

Friday, 6 July, 2007

## **NEW LICENSING REGULATIONS, FUNDING TO IMPROVE SAFETY FOR MOTORCYCLISTS**

Minister for Roads and Ports, Tim Pallas, today announced that the Government would introduce new regulations for Learner and Probationary motorcyclists in Victoria through the introduction of a new Learner Approved Motorcycle Scheme (LAMS).

Mr Pallas said motorcyclists would also benefit from \$2 million from the Motorcycle Safety Levy to target eight motorcycle blackspots and improve road safety.

Surrounded by bikes of all shapes and sizes, Mr Pallas said the new licensing scheme would encourage national uniformity and modernise the current regulations that restrict new and learner motorcyclist to an engine capacity of 260cc.

“Current regulations don’t reflect the performance abilities and safety mechanisms of today’s motorcycles and these changes will allow learner and probationary licence holders to ride motorcycles with a maximum power/weight ratio of 150kw/tonne and a maximum engine capacity of 660cc,” Mr Pallas said.

“This will allow new and learner riders to access a greater number of bikes that have safety features like ABS and combined braking systems.

“It also encourages riders to stay on the same bike for longer after their 260cc restriction period ends, as currently many new riders immediately opt for very high performance bikes after their restrictions end.”

Parliamentary Secretary for Transport, Martin Pakula, thanked the Victorian Motorcycle Advisory Council (VMAC) for its work on the new system.

“When these changes come in over the next 12 months they will bring our motorcycle regulations into line with South Australia, Tasmania and also New South Wales, where the system has been successfully introduced,” Mr Pakula said.

Rider advocate and interest groups have also strongly supported the move saying it will give learner and novice riders access to more appropriate motorcycles and restrict them from high risk, race replica 250cc motorcycles.

Victoria Police and the Transport Accident Commission will work closely with VicRoads to bring the new system into place along with an easily accessible database that will help Learners and P-Platers understand which bikes they can ride.

Mr Pallas said the eight road safety projects announced today, also funded through the Motorcycle Safety Levy, focused on lengths of road and intersections where motorcyclists are at higher risk of a crash.

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“The Bracks Government is working with the Victorian Motorcycle Advisory Council to invest funds raised through the Motorcycle Safety Levy in a wide range of initiatives to improve motorcycle safety,” Mr Pallas said.

“Since 2002 we have committed about \$11.6 million to improving riding conditions at locations where there have been a high number of motorcycle crashes.

“A preliminary evaluation of the first 51 sites treated under the Motorcycle Blackspot Program showed an approximate 38 per cent reduction in motorcycle casualty crashes at the treated blackspot sites.

“This is a significant reduction, but we know that more needs to be done to improve safety for all our road users.”

The eight new projects are located at:

- Moe-Rawson Road;
- Myrniong-Trentham Road;
- Grampians Road;
- Great Ocean Road – Apollo Bay to Lavers Hill;
- Great Ocean Road – Lavers Hill to Port Campbell;
- High Street, Ashburton;
- Healesville-Kinglake Road
- Hoddle Street – Eastern Freeway On Ramp.