Inquiry Name: Inquiry into VicRoads' Management of Country Roads

John Ferguson

SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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Vicroads run a selective maintenance regime where some places attract peculiarly great attention at the expense of everywhere else.

The Goulburn Valley Highway between Yea and Molesworth is an egregious example of the former, while the once Great Ocean Road has degraded into a long, winding hazard of broken surfaces, poor marking, and general danger. I won’t ride it at all except through the Winter, and even then, only in the early mornings. The widespread use of “Rough Surface” temporary signs is becoming more so, and there’s an even more disturbing increase in the number of mobile billboard trailers warning of the same. The road South from Malmsbury to Daylesford is a good example of this.

Obviously there is an economy of scale assumed and expected when one body is responsible for road maintenance, but Vicroads have clearly demonstrated over several years that this is just beyond them; they are inept and incompetent at many levels. The revelations this week that they cannot even instal wire rope barriers in accordance with their own rules is an example of this.

Rather than return to a piece-meal Council administered system, we need to separate Vicroads regulatory roles from their construction and maintenance roles; bring back the Country Roads Board in effect. A new CRB would then be able to focus on the job of road construction and maintenance, and should be funded accordingly. Vicroads as regulator only would then no longer be regulating itself, and there would actually be scope for some accountability for both organisations. As it is, it’s very hard to have any faith in Vicroads’ management.

As a motorcyclist I am punished for the incompetence of others and forced to pay the laughably mis-named “motorcycle safety levy”, which Vicroads has only mis-managed. Grossly under-spent, and what is spent is spent badly on ill-informed, poorly constructed propaganda that reflects an appalling lack of comprehension of what they are in fact trying to do. It is an insult. Vicroads inability to collect detailed statistics, and their preference for obfuscation and deception, still does not hide the reality that 84% (or similar) of rider and
car collisions are the fault of the driver. Rider’s claim on the third party insurance of the drivers, but Vicroads perspective is simply that as a minority, and as victims, it’s our own fault. If they were in any way genuine in their endeavours, the “motorcycle safety levy” would be applied on car registrations, and not onto motor cycles at all.

It is difficult not to be extremely cynical about the timing of this survey, too; released quietly in holiday season, with a very short closing date.

Please acknowledge receipt of this email.

Please provide me with feedback as to the results of this survey.

Yours sincerely,

John Ferguson

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File1:

File2:

File3: