Mr Murray Thompson MP  
Chair  
Parliament of Victoria Road Safety Committee  
Parliament House  
Spring Street  
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

Dear Mr Thompson

SUPPLEMENTARY VICROADS SUBMISSION TO THE INQUIRY INTO MOTORCYCLE SAFETY

I am pleased to provide the Parliamentary Road Safety Committee with a supplementary submission to the inquiry into motorcycle safety.

This submission outlines revisions to VicRoads’ proposed Motorcycle Graduated Licensing System model. These revisions have arisen as VicRoads has progressed its policy thinking since its original submission to the Committee last September.

I welcome the opportunity for VicRoads to appear before the Committee again and look forward to the inquiry’s findings to improve the safety of this most vulnerable road user group.

Yours sincerely

Gary Liddle  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
1/3/2012
VicRoads Supplementary Submission to the Parliamentary Road Safety Committee Inquiry into Motorcycle Safety

Motorcycle GLS

February 2012
2. Discussion

Currently in Victoria, novice motorcyclists enter the learner phase through the successful completion of a knowledge test and a riding skills test on a training range. If successful, the learner rider is permitted to ride solo on the road. The learner has a minimum of three months and a maximum of 15 months to successfully complete the intermediate licence test.

Through VicRoads’ consultation, it became clear that there is an absence of any structured learning protocols associated with the learner phase of motorcycle licensing. Effectively the learner rider self-manages how, when and how much riding experience they obtain before they attempt the intermediate licence test.

A fundamental shift to the learner phase in the proposed Motorcycle GLS sees an emphasis placed on the staged development of the learner rider’s skills during on road riding prior to them being eligible to obtain an intermediate licence. It is possible that the proposed Motorcycle GLS may actually expedite an individual’s progress through the learner phase due to the structured nature of the skills development model.

The proposed model provides a more robust licensing process for riders to graduate through the phases as they develop their riding skills.

The proposed Motorcycle GLS model is comprised of the following components:

Pre-learner training
- Mandate training and develop a new training curriculum.
- Introduce a supervised on-road component as a pre-requisite for solo riding.

Skills development
- Require learners to complete a staged experience development diary.

Assessments
- Introduce a new learner permit test based on the new training curriculum.
- Introduce an on road element to the test to obtain a motorcycle licence.

New restrictions
- Learner riders must ride with their headlight on and wear a high visibility vest/jacket.
- Intermediate riders must not tow anything, must not use a mobile phone, and must ride with their headlight on.
- The intermediate licence phase will be extended from 12 months to three years.
- Learner or intermediate riders who pass their test on an automatic motorcycle (e.g. scooter) will be restricted to an automatic motorcycle.

Attachment A shows the progression through these individual components.

Recommendation: That the Committee considers the benefits of implementing a new Motorcycle GLS as presented above.
1. Background

Motorcyclists are among the most vulnerable road users in Victoria. The current system for licensing motorcyclists has been in place for some time. Recent advancements in the novice car driver graduated licensing system (GLS) and the growing popularity of motorcycles have highlighted the need to update motorcycle licensing to reflect the road safety needs of today’s riders.

As the state’s licensing authority, VicRoads is responsible for the review of motorcycle licensing and identifying ways it can be improved. As part of this review, VicRoads conducted an analysis of crashes involving novice riders and an investigation of motorcycle licensing practices interstate and internationally.

In September 2010, VicRoads released a discussion paper to encourage comment from motorcyclists and the wider community about how the current motorcycle licensing system could be improved.

The 8-week public consultation phase aimed to capture community feedback on options to improve the motorcycle GLS in Victoria. Feedback received through the consultation response form in the discussion paper was structured around specific questions; whereas the information forums generated a wider range of views and ideas to change motorcycle licensing requirements to improve novice rider safety.

The key themes emerging from the community consultation included:

- Strong support for improvements and consistency in the current training delivered by third party accredited providers and the learner permit and licence test regimes.
- Strong support for ensuring that any individual who passes the test on a scooter may only ride a scooter (as opposed to a manual/geared motorcycle).
- Agreement for encouraging, rather than mandating, riders to wear full motorcycle protective clothing. However, the absence of an appropriate standard presents a challenge in mandating novice riders to wear full protective clothing.
- Concern that the costs associated with implementing an onerous supervised riding model would be prohibitive and may encourage some people to ride unlicensed.
- Concern that the lack of availability of an appropriate trainer/ supervisor/instructor, particularly in regional areas of Victoria would prevent many people from obtaining a licence.

Following a comprehensive review of all the feedback received during the public consultation, and after discussions with Victorian road safety partners, VicRoads has developed a Motorcycle GLS model for the Government’s consideration.
Motorcycle Graduated Licensing System model

Start

Learner permit training

Training completed

Yes

Knowledge test

No

Knowledge test passed?

Yes

Off road test

No

Off road test passed?

Yes

Rider assessment manual/log book

learner permit issued

On road ride (stage 1)

No

On road ride (stage 1) completed?

Yes

Restriction lifted (if applicable)

Attachment A

Minimum recommended stage 2 hours completed. Riding review and hours checked, manual updated. Stage 2 completed.

Minimum recommended stage 3 hours completed. Riding review and hours checked, manual updated. Stage 3 completed.

Minimum recommended stage 4 hours completed. Riding review and hours checked, manual updated. Stage 4 completed.

All stages completed?

Yes

Practical test, possibly with off road and on road components.

No

practical test passed?

Yes

Motorcycle licence issued.

Motorcycle licence.

Finish