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## Appendix Three: Operation of the Motorcycle Safety Forum

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VicRoads provided the following responses to thirteen issues that were raised by Psycorp, a consulting firm commissioned to develop a Strategy for the Motorcycle Safety Forum (refer to Chapter Two, page 75).<sup>1</sup>

- 1. The existence and function of the Forum is poorly understood by both the senior management of the organisations represented thereon and the motorcycling public - there is therefore little commitment to the Forum and/or its aims.*

### **Response**

Management from the three main road safety agencies, namely the Victoria Police, TAC and VicRoads are well aware of the Motorcycle Safety Forum (each agency is represented on the Forum).

Representation of the then MSF chairperson on the Road Safety Reference Group (RSRG) between April 1995 and December 1996 allowed the MSF to receive reports on the RSRG's activities and visa versa.

The MSF continues to have input into the RSRG through the MRAA representative, for example the MSF's comprehensive presentation in May 1997 to the RSRG regarding off-road riding facilities.

In addition the current chairperson of the MSF was invited to outline motorcycling issues to the Road Safety Management Group (RSMG - comprising VicRoads, TAC and Victoria Police) in April 1997.

2. *The Forum needs to link and co-ordinate more effectively with other road safety bodies and agencies (eg Co-ordination Group, FORS, MUARC) - should seek to input into related areas (eg policy on motorcycle education in schools).*

**Response**

The MSF now has a representative from Monash University Accident Research Centre, and exchanges minutes with the FORS Motorcycle Safety Consultative Committee. As noted above the MSF has linked and co-ordinated more effectively with other groups such as the key agencies, RSRG, and RSMG.

3. *The Forum is not representative of all motorcyclists and should therefore include representatives from clubs and the general riding community - there is a need to understand that motorcyclists are not a homogenous group.*

**Response**

In September 1996, a representative of Motorcycling Victoria joined the Forum, enabling issues relevant to motorcycle clubs to be brought forward. The majority of representatives are riders themselves and are therefore well placed to reflect rider's attitudes and experiences.

4. *A motorcycle safety strategy needs to link to the overall road safety strategy for Victoria - in the short term it also needs to be co-ordinated with VicRoads' countermeasure development project being undertaken by MUARC.*

**Response**

The Motorcycle Safety Strategy preceded that of *Safety First* and therefore its key approaches were incorporated into its motorcycle section (the explanatory notes section of the Motorcycle Safety Strategy demonstrates

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that the ‘publicity and enforcement’, ‘rider training and licensing’ and ‘publicity campaigns’ strategy items were estimated to have the maximum effectiveness, and thus were incorporated into *Safety First*).

The Motorcycle Safety Strategy highlights key countermeasures which provide the focus for the ongoing activities for the MSF.

5. *Victorian and national motorcycle safety aims need to be linked and approaches nationally consistent - appears to be little co-ordination between Victorian and FORS approaches.*

**Response**

As previously noted the MSF exchanges minutes with the FORS Motorcycle Safety Consultative Committee. The chairperson and the MRAA Forum representatives are also members of the FORS Motorcycle Safety Consultative Committee. Through these mechanisms when relevant issues arise from FORS they are discussed at MSF meetings, for example the MSF had input into the FORS motorcycle billboard campaign.

6. *The Forum was formed on a “top down” basis by Government and has never truly functioned as a group driven by “bottom-up” processes - the lack of ownership of the group and its role by members or the motorcycle community must change as a pre-requisite to effective management of a motorcycle safety strategy.*

**Response**

The MSF was formed by the Government as a result of the Road Safety Committee’s Report (Inquiry into Motorcycle Safety in Victoria 1993). It is expected that the representatives of the motorcycling community who sit on the MSF have ownership of the safety processes and initiatives that occur. As occasion arises the MSF has its own voice, for example its submission to this current Inquiry. Since 1995, progress has been made with Forum

initiatives and their ownership by members. Broader recognition by the motorcycle community remains to be further developed.

7. *The Forum needs to take a balanced view of motorcycling to ensure that relevant mobility, access and environmental issues are balanced against safety aims - balance appears to be too heavily weighted towards safety at present.*

**Response**

Although the MSF's primary focus is one of safety, it does consider other issues involving mobility and environment, as noted in response to point (9) below. The MSF has also discussed the question of access, for example motorcycle footpath parking.

8. *The Forum needs to educate itself regarding key issues to ensure that it operates on accurate information and understanding rather than hearsay or opinion.*

**Response**

The MSF is provided with information such as accident statistics (made available both with and without request by VicRoads and TAC). The MSF also keeps up to date on a wide range of issues through presentations on specific topics, such as the presentation from the Department of Education on their Administrative Guidelines for Traffic Safety Education, and by VicRoads tabling relevant information (as the need arises) at meetings.

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9. *As on-road and off-road motorcycle safety issues may be linked - consideration should be given to broadening the focus of the Forum.*

**Response**

A significant amount of consideration has recently been given to off-road motorcycle safety, especially since Monash University Accident Research Centre published the report titled 'Motorcycle Related Injuries to Children and Adolescents' by Haworth, Ozanne-Smith, Fox and Bruman (1994). The MSF also gave a presentation to the RSRG on the subject of off-road riding facilities in May 1997.

10. *The appropriate sections of the Government response to the Parliamentary Road Safety Committee's Report on Motorcycle Safety in Victoria should be incorporated into the motorcycle safety strategy.*

**Response**

The appropriate sections of the Government response to the Parliamentary Road safety Committee's Report on Motorcycle Safety in Victoria were taken into consideration during the development of the Motorcycle Strategy in 1995. It should be noted that the Motorcycle Strategy incorporates the most beneficial initiatives as established by the review undertaken for its development.

11. *The Forum currently operates as a "clearing house" and network for information transfer - while this is valuable, it does not realise the full potential of the group.*

**Response**

With the acceptance of the Motorcycle Strategy in 1995, which contains a clear action plan, the MSF is realising its full potential as a group by being able to work together on all projects, and enabling coordination between

road safety agencies (for example, the Police unrider enforcement with associated TAC advertising).

- 12. The Forum currently lacks credibility due to an apparent lack of direction, poor focus and low level of commitment among member groups.*

**Response**

The development of the Motorcycle Strategy has provided direction and focus in implementing a range of projects and initiatives undertaken by the MSF.

- 13. To be effective, the Forum needs:*

- 1. a management plan and executive officer support;*
- 2. access to recurrent funding for administration and programme purposes;  
and*
- 3. to take a leadership role in championing motorcycle safety.*

**Response**

The MSF now has a management plan (action plan) and executive support from VicRoads. The MSF has a key role in the area of improving motorcycle safety as noted in responses to previous issues.

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**Endnotes**

- 1 VicRoads Correspondence, 20 August 1997, Attachment p. 7.