after school and work. It also considers broader industry trends regarding heat exposure and sun smart / skin cancer awareness, requiring hours of operation that avoid solar exposure, particularly in the spring and summer periods.

So, in short, Government could be more proactive in considering motorcycle facility needs when it comes to future urban planning, even if this means motorcycling sharing facilities with other similar activities under a 'precinct type' model, and when planning such facilities, liaise with local motorcycle clubs (and/or MQ) in terms of what motorcycle facility requirements might include.

### **Ongoing potential for Youth Training and community engagement**

Motorcycling Queensland has, for the past 2 years, been working on the creation of programs designed to engage with youth in the motorcycling space. We have been consulting with schools, RTO's, Indigenous groups including "Deadly Choices" as well government departments and other not for profit youth and community groups like "yourtown", "PCYC" and "Ipswich Youth Justice" on the development of such programs.

The programs we are developing with these groups have vocational content from Certificate II in Automotive that we expect will help with gaining work or at the least have the young people understand what work is about and what employers expect. This will also help with being able to learn skills like problem-solving and also building their self-esteem.

There is also the fun sporting and getting healthy side to these programs where we teach them how to ride a dirt bike and how to become involved in the sport either as a participant, volunteer or official

Motorcycle activity is beneficial to young people as it requires them to keep fit, eat well and learn to plan ahead. MQ runs a program called TRIP. This is the Talented Rider Identification Program for young people between 15 and 21 in this program participants learn what takes to perform at their best. In designing courses for youth training and community engagement MQ will incorporate key course modules and components from the TRIP into future youth training programs. Being fit and healthy and being part of a supportive team like the 'motorcycle family' is good for general mental health as sport teaches you to deal with life when things do not go as planned.

Research indicates that behavioural issues, particularly amongst youth are related to sedentary lifestyles. What we know about motorcycling is that is anything but sedentary. It requires the individual to be fit, healthy, alert, engaged, willing to learn, happy to get their hands dirty in terms of machine maintenance and up-keep, and that the rewards in relation to this effort are enormous, in terms of learning new skills, building confidence, helping others achieve their goals, etc.

"Kids who play sports have fewer emotional and behavioural problems and are less likely to [do drugs](#) or have [bad body image](#). James Hudziak, MD, Director of the Vermont Center for Children, Youth, and Families."

### **More research into the benefits associated with motorcycling (physical exertion, cognitive abilities, economic, etc)**

There is evidence, albeit mostly anecdotal, that there are many mental and physical health benefits associated with motorcycling. The high skill, fitness and concentration levels needed to ride a motorcycle, have proven health benefits for the rider, and as a result the wider community.

The implementation of a research project (preferably a longitudinal project) to support this theory would be advantageous to motorcycling.

Given the fact that recreational motorcycle riding is on the increase, it would be of considerable significance to show that this activity is associated with improved physical and cognitive fitness.

The aim of a such a study would be to acquire data in areas such as:

- mental benefits associated with motorcycling
- physical (including cognitive) benefits associated with motorcycling
- economic impact of motorcycling
- does riding a motorcycle (in some instances from a very young age), result in better / safer road users as adults (both car and motorcycle)

Acquiring data on the above areas of this sport will benefit the sport and industries in support of it. The fitness value will attract more people to the sport and thus yield national benefit for fitter and healthier Australians.

The support industries such as motorcycle manufacturers will benefit from the sport being promoted (eg sales) as well as being perceived as active agents in researching this important area.

Motorcycling Queensland has consulted widely within the industry (manufacturers, wholesalers, dealers, motorcycle mechanics, clubs, coaches, riders, after market spares shops, etc) and determined that there is strong support for such research to be undertaken, and for Motorcycling Queensland or Motorcycling Australia to lead such a project.

For this type of study to be undertaken properly and professionally (ie qualified University standard Research team), indicative costs suggest a budget of at least \$150,000.

This is significant money for a not-for-profit organisation such as Motorcycling Queensland to allocate to such a project, however this is certainly an area (ie funding a research project) that the Queensland Government could consider investing in to benefit recreational motorcycling.

In recent times, Motorcycling Queensland, and a number of our affiliated clubs, have incorporated data captured as part of the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries (FCAI) 'Directions for the Motorcycle Industry 2017-2020' report, in grant applications, etc. and when seeking funding, and whilst this FCAI data is excellent relative to the industry, additional individualised / personalised data (as suggested by the above research proposal) would certainly strengthen the motorcycling cause when it came to lodging future grant / funding applications.

Additionally, an emphasis throughout the Queensland Government's new Activate! Queensland 2019-2029 strategy (developed after widespread sport and recreation consultation) is the idea of 'collaboration'. This is an area we think that can be further enhanced between State Government (and other levels of government eg local), and in particular with bodies such as Motorcycling Queensland, who are recognised (and funded accordingly) by Queensland Government as the relevant state controlling body for motorcycle sport and recreation when determining policy particularly relative to recreational motorcycle activity.

### **In Summary how can Government assist:**

- invest money into research initiatives that help identify (and promote) the benefits of motorcycling
- assist with accessing new land / venues suitable for motorcycle recreational activity
- assistance with security of tenure to existing facilities and venues
- investigate the possibility of establishing more Queensland Moto Park or MotorSport precincts throughout the state
- assist with lighting of facilities to ensure more equitable access to facilities
- Include / work with Motorcycling Queensland and the industry generally in future safety / ride campaigns-monitor new players in the motorcycle event and insurance market to ensure minimum compliance.

**More information:**

Should the committee require any further information or clarification of information contained with this report, please contact:

**Kim Rowcliffe**

General Manager

**Motorcycling Queensland**

**E:** [REDACTED]

**P:** (07) 3281-2255

***Ride. Race. Enjoy.***

Location: Level 2, 8 Gordon Street, Ipswich, Queensland

Postal: PO Box 2072, North Ipswich, Queensland, 4305

p: (07) 3281-2255 e: [info@mqld.org.au](mailto:info@mqld.org.au) f: (07) 3812 2742 w: [www.mqld.org.au](http://www.mqld.org.au)

