

TRANSCRIPT

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ECONOMY AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

Inquiry into the Increase in Victoria's Road Toll

Melbourne—Tuesday, 8 September 2020

(via videoconference/teleconference)

MEMBERS

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Mrs Bev McArthur

Mr Bernie Finn—Deputy Chair

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Mr Lee Tarlamis

Mr Mark Gepp

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Mr David Limbrick

Ms Melina Bath

Mr Andy Meddick

Dr Catherine Cumming

Mr Craig Ondarchie

Mr David Davis

Mr Gordon Rich-Phillips

WITNESS

Ms Cate Hughes (*via teleconference*).

The CHAIR: Welcome to the Economy and Infrastructure Committee's public hearing for the Inquiry into the Increase in Victoria's Road Toll. I welcome any members of the public watching via the live broadcast. My name is Enver Erdogan, and I am Chair of the committee. I would like to also acknowledge my fellow members of the committee present with us here today: Mr Lee Tarlamis, Mr Andy Meddick, Mr Rod Barton, Mrs Beverley McArthur and Mr Mark Gepp.

All evidence taken at this hearing is protected by parliamentary privilege as provided by the *Constitution Act 1975* and is further subject to the provisions of the Legislative Council standing orders. Therefore the information you provide during this hearing is protected by law. However, any comment repeated outside the hearing may not be protected. Any deliberately false evidence or misleading of the committee may be considered a contempt of Parliament. All evidence is being recorded. You will be provided with a proof version of the transcript following the hearing. Transcripts will ultimately be made public and posted on the committee's website.

We welcome your opening comments but ask that they be kept to a maximum of 5 to 10 minutes to ensure we have plenty of discussion time. Could I please remind members and witnesses to mute their microphones when not speaking to minimise interference. If you have technical difficulties at any stage, please disconnect and contact the committee staff using the contacts you were provided. Could you please give your name for the benefit of our Hansard team and then start your presentation. Over to you, Cate.

Ms HUGHES: Thank you, Mr Chairman. Good morning. My name is Cate Hughes. I appreciate this opportunity to expand on issues raised in my submission. I come from a rural background and will be concentrating on issues of concern to regional road users and in particular motorcycle riders. I will also email my personal background to the committee for their information.

Firstly, I would like to cover some important motorcycle- and scooter-specific points to assist understanding why it is essential they are viewed as a separate road user category to cars, which, if they were considered as such across all levels of planning from road infrastructure to road safety—as users—would result in significant long-term positive outcomes. Motorcycles and scooters are not one-size-fits-all modes of transport. They require varying levels of skill to ride and could not be more different to cars. All levels of government, road authorities and driver education include them with cars in planning, and that is if they are included at all. From little scooters to large touring motorcycles, there are at least 12 to 15 different basic types and thousands of different models. As vulnerable road users disregarded and/or disrespected by car drivers and often ignored in road infrastructure and safety planning, being only two wheels with minimal impact on road surfaces and the environment, they have more in common with bicycles, particularly as they continue their transition to electric.

Charging stations for electric-powered motorcycles and scooters are necessary to accommodate their increase as many people choose these environmentally friendly electric machines. Motorcycles and scooters are cost-effective forms of transport and are invaluable in efficiently navigating and reducing urban road congestion and parking. Leisure motorcyclists contribute substantially to regional tourism. With limited carrying capacity, small fuel tanks and a high level of concentration required, riders take regular breaks to rest and purchase fuel, drinks and food. En route they support regional tourist attractions, stay overnight in accommodation, dine out and attend events, festivals and concerts. Touring riders travel days to weeks for major events interstate. Many regional riders are volunteer emergency services personnel in their rural areas and are actively involved in fundraising events for their local services and charities.

Two major issues for motorcyclists are surfaces and barriers, and I will just cover surfaces firstly. A non-slippery, hard surface is essential for rider safety and stability. Motorcycles vary in size and weight, power-to-weight ratio and manoeuvrability and respond differently in road handling. Poor road surfaces are potentially lethal for motorcycles. For instance, potholes and wheel ruts left by heavy trucks are invisible to riders once filled with water. Even in perfect dry conditions, if present on approach to, in or on exiting bends, they can potentially throw a motorcycle off course into oncoming traffic. Slippery road surfaces are a direct threat to riders. For example, line and road markings should always be non-slippery paint or products such as OmniGrip designed to prevent loss of traction. Likewise, steel road plates in construction zones must be treated with

products such as OmniGrip. The process of snake-style crack filling must stop and a non-slippery alternative be found.

Road contractors leaving loose gravel on newly surfaced sections of road and inadequate roadwork speed reduction result in motorcycle riders having to travel substantially slower than posted limits with poor visibility from dust while being peppered with airborne gravel from oncoming and overtaking vehicles. Gravel from minor side roads, particularly on or either side of bends and at intersections, is spread out onto bitumen running lanes by other vehicles. This can be remedied by surfacing the first 100 metres of gravel on a side road.

Raised painted rumble strips are a double hazard as many are painted with slippery paint. A rider can be forced onto these in avoiding an errant vehicle, wildlife or a road surface hazard.

Barriers, in particular flexible fence-style or wire rope barriers and most recently the fixed beam style with multiple posts close together—barrier posts are lethal for motorcycle riders. By their own admission road authorities acknowledge barrier posts are a danger to riders, as do manufacturers of these barriers, resulting in the manufacture of motorcycle-specific barrier protections—steel W-beam-style barriers and padding for the multiple posts on flexible and fixed fence-style barriers. However, road authorities appear to be under the impression that they are only applicable on certain rural roads and only on bends. Appropriate placement of all barrier types is vital. Where an ideal safe run-off area exists, the installation of a barrier introduces a road hazard. Where a steel W-beam barrier exists, fencing it off with a wire rope barrier seems ridiculous. In the case of flexible fences or wire rope barriers and their anchor points, known as end treatments, manufacturer specifications and Austroads standards for installation appear to be largely ignored by VicRoads.

The overwhelming issue with the installation of these fixed and flexible fence-style barriers is the close proximity to running lanes either side of the road and in the case of single-lane highways often along the centre white line as well. Effectively this has resulted in many kilometres of emergency lanes that are next to non-existent or so narrow that no vehicles, from the average family sedan to trucks and coaches, are able to stop safely in the event of an emergency or exit vehicles safely from both driver and passenger sides. Access issues affect all emergency vehicles, particularly fire units, if required to prevent a roadside fire from spreading across the road or use equipment to cut crash victims from a vehicle. Tow truck operators are affected, and along with all emergency staff, as the roadways are their workplace, it poses a duty of care question with regard to the safety of that workplace. The recent introduction of the Victorian workplace manslaughter offences laws, strengthening OH&S legislation under WorkSafe, raises questions: why would a barrier manufacturer or installation contractor risk potential prosecution by complying with VicRoads's instructed installation contrary to specifications? Have they been or will they be indemnified for potential prosecution, and by who—VicRoads, TAC, the state government?

There are multiple reasons why road users take evasive action, often unavoidable, with different ramifications depending upon the type of vehicle and predominantly at speeds of 90 to 110 kilometres per hour on single- and dual-lane highways. When barriers are installed so close to these high-speed running lanes, it leaves nowhere for them to go. A myriad of unforeseen but entirely possible evasive actions that can happen include dangerous lane changing and overtaking, swerving and sudden stopping due to wildlife or stock crossing or on roadways, debris, unsecured loads falling from trailers, tyre blowouts, breakdowns, accidents ahead, erratic alcohol- or drug-affected driving, distracted and inattentive driving and weather conditions. Having no emergency lanes is a disaster waiting to happen.

Regional road users resent feeling fenced in when their roadworthy vehicles suffer rim, tyre and suspension damage from many hazardous rural roads effectively unfit for purpose or unroadworthy. The majority of behavioural road user issues can be addressed by education, beginning in schools with exposure to all types of vehicles, to encourage a better understanding of sharing roads as a car driver, particularly trucks and buses, whose weight prevents them from stopping suddenly, and looking out for motorcycles.

The majority of regional road user issues raised relating to hazardous surfaces and barrier placements are able to be addressed in three ways—firstly, by establishing an independent crash data body with specifically trained crash investigators based in major regional centres also tasked with overhauling and refining crash data collected by Victoria Police and emergency departments and the correlation of all crash data into one system. Without comprehensive, reliable data, road safety researchers cannot perform accurate analysis in support of

road authorities' proposals, nor can they accurately analyse the performance of road safety measures once implemented.

Secondly, genuine consultation with all types of regional road users, not necessarily formally qualified or self-appointed representatives but practically experienced folk who know their local roads as regular users, be they freight, grain or stock truck drivers; tour coach or school bus drivers; farmers moving machinery; local emergency services personnel, including volunteers; taxi and courier drivers; and of course experienced motorcycle riders, whose accurate insight into road conditions is invaluable and vital in identifying issues specifically affecting them. Drivers do not see, feel or experience the road the way a motorcycle rider does, and it is why riders generally excel as drivers too. The high level of concentration required to ride a motorcycle safely, along with their ability to continually risk assess their environment and respond promptly and safely, results in their focussed, undistracted riding and driving.

Finally, if road authorities are going to continue being tasked with design, recommendations and implementation of road safety systems and advise government accordingly, they need to be fully accountable and subject to independent oversight, particularly in relation to responses to recommendations arising from investigations and inquiries. They should not be made totally by the authorities under scrutiny and need to be monitored to ensure implementation. Thank you.

The CHAIR: Thank you very much for that informative presentation and submission, Cate, especially in relation to the part about the crash investigations data, a point that has been raised by others that have appeared as witnesses before this hearing. What I might do is pass on to the rural MPs, because I know a lot of your submission was targeted towards them. I might start with Bev, Mark, Andy, then Rod, in that order. So Bev, you can go first. Mrs Beverley McArthur.

Mrs McARTHUR: Thank you, Chair, and thank you, Cate, for your very comprehensive submission and your very good presentation today. As the Chair has just said, virtually every witness has said that the data that we receive in Victoria is just unacceptable. It is not up to scratch, and we have got to do something about that. Because if we are making decisions about multibillion-dollar expenditure on roads and reducing speed limits and applying more wire rope barriers, we need to have far better data than we have got now. So, Cate, I was just wondering what you think of the VAGO report which did point to the lack of consultation that existed in the rollout of these barriers and also the cost and the lack of consideration given to the emergency services, who, I am told by SES people, now have to have the biggest wire-cutters in the business to go out because they just cannot travel several kilometres past an entry point to get back on the other side of the road or whatever to attend an accident or a fire or whatever. So what do you say to the government, who seem to have totally failed to listen to any of these services and answer to the VAGO report?

Ms HUGHES: Well, I will be honest, Bev. I have not actually read the entire report from start to finish. I have read a summary of it. The main points that jumped out at me were the exaggeration of the statistics with regard to wire rope barrier effectiveness, and I think VAGO was quite right to point that out because from memory—like I say, I do not have it in front of me—I think the figure of 80 per cent was bandied around and that was based on a best possible scenario and no actual backup of actual data that support that. In reality, I think VAGO found that it was a whole lot less—like around 30-something per cent not 80. So the thing that really jumped out at me was—whether it is intentional or not—misinterpretation of data and what that data was actually based on. I mean, there is another assertion that has been made too, 'There have been 3000 strikes to wire rope barriers; therefore we've saved 3000 lives'. Well, I do not remember any year in my driving history where we have even had thousands of deaths on a road in the first place, so it seems totally unrealistic. The reasons for strikes to barriers can be so many different reasons that are totally inconsequential and are not ever going to result in a crash, like tree branches falling on them; a dopey, tired driver just grazing it and not righting themselves and continuing on; trailers swinging out from B-double trucks—those sorts of things. So there are a lot of reasons why barriers are damaged, which I think have been exaggerated in trying to sell the point that they are marvellous things that are going to save lives.

So, sorry, Bev. I did not really answer your question—I realise that—because I have not really—

Mrs McARTHUR: No, you've done that.

Ms HUGHES: read the entire report. So I have just given you my take on the VAGO report.

Mrs McARTHUR: Well, suffice to say, it is pretty damning, so you have done exceptionally well. Would you consider the speed enforcement looks a bit more like revenue raising than safety prevention, and how much do you think that motorcyclists do contribute—that is a second question—to local economies? You touched on what happens in rural areas, and I witness that all the time. As motorcyclists come into my small towns they do spend a lot of money on food and accommodation and so on. So to not consider them perhaps is not right.

Ms HUGHES: Well, no, that is right. The other factor to regional motorcycling too is one very obvious one, which is when we have visiting motorcyclists that literally ride for days and weeks from interstate to attend the major races down at Phillip Island—for instance the MotoGP, the superbikes et cetera—it is like there is an intentional targeting of motorcycles when that happens. So as soon as they cross the border they are pounced on by Victoria Police and scrutinised—checked for everything and so on. It is like every time there is an event, it gets to a point where a lot of riders now say, ‘Look, it’s less hassle for us not to go to Victoria now’. Some of them are even just flying out and going to Malaysia instead, because it is quite an expensive event to attend—those events at Phillip Island—and if you are going to be hassled all the way there once you hit Victoria, then it is a bit off-putting for riders. That is a common complaint—

Mrs McARTHUR: Okay. So, Cate, are you saying that there is a different attitude in other states to Victoria—to motorcyclists?

Ms HUGHES: Yes and no. It varies, I think. By and large I think there are certainly other states that have a much better attitude towards motorcyclists. I mean, Tasmania springs to mind. They are particularly welcoming to motorcyclists. There are certain regions around Australia, different shires and councils, that have actually put their hands up as being motorcycle-friendly regions. But from a policing perspective, I really could not say, because I do not know enough about the other states. But from just anecdotal stuff, hearing stuff, I think that certainly Victoria seems to hound their motorcyclists pretty hard.

The CHAIR: Thank you, Cate. I might pass on to Mr Gepp, and if we get a bit more time for questions, then Mrs Beverley McArthur can ask a couple more. So Mr Gepp, over to you.

Mr GEPP: Thank you, Chair, and thank you, Cate. Look, just a couple of comments on the event policing. It is the first I have heard that Victoria Police have a different attitude to motorcyclists than to other road users. Certainly my experience is that wherever there is a major public event where there are more users on the road—whether it is cars, motorbikes or whatever it happens to be, whether it is a long weekend or whatever it is—policing is automatically stepped up, and in fact police run significant campaigns with motorcycle groups. In particular, when there are a lot of them travelling intrastate and interstate, there is a lot of work that is done in terms of liaison between VicPol and those users. So I must admit I am a bit surprised at the suggestion that there is different treatment.

Having said that, I am particularly interested, Cate, in your presentation and particularly around this issue of slippery surfaces and what we can practically do that could assist safer use, or a safer experience, for motorcycle riders, in particular in terms of non-slippery surfaces that we could adapt—paint or other chemicals—and particularly when we are talking about road repairs. I think you alluded to that. You touched on the state-type repairs that are done in terms of those cracks. So I wonder if you might be able to elaborate a bit more on that, please.

Ms HUGHES: Well, I am not sure, other than what I have said, how much more I can elaborate on it—

Mr GEPP: I am particularly interested if you have got information about other jurisdictions, whether it is in Australia or overseas, where they use different types of surfacing to support the proposition that you are advancing.

Ms HUGHES: Well, clearly there are non-slippery paints and products such as OmniGrip that are used around the world in road applications, with line marking and road marking—steel road plates in construction zones. I guess the one thing that I am curious about, which I have not found any information on, is what alternative could be found, a non-slippery alternative that could be found, to replace this practice of snake crack filling. I am not sure if everybody understands what I am talking about there. It is when there are long cracks in the bitumen and instead of doing a whole area of seal one person goes along with a wand-type thing that just drizzles bitumen into the crack, but it is obviously not the same bitumen that is on the road surface because it is quite shiny and slippery. When you get patches like one that I can think of immediately, up towards Tallarook,

where there is a whole section for quite a number of kilometres where there are just absolute cobwebs of these snakes that have been filled in, it creates a very slippery and uneven surface, particularly for motorcyclists.

Mr GEPP: I am familiar with what you are talking about, Cate, and it is particularly when the damage in the road runs north-south, if you like, rather than east-west— That is exactly right. Just one other point, if I can, quickly, Chair, in relation to your submission, Cate. You talk about driver-assisted technology. I wonder if you might just spend a minute or so expanding on those thoughts from your submission, please.

Ms HUGHES: Driver-assisted technology—yes, that is an area that worries me somewhat for vulnerable road users, in particular motorcyclists, cyclists, and pedestrians, for that matter. I asked a question once not so long ago as to how an automated vehicle would assess which option to take if faced with a myriad of options. Say, for instance, the vehicle is travelling along and it has the choice of impacting another vehicle, a motorcyclist or a pedestrian. What is it going to do if it has no choice but to impact one of them? And the answer I was given from the particular expert I was asking on a forum was it would choose the one of least resistance, which in that case would be the pedestrian. Now, given the unlikely event of a pedestrian being on a highway—they are not ordinarily on a highway—the next most vulnerable would be the cyclist and the motorcyclist, and that concerns me greatly. If these automated cars are not refined to a point where they are going to protect vulnerable road users, then aren't we just introducing another problem?

The CHAIR: Thank you. I might pass over to Mr Meddick, who is also a rural MP, and then I will pass to Mr Barton. Mr Meddick, do you have a question?

Mr MEDDICK: Yes. Thank you, Chair, and thank you, Cate. I have just got a few very quick ones, I suspect, and they also speak a little bit about what Mr Gepp was talking about. I am particularly interested in the raised rumble strips—the level strips. Now, can you give us some insight into what the material is that is used in those level strips? Because I completely agree with you that whenever you separate rubber from the road, regardless of whether it is a car or a motorcycle, then you may well be asking for trouble. So what material they use and how it is applied, first of all. One of them you answered to Mr Gepp before with the use of OmniGrip, so I will look into that one.

And the very last thing is: when you talk about the use of metal plates on roads in construction zones, in my experience they are used to cover trench work that goes across roads and things like that. What material would you suggest that could hold up the weight of a B-double and hundreds of thousands of road movements where typically these things would go across? I know steel is used because of its strength and to cover over these holes—all these trench works. Your submission has been so in depth that I would think that if you are saying that they should not be used, you would have a solution of an alternative material to use.

Ms HUGHES: Well, I was not actually saying they should not be used. All I was saying was that they need to be either replaced with a chequer plate-style pattern—like something that has got a textured surface-type feel—or painted with a textured product, like OmniGrip, for instance, to remove the slipperiness factor from the steel. But certainly keep using them. One of the areas where they are far more commonly used is actually in the CBD around construction zones, and even just a little scooter tootling along really slowly can hit one of those plates, particularly if it happens to be damp, and that is it—whoosh, they are gone. They just slide out straightaway; they are lethally slippery. So the answer is: sure, keep using them, but there really must be more attention on removing that slippery surface for riders and—

Mr MEDDICK: Do I take it then that the same solution you are talking about in that instance would be for the level strips—is that similar?

Ms HUGHES: The rumble strips?

Mr MEDDICK: Yes.

Ms HUGHES: The rumble strips. I do not know what materials are used in rumble strips. But with regard to the raised and not raised, in America, for instance, they set the rumble strips at road level; they are level with the road. They are still just as effective, but you have not got that additional separation, as you say, of the tyre from the road surface, which is particularly pronounced in motorcycles—and one would assume that they would have them painted with non-slippery paint. That is just another thing. A rumble strip is very effective, but when it becomes a hazard to a road user then that becomes an issue.

Mr MEDDICK: I have noticed that in some of the places, the back roads I travel in western Victoria, some rumble strips are in effect non-slip paint and at level surface on the road, rather than being a raised rumble strip. I am unsure, but perhaps there is already movement to go to this on behalf of VicRoads.

Ms HUGHES: There could well be, and that is good to hear if that is the case. Certainly on the highways that I travel in the north, north-east, the rumble strips are raised. Even if it is only a small amount, they are still raised; they are not flush to the road like the American ones are. But I have got to confess that I have not been to western Victoria for quite some time, so that is good to hear if that is the case.

Mr MEDDICK: Not a lot of people have at the moment, Cate.

Ms HUGHES: True. Not a lot of us have been going anywhere, really.

Mr MEDDICK: No. Thank you very much for your answers. Cheers.

Ms HUGHES: Thank you.

The CHAIR: Cate, seeing as though all the committee members that had a question have had an opportunity, I will ask if anyone has one additional question. Otherwise we might actually conclude your presentation. I found it very informative—

Mrs McARTHUR: Chair, perhaps I could just ask Cate: how do you think we could go about better consulting with the motorcycle constituency to get a better outcome on how we all use roads?

Ms HUGHES: Yes. It is a good question, Bev. I think that the main problem with consulting in general with all road users, really, as I said in my introduction, is that we need to be involving—particularly in the regional areas, as you would appreciate—grassroots-level practical users, regardless of what they use. Motorcyclists are no different in a sense—well, they are different in a lot of senses—from a consulting perspective. If anything, they are more important because they are so different to cars and other vehicles, and their needs are not really understood unless you are a rider. So when you get a whole lot of public servants or research professors or various other people involved in these decision-making processes and the designing and implementation of programs, unless they ride a motorcycle themselves and more specifically unless they ride one in a regional environment as well, they really have no concept of what they are looking for, because you cannot ascertain what is involved for a motorcyclist without being on a motorcycle and experiencing that yourself.

The CHAIR: Thank you. I might pass over to Mr Andy Meddick, who has a further question.

Ms HUGHES: Sure.

Mr MEDDICK: Yes. Just one final thing, Cate; thanks very much. I used to ride motorcycles when I was a lot younger. I am completely banned from them by my wife, who believes they are way too dangerous.

As a now non-motorcycle rider I recall those TAC ads—I do not know if you remember them; I am sure you do—where things were slowed down. There was a potential accident about to happen, and the driver of the car actually got out of the car like a ghost or whatever and exchanged clothing and everything with the motorcycle rider and they exchanged places. The footage was then sped up and a collision was averted, which was all about trying to change people's perceptions about how they looked for motorcycle riders and how motorcycle riders looked at traffic. It was a really good educational tool, I felt, that increased awareness from both sides about how traffic moves and interacts. Do you think upgrading it and a new education program based around that, about each of us looking out for the other one and understanding that interaction with other types of traffic—a re-ignition of that program—would help? And as someone who lives near and travels down the Great Ocean Road quite a lot, I know there have been a number of motorcycle accidents there, where some riders have done the wrong thing in that they have taken what is normally considered a racing line, for instance, where they have come around the corner and they have actually crossed onto the other side of the road around blind bends where they could not see what is coming and the inevitable tragedy has occurred. Should there be area-specific education programs about how to ride on those particular roads and the things to do and not to do and the things to look out for?

Ms HUGHES: Yes, well, any form of education is good for all concerned drivers and riders. I notice up in north-east Victoria—particularly around the foothills of the Great Dividing Range, where there are some pretty

popular roads for motorcyclists—quite often on a long weekend or a particularly warm weekend they will have those big billboards up on the medians, which basically alert riders to be more cautious about bends et cetera, and that is great. But I think what is really needed is some kind of effective campaign that is going to really highlight and put on drivers' radar that motorcyclists are sharing the roads and they do need to look for them. Most of the problem with driver impact with motorcyclists, the majority of times, is that the driver did not actually look properly in the first place, because it is not on their radar; they do not expect to see motorcyclists. They will glance quickly in the mirror or they will just have a very quick glance to the side of them and think, 'Oh, yeah, I can change lanes now because there's no car there'. But a motorcyclist has a much smaller footprint beside them, so if they are in a blind spot and they have not actually checked their mirrors properly or done a proper head check, as in turned their head and looked out the window, then that is why they do not see them—because they are not actually looking. Some of them do not even look in their mirrors at all, and they just do a lane change. So I think a lot of that needs to be sorted with education. The same with things like lane filtering—lane filtering is a legal pursuit now, and yet riders that are legitimately lane filtering in traffic have drivers that will deliberately gradually move as they inch their vehicle forward over the line to block their passage or will open a door on them.

Mr MEDDICK: That is a really good point actually. I have seen that quite a bit in city traffic particularly.

Ms HUGHES: Exactly.

Mr MEDDICK: But what is the solution then? Because I also see it out on the highways. Travelling up and down the Geelong freeway, for instance—the Princes Freeway there—I will be in a lane on the left-hand side and a truck might be coming beside me or another car, and then in between us at well in excess of 100 kilometres an hour a motorcyclist will just rip through the middle. That happens more times than I actually care to talk about. How do we stop that from happening? Is there a misunderstanding on behalf of some motorcyclists that the lane filtering only applies to stationary traffic and not to moving traffic?

Ms HUGHES: Is there? Perhaps there is; perhaps it is deliberate. I do not know. I cannot speak for all riders in that sense. There are young blokes in particular, especially ones that are on particular types of fast, sport-type bikes, who, when they first get out on the road, think they are all up-and-coming boy racers. So they have a bit of an attitude, and that can be part of it. It could also be ignorance. I mean, there is a distinct difference between filtering and lane splitting—that lane splitting is illegal and it is done at speed, whereas lane filtering is a legal pursuit through stationary or very slow moving traffic. So yes, once again, education and awareness campaigns perhaps remind us. When you say that from a regional perspective—targeting somewhere like the Great Ocean Road, for instance, or that Geelong freeway situation—well, perhaps there should be some billboards that actually remind users of particular things that happen on that road that should not be happening.

The CHAIR: Thank you very much, Cate, and thank you, Mr Meddick, for that inquisitive question. On behalf of the committee, I would like to thank you for your presentation and your quite robust discussion with committee members. Cate, it has been a pleasure. The committee now must break for 20 minutes for morning tea. Thank you.

Ms HUGHES: Lovely. Thank you very much.

Witness withdrew.