

'Produced for Activists, Reps and Interested Parties'

The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily the views of the Motorcycle Action Group

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EDITORIAL

Things are dire!

Legislation from the EU, compulsory Day-Glo on the statue books in Eire, compulsory Day-Glo & a host of other things coming from the French Government. That includes you - if you travel to or through France – read a full account on the MAG UK website. And, bear this in mind, – 'if your bike is 7

years or older you won't be allowed into French Cities!!' Yep, I kid you not people.

Luckily, no-one does a Demonstration quite like the French - and 100,000 riders did something about it on June 18th demonstrating across France for their Right To Choose. Unlike those in their Government, it would appear

Riders hold dear the values of The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen of 1789 in which Liberty is defined in Article 4 as follows:

"Liberty consists of being able to do anything that does not harm others: thus, the exercise of the natural rights of every man or woman has no bounds other than those that guarantee other members of society the enjoyment of these same rights."

Sometimes I wear a pink urban glow vest for commuting or on the motorway, and, just like I have always worn a crash helmet that is entirely my choice. Being a person of average intelligence, I like to think I can decide for myself and don't need some 'do gooder' making that or any other decision for me.

I see yellow hi-viz everywhere on my commute – from cyclists to manual workers to school kids. It no longer stands out, everyone is cloned. How long before we all look exactly the same? And, when we do, will there be another load of Bureaucrats waiting in the wings to inflict something else on us without proof that it even works?

As if all this weren't proof of some sort of sick 'open season' on Riders, the DSA have now issued a statement on Compulsory Protective Clothing.

Potholes - The law tells highways authorities they have to provide a safe and efficient network for all types of road user. Highways Authorities are designated Councils. The 152 Councils designated as Highway Authorities have a statutory duty to maintain all local roads in their area. The remaining

2 per cent of the national network, comprising mainly motorways and trunk A roads (known as the Strategic Road Network) is the responsibility of the Highways Agency.

This makes road surfaces, potholes, non-slip manhole covers and whatever else might affect the grip of a vehicle onto the road surface very much a **local** issue.

ACTION POINT:- Now could not be a better time for MAG Groups/Regions/Members to use their clout and work with Councillors/MPs to improve their local road network which, in turn, improves the national road network making it safe for us wherever we ride. I very much hope that Reps will get this moving in their respective areas, with guidance from staff at MAG Central Office. This is something which affects us all and, tackled locally, through personal contact, results in a National Road Network fit for purpose.

And, don't forget the Government have put aside a £100m pound pot for the repair of potholes which Councils can claim from AND they have to be accountable. There really is no excuse why our roads continue to resemble those of an under-developed country.

Act now before another hard winter takes its toll on our roads.

Many thanks for my Certificate of Merit Award announced at AGC. I wasn't there to accept and it appeared through my post box mid June. I have to confess to knowing about it as 'the lovable TC' congratulated me before I did know about it. Thanks to Den and Trace for nominating me.

Apologies if this is late. Its not Nich's fault but mine. Due to illness I was out of action for a week

Ride safe and free, Aine

Don't forget – if you've got news/copy for Network then email me at:- AnneGaleMAG@aol.com

Acknowledgments:- George Legg. Nich Brown. Rowan Publications. Paddy Tyson. Sean Buckley.

FROM NICH AND PADDY AT MAG CENTRAL OFFICE:-

Compulsory dayglo clothing for riders is getting a lot of press lately and rightly so.

Demonstrations in France and the banning of bikes older than 7 years from cities and a host of other anti-bike legislation.

However, Ireland, which at least feels closer to home than France, is also pressing ahead with 'Full Sleeve' dayglo.

The Irish Government "... proposes the introduction of regulations for the mandatory wearing of high visibility upper body clothing with full sleeves for rider and pillion passenger". Quote taken from Section 4.4.5 of the Irish Road Safety Authority's NATIONAL MOTORCYCLE SAFETY ACTION PLAN 2010 – 2014

http://www.rsa.ie/Documents/Road%20Safety/Motorcycles/National_Motorcycle_Action_Plan.pdf

Please remember that there still is no research on which to base this decision, but more importantly it is another case of putting the onus of responsibility on the victim and undermining any element of freedom of choice for the rider.

IF it was a justifiable safety issue, then surely the bikes most frequently involved in accidents (under 125s in an urban environment) would be the ones to concentrate on, but bizarrely the French plan is to exempt these!

MAG has already had the Leeds Demo (in May) and the Brum demo is on July 2nd. We need to be vocal. I feel this'll be a summer of MAG activity...

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Say-No-to-Day-Glo/206289546073856>

AND

The French are facing a raft of new domestic legislation; compulsory day-glo, immediate jail terms for those breaking the speed limit by 30mph, the removal of radar warning signs, bigger number plates for bikes so that owners can be identified, confiscation of any gadget that has the ability to map the location of speed cameras (i-phones, gps), removing the right to filter through traffic...

The list is long, but not surprisingly the French riders aren't taking it lying down and rather than Grumble down le pub, they'll be out on the streets.

Remember, Ireland has now decided that full sleeve dayglo is a good idea too and the EU anti-tampering regulation, compulsory ABS et al, is still ongoing, so I hope that as many of you as possible will be in Birmingham to demonstrate on the 2nd July.

Liberty, equality, fraternity, demos and wine: There's a whole lot of stuff the French do well (but maybe they could work on those squat toilets...)

AND

A new THINK! campaign to help cut the number of motorcyclists killed and injured on Britain's roads was launched today by Road Safety Minister Mike Penning

Despite accounting for only 1% of traffic, motorcyclists make up around 19% of casualties on Britain's roads with many of these collisions happening at junctions and involving another vehicle. This campaign will put motorcyclists centre stage in a bid to encourage drivers to look out for bikers by placing the focus on the person behind the helmet.

Mike Penning said [PART...]:

"While many drivers may take extra care at junctions, they often don't see bikers and this is a major factor in motorcycle casualties. That is why our THINK! campaign aims to remind drivers to think about the biker, not just the bike, so that we see fewer of these needless accidents."

In 2009, 78% of motorcyclists killed and seriously injured were in collisions involving another vehicle and 67% of these collisions occurred at junctions, often with the driver of the other vehicle failing to see the motorcycle.

The THINK! campaign will include national radio adverts which will run from Monday 20th June which will be supported by drive time radio sponsorship and nationwide petrol forecourt advertising. There will also be Facebook activity aimed at motorcyclists and online adverts reminding drivers to look out for bikers.

The figures are startling and although improved training for riders is important, it is clear where the focus of attention should be if the government is serious about cutting casualties.

MAG applauds the new Think! campaign but reiterates that the onus of responsibility should not be placed on the victim, but rather the perpetrator and awareness of all road users should be central to driver training.

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AND..... [is this 'compulsion' through the back door? Ed]:-

DSA is reminding learner motorcyclists to wear suitable clothing when they take their module one and two motorcycle tests.

While most motorcycle trainers encourage their pupils to wear the best protective motorcycle gear that they can afford, some candidates aren't following this advice.

DSA doesn't want to restrict candidates to wearing the most expensive protective motorcycle clothing. However, DSA's examiners won't ignore or condone riding a motorcycle or scooter while wearing unsuitable clothing.

Tests won't go ahead if you are inappropriately dressed

From 1 July, examiners might tell you that your test won't go ahead if you arrive inappropriately dressed. However, where possible, examiners will give you the chance to find suitable clothing within the time available.

DSA won't pay out-of-pocket expenses if your test is cancelled because of inappropriate clothing.

Guide to suitable clothing

As a general guide the following is an indication of the minimum level of clothing acceptable:

- motorcycle boots
- sturdy footwear or boots that provide support and ankle protection
- textile or leather motorcycle trousers
- heavy denim trousers
- heavy denim jacket with several layers underneath
- textile or leather motorcycle jacket
- motorcycle gloves

The following are examples of clothing that are not acceptable:

- lightweight training shoes
- canvas basket ball trainers
- any form of clothing with areas of exposed skin
- shell suit or lightweight tracksuit
- distressed ripped jeans
- lightweight fleece or hoody
- no gloves or skiing gloves

In all cases it's a legal requirement that riders wear an approved and correctly fastened motorcycle helmet,* with suitable eye protection (*an exception is made for members of the Sikh religion wearing a turban).

Cases of inappropriate clothing

Recently there have been cases where candidates have arrived unsuitably dressed for the practical test. This has included wearing lightweight nylon shell suits, lightweight canvas training shoes, or wearing no gloves.

One of these cases resulted in the test not going ahead.

More advice and guidance

Clothing is one of the subjects covered in element A of compulsory basic training (CBT).

Go to at www.iam.org.uk/cameras to find out more about

FROM THE HOUSE

Northern Ireland – North West 200 questions/debate

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure if she would consider requesting, from the Department for Regional Development, additional road closure hours for the North West 200 if asked to do so by the organisers.

Mr Hilditch asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what plans she has to help further develop the North West 200 as a premier international event.

Ms Ní Chuilín: With your permission, before answering, I put on record - I am sure that the entire Assembly will join me - my sincere condolences to the family and friends of the three racers who died in the past week in incidents at the TT races in the Isle of Man. Sidecar racer Bill Currie and his passenger Kevin Morgan, both from England, were killed during last Tuesday's practice session, and our own Derek Brien, from Bellewstown, County Meath, was killed yesterday during the Supersport race. I would only consider supporting an application to the Department for Regional Development for additional road closure hours for any motorcycle road race once I was satisfied that ongoing public concerns about safety standards in the sport generally had been fully and satisfactorily addressed. I would also wish to be assured that an increase in hours would be acceptable to all relevant sporting interests and would contribute to the delivery of my targets for sport as set out in my sports strategy, Sport Matters.

Mr G Robinson: As the North West 200 is such a major economic and tourist event in Northern Ireland, will the Minister give an assurance that she will assist the organisers in every way possible to expand the event at every opportunity?

Ms Ní Chuilín: In short, I will, to develop tourism potential, notwithstanding the concerns that I have already raised. There are safety concerns, and we need to get a balance between addressing them and making sure that we tap into the economic and tourism potential of the North West 200.

Mr Hilditch: Will the Minister tell us, in light of the various problems that were suffered this year, what additional resources have been identified in her Department to assist the organisers for next year?

Ms Ní Chuilín: I am undertaking an exercise in the Department to see whether there are additional resources for many projects across my portfolio. At the minute, I cannot confirm what, if any, additional resources are available, but, once I have received that information, I will take on board and answer the Member's question.

Mr G Kelly: I, too, welcome the Member for North Belfast to her first Question Time. How much funding has been given to motorsport over the past two years?

Ms Ní Chuilín: In 2009, my Department earmarked up to £2 million to help motorsport to improve health and safety at venues here. An approved business case for the funding was developed by Sport NI together with the umbrella group for motorsport, the 2&4 Wheel Motor Sport Steering Group. As a result, more than £1 million was allocated to improvement works and dedicated circuits in Kirkistown, Nutt's Corner and Bishopscourt. A further £219,000 was made available for the purchase of road safety equipment, and an additional £155,000 has been spent on urgent safety work at the North West 200 and Cookstown 100 circuits. Another 33 projects and 25 motorsport clubs have also received assistance.

Department for Transport:

Motorists are warned to insure their vehicles to tackle the menace of uninsured driving. Under the new Continuous Insurance Enforcement law – which affects all motorists from June 20 – it is an offence to keep an uninsured vehicle, rather than just to drive when uninsured.

A national advertising campaign will be launched by the Motor Insurers' Bureau today to raise awareness of the law.

Road Safety Minister Mike Penning said: "Uninsured drivers are a danger on our roads, killing 160 and injuring a further 23,000 people each year, and they cost honest motorists £500 million in extra premiums. That is why we are introducing this tough new law which will leave uninsured drivers with nowhere to hide. Our message is clear – get insured or face a fine, court action or seeing your car seized and destroyed."

In order to make sure everyone is aware of the new scheme, a national awareness campaign will be shown on satellite and terrestrial TV channels. Around four percent of vehicles have no motor insurance at any given time, so that is why this new enforcement approach is so important.

Under the new system:

- The DVLA will work in partnership with the Motor Insurers' Bureau to identify uninsured vehicles.
- Motorists will receive a letter telling them that their vehicle appears to be uninsured and warning them that they will be fined unless they take action.
- If the keeper fails to insure the vehicle they will be given a £100 fine.
- If the vehicle remains uninsured – regardless of whether the fine is paid – further action will be taken. If the vehicle is on public land it could then be clamped, seized and destroyed. Alternatively court action could be taken, with the offender facing a fine of up to £1,000.
- Seized vehicles would only be released when the keeper provided evidence that the registered keeper is no longer committing an offence of having no insurance and the person proposing to drive the vehicle away is insured to do so.
- Vehicles with a valid Statutory Off Road Notice (SORN) will not be required to be insured.

The new law will run alongside the existing offence of using a vehicle with no insurance, which is enforced by the police. The police seize 180,000 vehicles each year for this offence, and offenders also face a £200 fixed penalty or a court fine of up to £5,000 and possible disqualification.

The DVLA's records will be compared regularly with the Motor Insurance Database (MID) and this process will identify registered keepers of vehicles that appear to have no insurance. All drivers can check their vehicle is recorded on the MID for free – visit www.askMID.com.

VisorDown

Worst potholed roads in Britain named

A campaign to expose the UK's deteriorating road system has revealed the worst roads as voted by the public.

The two roads that 'won' top awards were the B6343, near Morpeth, Northumberland for major road category, and Fieldhead Lane, close to Holme, West Yorkshire which won minor road category.

Even though the Government has pumped £100m into an emergency road maintenance fund, over 90 per cent of the nominations to the website were for local A and B roads.

The UK's Top 5 most potholed roads:

B6343, near Morpeth, Northumberland – Major road category winner

Fieldhead Lane, close to Holme, West Yorkshire – Minor road category winner

Long Mill Lane, Plaxtol, Kent. Yattendon Road, Basildon, West Berkshire.

Fyfield Road, Amport, Hampshire.

- **Action – potholes are a local issue so why not get liaising with your Council and get something done about it. See my Editorial.**

Which brings us nicely onto:-

England's roads under pressure from traffic, weather, spiralling costs and

budget cuts

England's 236,000 miles of local roads – used by 30 million drivers every day – are under attack from increasing traffic, severe winters, higher repair costs, and dwindling highways funding.

The challenges faced by the country's 152 council highways authorities are the subject of a new Audit Commission [report 'Going the Distance: Achieving better value for money in road maintenance'](http://www.auditcommission.gov.uk/sitecollectiondocuments/downloads/EMBARGOroadmaintenance.pdf) (<http://www.auditcommission.gov.uk/sitecollectiondocuments/downloads/EMBARGOroadmaintenance.pdf>)

Extract only:- In cash terms, its road network is a council's single most valuable asset. Yet councils struggle to apply asset management principles to roads. They cannot be sold, they don't generate income, indeed they consume large resources. Hardly surprising that some councils see roads as liabilities rather than assets.

But the report urges councils to consider asset management plans, such as Cornwall's Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP), which for an investment of £80,000 is driving consistent levels of service and road condition across the whole county. Such plans also indicate when best to intervene with works to extend the whole life of a road, typically a maximum of only 20 years.

The study team found that collaboration pays real dividends. The Midlands Highway Alliance estimates it has delivered £5.1 million savings for councils and £7.8 million for the Highways Agency in its first three years, and it is looking to a further £14 million of savings between 2010 and 2014. Ten authorities in the East of England have also formed an alliance to save £6m over five years, with £3.3 million from shared back office costs alone.

Road Safety GB: Department for Transport announces motorcycle test shake-up

The DfT is undertaking a major overhaul of the motorcycle test to weed out poorly-prepared candidates before they take the high-speed parts of the test (Telegraph).

The overhaul follows criticism of the previous government's launch of the new 'super test centres', and calls for the 'hazard avoidance manoeuvre' or 'swerve test' to be scrapped, following a spate of accidents during the procedure.

The off-road section of the test has also been overhauled, with further changes to the on-road section expected. Candidates taking the off-road test will now be tested on slow-speed manoeuvres first (such as the observed 'circuit ride'), to prove to examiners that they have necessary competence in motorcycle control.

Only if they succeed will they be allowed to move onto the high-speed sections (including the swerve test).

They will also be given more time to familiarise themselves with the test-track layout. The emergency stop manoeuvre will also now take place before the swerve or avoidance exercise. Candidates who fail the emergency stop will not be permitted to carry out the avoidance exercise if it is considered unsafe for them to do so. The DfT said this should "significantly reduce the likelihood of an incident for candidates who are poorly prepared".

For the high speed manoeuvres, candidates will now be allowed a 5% tolerance of the speed they travel at. Announcing the measures, Mike Penning, road safety minister, said: "As road safety minister – and as a motorcyclist – I know how important it is that our motorcycle test prepares new riders for real life on the road. That is why I decided to carry out a full review of the motorcycle test. The first changes from the review are being implemented from today (25/5/11) when we will be applying common-sense measures which will see the off-road section of test made safer, fairer and more realistic."

Click here to read the full Telegraph report: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/motoring/roadsafety/8518849/Major-overhaul-for-motorcycle-test.html>

Labour Party says – Tory-led government’s “red tape challenge” for roads puts lives at risk

The Department for Transport has published a list of over 400 road transport regulations on the government’s ‘Red Tape Challenge’ website, described as being “aimed at reducing bureaucracy”. The consultation runs for four weeks. The government has pledged to scrap as many regulations as possible as a result of the challenge.

Maria Eagle MP, Labour’s Shadow Transport Secretary, said in response to the launch of the Tory-led Government’s ‘Red Tape Challenge’ on road transport regulations:

“The Tory-led Government is wrong to consider scrapping vital regulations that improve safety on Britain’s roads. It is madness to describe speed limits, maximum hours for driving HGVs and compulsory motorbike helmets as red tape. It’s increasingly clear that the Transport Secretary has a reckless attitude to road safety. Not only does he see vital road safety rules as red tape but he has axed road safety funding and abandoned targets that were reducing deaths and injuries on Britain’s roads. This comes on top of the cuts to frontline police officers needed to tackle traffic offences.

“Thanks to the measures Labour took in government, the number of people killed and seriously injured on our roads fell by 17,000 in the past decade. It’s unacceptable to now put the lives of motorists, cyclists and pedestrians at risk by ideologically slashing vital safety regulations.”

Ducati UK Launch Ducati Rider Training at 13 Centres across the Country

In May Ducati announced a new rider training scheme that will give people a chance to learn to ride on a Ducati.

The ‘Ducati Rider Training’ scheme will see 13 locations across the country with each of these locations consisting of a dealer and training facility partnership.

Each training facility has been carefully chosen for their ability to provide high training standards expected from a Ducati supported scheme. All training facilities will be linked to a franchised Ducati dealership to enable Ducati dealers the ability to offer a full service from training to purchase.

Initially the training will take place at one of authorised training facilities on 125cc motorcycles before moving onto the training school’s bigger bikes and then relocating to the Ducati dealership where the training company will progress the rider on to the Ducati Monster 696. All training will be tailor made to an individual’s ability and previous experience and the pricing of each course will reflect this.

For further details of Ducati Rider Training and contact details of participating training facilities and dealerships visit www.ducatiuk.com

AROUND THE COUNTRY

SUSSEX

Sussex Safer Roads Partnership (SSRP) has launched the follow up to its hugely successful ‘Embrace Life’ film, which this time focuses on motorcycling and motorcyclists.

SSRP has worked with writer/director Daniel Cox and Alexander Commercials to create ‘Stay a Hero, Stay Safe’, which portrays bikers as inspirational role models and shows a young boy creating his own motorcycle experience.

The film follows the award-winning ‘Embrace Life’ commercial which scooped multiple accolades including YouTube ad of the year 2010 and a Prince Michael Road Safety Award.

<http://www.sussexsaferroads.gov.uk/safer-for-motorcyclists/stay-a-hero-stay-safe.html>

to view the film or for more information contact Neil Hopkins, Sussex Safer Roads Partnership, on 01273 467425.

Motorbikes Banned From Ealing Bus Lanes -Two year trial has not increased safety benefits

The signs are in place throughout the borough announcing motorbikes will be banned from using bus lanes from the 27th June.

Ealing Council was taking part in an experiment - which began in 2009 - allowing bikers access to parts of the road usually reserved for buses.

It was originally thought this would help increase safety benefits to motorcyclists by around 40%.

However, according to the Council, evidence suggests that there have been significantly more motorcyclist casualties, mainly caused by cars turning across bus lanes into side junctions.

The council considered data from the London wide experiment on Transport for London roads and data from motorcycle crashes on Ealing roads.

The increased casualties in Ealing were similar to those on the TfL roads.

Cycling groups have lobbied against motorcycle access to bus lanes - in both trials cyclist casualties were higher than expected.

Motorcyclenews.com quoted the report into the trial which said:

"Whilst there were no direct collisions between a motorcycle and a pedal cycle, it is suggested that there must be a causal link given that the only change between the data-sets was the motorcycle experiment." It adds: "The most likely reason for the increase [in cycle collisions] is that cyclists are riding closer to the kerb (because of motorcycles passing fast and close), making them less visible to other road users."

Motorcyclists believe they are being unfairly blamed for other people's crashes.

Hampshire County Council is urging car drivers to 'think bike' and 'think biker' as we approach the summer months when motorcycle casualties tend to peak.

In 2010 there were 508 collisions on Hampshire's roads involving motorcyclists; 13 were fatal, and 164 were serious, and so far this year two more lives have been lost.

With the aim of reducing these casualties, the council is running a county-wide bus back campaign.

Doudecker buses will carry a picture of a motorcyclist on the rear, with the message 'See me now? Take longer to look for bikes.' Single-decker buses will promote the 'THINK bike!' message by displaying a vehicle's wing mirrors with a biker and cyclist in each of them.

Marc Samways, traffic management and road safety manager, said: "Despite only 1% of traffic on the nation's roads being motorcycles, they account for 21% of road deaths. Many riders are injured at junctions when vehicles pull out, others crash as a result of entering a bend too fast.

"Our message to drivers is, 'think bike' and always take longer to look for motorcyclists especially at junctions and, when overtaking, give a second glance to really check it's safe to manoeuvre as they could be hidden in your blind spot. Riders can help too by riding defensively, concentrating and anticipating the errors of other road users." For more information contact Charlotte Tilling on 01962 832204.

CRASH card launched in Gloucestershire

A card, containing vital personal information, which could prove invaluable if a motorcyclist is involved in a collision, has been launched in Gloucestershire.

The CRASH card is the size of a credit card and fits inside a rider's helmet. It provides personal details to help ambulance crews, saving valuable time and helping treatment, especially if a rider is unconscious or unable to communicate.

A self-adhesive green dot stuck to the helmet alerts paramedics to look out for the card.

Chris Harrison, Gloucestershire road safety partnership's motorcycle coordinator, said: "The CRASH card is designed to save precious time in the minutes following a serious collision and improve medical care received at the roadside.

"All bikers are encouraged to carry the card, which also gives helpful advice if a rider comes across a road traffic collision so that they can relay important information when dialling 999."

<http://roadsafety-gloucestershire.org.uk/crash-card-could-save-your-life>

Peak and District MAG (PaD MAG). [Small Group makes a big difference – good on ya, Ed]

On the 1st May Andy Addlinton from the Derby and Derbyshire Road Safety Partnership (DDRSP) asked us if we would like to come down to their stall they have there, so we can put MAGs point of view on things. It was a very good day with lots of people coming over to the stall and we got 8 pages of the Get a Grip campaign protection signed, with lots of people taking a interest in the Gat a Grip.

The other good news is that the DCC are now going through a tendering exercise to renew the contract to supply such things as inspection covers. For the first time this will include high friction covers, so they will be available to use.

Also we now have an agreement that road inspections on 'bike routes' will consider the different needs of motorbikes in particular for polished ironwork and debris in the road. I hope to be having a meeting with them so they know what bikes have problems with and to get them to do the same on all roads, but it's a start.

I've been in touch with Stepping Hill Hospital in Stockport about parking, this came about because I had to take the better half there and could not see any bike parking (copy of email sent to Paddy) I asked them about bike parking, they responded saying they will not charge for motorbikes to park in the car parks and are looking at putting in some Motorbike parking, I must say this was the easiest thing I just asked.

I'm still in talks with Lafarge Cement about Diesel spill stickers and hopefully getting somewhere.

I have got a small petrol station to put up the Diesel spill stickers on his pups (Hope Garage, Hope, Hope Valley, Derbyshire).

We are only a small group approx 5 to 6 regular members but it goes to show how a small group can still get things moving.

Ride safe, Sean Buckley Local Rep.

FEMA

Don't forget motorcyclists in the ITS discussion

Awareness across the field of ITS is slowly rising, however, with more publications addressing the needs of powered two-wheelers. Two-wheeler safety in the 21st Century receives the attention of the press this month, with Vision Zero International looking at how motorcycles can benefit from advances in driver assistance technology - or not.

In one of its latest publications (1) the European Commission acknowledges that "Indeed, though there is increasing interest in defining and reporting ITS impacts and benefits, the vulnerable road users - the very people who need the most support - [vulnerable road users include motorcyclists] seem to have been left out." Now, the article of Vision Zero features the hot stuff of leading manufacturers being fitted on testbed bikes, as well as the views of vehicle researchers and motorcyclists' associations. Vision Zero International is the only specialist magazine dedicated to the coverage of intelligent safety technologies, their development, and their implementation in the next generations of vehicles.

While the magazine is committed to the ethos of the vision zero principle - reducing road injuries to zero – it offers an outlook at the most promising solutions. Most members of the motorcycle community agree that motorcycling, like all human activities, can never be made risk-free; but new technologies could offer some affordable and reliable safety features, in new areas like assistance system and visibility enhancement, but also in making existing technology better, from durable and comfortable helmets to airbag jackets.

This renewed interest for motorcyclists from the intelligent transport community is a striking rebuttal to those who claimed that motorcycles had no place in the "vision zero" scenario. Let us hope that it is the first step towards a more open future, one that lets all users share the road and respects their freedom of movement and their safety.

Riders give a hand in shaping the landscape

Meanwhile, lawmakers lay the bricks of what they hope will be the foundation of Europe's intelligent transport. The approval of an Action Plan on intelligent transport last year by the European institutions last year sealed an agreement between the Member States, the Parliament and the Commission on a way forward, with a list of measures to be investigated and implemented in the coming years.

At the moment there is little interest from the media for what is at best one in a series of legislative texts that would only start having visible consequences at the end of the decade, if not later. And with technology evolving rapidly, there is a very real risk that carefully laid plans could be made obsolete even before it is implemented!

Nevertheless, as pledged in its road map for the next decades, the European executive is investigating the potential of intelligent transport systems for vulnerable road users. These include pedestrians, cyclists, and of course, motorcyclists. And because European law mandates an impact assessment prior to all new legislation, research is conducted to determine exactly what kind of technology, and which policies, can best help with the safety of riders.

At the demand of the Commission, FEMA took an active part in the first impact assessment on vulnerable users' and intelligent transport systems, providing the point of view and the experience of everyday users.

In touch with public research authorities, users and the industry, FEMA's unique outlook makes it a reference point in field where there is a lot of guesswork, new and barely tested technology, and not much thinking about the kind of changes to be expected in the way people drive and ride. The motorcyclists' federation made a point of recommending the use of technology as a solution to real-life problems - training, behaviour, infrastructure - and not as an end in itself.

And because powered two-wheelers are found on every road in every corner of Europe, it insisted that the report should not only focus on systems for motorcycles, but also on other vehicles and around infrastructure. And last, that, investigations should also cover the changes in driver behaviour and habits, distraction and confusion caused by invasive displays and screens, and conflicts between new systems that are not designed to work together.

While not all answers to these questions are available today, riders insist that they receive the attention they require today, in order to ensure that the so-called advent of "intelligent transport" benefits everyone and harms no one. The recommendations of the study, also involving experts from other organisations, will be a valuable input to the European Commission's Action Plan, hopefully finding their way into the European laws of tomorrow.

(1): EC DG for Mobility and Transport (2011) Intelligent Transport Systems in action. Action Plan and Legal Framework for the Deployment of Intelligent Transport Systems. pp. 20

CEN misses historic opportunity to save European motorcyclists' lives by turning ready-to-be-voted guardrail standard into mere technical paper

On Thursday, June 16, CEN's technical committee on road equipment (TC226) held its annual meeting in Stockholm. The draft standard for motorcyclists protection systems which was ready for vote, was turned into a mere Technical Specification by the United Kingdom, Germany, Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Finland, Sweden, and Ireland. FEMA expressed great disappointment and thanks those who have worked hard in preparing what could have become a milestone in the history of motorcycle safety.

The Federation of European Motorcyclists' Associations (FEMA) is sad to announce that its efforts to get adopted the draft standard for motorcycle-friendly guardrails have not been successful. Despite the commitment of several CEN delegates and technical experts throughout the preparation process, the draft proposal for an EN1317-8 was not put for formal vote. Worse: despite the adopted resolution 319 calling for a European Standard, TC226 committee turned the proposal into a Technical Specification, to the extreme satisfaction of some stakeholders, who feared that such a standard could have completely changed the parameters of the European road restraint system market.

EN1317-8 proposal was based on the Spanish standard, which has proven efficiency records: neither fatal nor seriously injured accidents ever since the installation of approved protective guardrails. Out of the 14 represented Member States, 6 only voted in favour of the proposal: France, Belgium, Norway, Italy, Portugal, and Spain, of course.

FEMA's General Secretary, Aline Delhaye, who has actively participated in the preparation of the draft since 2008, says: "I can only acknowledge CEN/TC226 decision with great regret. I believe CEN members missed an historical opportunity to make the history of motorcycle safety. What will be done with this

Technical Specification is a mystery to me. I have my doubts about the legitimacy of the arguments put forward by those who voted 'no' to a European Standard. But there we are."

Though very disappointed, FEMA members will of course keep on working at improving statistics, supporting research projects improving protection systems and testing requirements, drawing awareness, and calling for the European standard on road restraint systems (EN1317) to take motorcyclists into account by integrating the technical specification as part 8 of EN1317.

Events

Including Big Ones Up North!

Friday, July 1 - Sunday, July 3, 2011 - Heart of England Rally

Organiser: West Midlands MAG

Annual Rally with live music and all normal facilities to include the Brum Demo on the Saturday

Location: Kings Norton R.F.C. Hopwood Park, Ash Lane, B48 7BB off the A441.

Web: <http://west-midlands-region.mag-uk.org>

Friday, July 1 - Sunday, July 3, 2011 - Chinnor Bike Dayz XV

Organiser: Wycombe MAG

Best Little Bike Rally Ever. 12 bands (with John Otway). Free bike show and ride-in, stalls, food, beer, camping. Families welcome. Funds to MAG UK and the Air Ambulance Trust

Location: Little Horsenden Farm. Lower Icknield Way. Princes Risborough. Aylesbury. Bucks. HP27

Web: <http://www.wycombemag.co.uk>

Friday, July 1 - Sunday, July 3, 2011 - Barnstormer Rally

Organiser: Estonians MCC

Estonians MCC 3rd Barnstormer Rally, Seamer Grange Farm, Nr Stokesley, North Yorks. Live Bands, Disco, Late Bar both nights; Games; Bike Show.

Location: Seamer, nr Stokesley, N Yorks

Web: <http://www.estoniansmcc.com/>

Saturday, July 2, 2011 - 2nd Midsummer Mayhem Party Night

Organiser: Wakefield MAG

Wakefield MAG's 2nd Midsummer Mayhem Party Night. All the usual MAG party night attractions including live music from local band (and MAG members) Justice Rising, Silly Games, Raffle, Fancy Dress (optional, but prize for the best outfit) and lots more

Location: Duke of Wellington, 220 Horbury Road, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, WF2 8RE. 7pm till Late

Web: <http://wakefield.mag-uk.org>

Saturday, July 2, 2011 - Brum Demo - against European interference in biking

Organiser: West Midlands MAG on behalf of MAG(UK)

Ride to protest against European proposals for compulsory Day-Glo, compulsory ABS and anti-modification of motorcycles - Let Your Voice Be Heard! Make a weekend of it at the Heart of England Bike Rally.

Location: Gather at Noon for 1pm start - 'Hare & Hounds', Lickey Road, Rednal B45 8UU

Web: <http://www.mag-uk.org>

Wednesday, July 6, 2011 - RADMAG 2nd Annual Bikes & Burgers BBQ

Organiser: Rushden & District MAG

The perfect destination for a Summer evening's ride. Raffle, good food, great selection of drinks. Ample parking at the rear of the pub. Access via Midland Rd (turning opposite library).

Location: The Green Dragon Hotel College Street Higham Ferrers NN10 8DZ
Web: <http://rushden.mag-uk.org>

Wednesday, July 6, 2011 - Annual Open Evening

Organiser: Leominster Classic Motorcycle Club
Details as poster <http://www.leominsterclassicmcc.co.uk/page19.html>
Location: The Bush Inn, Canon Pyon, 8 Miles North of Hereford on the A4110
Web: <http://www.leominsterclassicmcc.co.uk/page19.html>

Friday, July 8 - Sunday, July 10, 2011 - 7th Cock Out Rally.

Organiser: Unwanted MCC
2 bars open all weekend 'til late. 4 bands over the weekend, Rock Disco, Silly games, Let us Entertain you, 'Karaoke Idol' Sat afternoon. Tinny bar, trade stalls, food van, tattooist, 24hr proper loos. Disabled-friendly.
Location: The Rockbar, Shobnall Sports & Social Club, Shobnall Rd, Burton on Trent, Staffs DE14 2BB.
Web: <http://www.unwantedmcc.co.uk>

Sunday, July 10, 2011 - Yorkshire Warriors Sponsored Rideout

Organiser: Wakefield MAG
Sponsored Rideout to York Racecourse in aid of The Yorkshire Regiment Charitable Trust (1114624).
Sponsor us on-line at: www.justgiving.com/Sponsored-Rideout-2011 (whip-round on the day for riders without sponsorship). Numerous displays and attractions at the racecourse, Yorkshire MAG stand and, of course, the heroes of the Yorkshire Regiment.
Location: Meeting at 09:30am (leaving at 10:00am) at the Grey Horse, Kirkgate, Wakefield, WF1 4EJ.
Pickup also at Squires Cafe Bar, Sherburn-in-Elmet, LS25 5LX at 11:00am, en-route to York.
Web: <http://wakefield.mag-uk.org>

Sunday, July 10, 2011 - Bikes Bands & Booty

Organiser: Brighton MAG
Sunday 10th July, 11am - 9pm. Ride in Bike Show (£2 per entry). Dealer stands, Trade stands, Licensed Bar, Live Bands, Tattooist, Food, Raffle. FREE ENTRY - All types of bikes & scooters welcome!
Location: The Royal Coach, Brighton Road, Shoreham, BN43 5LD. (A259 Coast Road)
Enquiries: Chris Cordell - 07780 704357
Web: <http://brighton.mag-uk.org>
Email: chris.cordell@mag-uk.org

Friday, July 15 - Sunday, July 17, 2011 - Big Willie's Over The Border Bash

Organiser: Dorset MAG
Dorset MAG's summer party. Live Music, Bike Show, Ride Out, Camping, Good Food available (incl. breakfast) and much more! Collection for Air Ambulance, all other proceeds go to MAG.
Ticket: £8.50 per bike/tent. Camping available from 3pm, 15th July.
Location: Virginia Ash, Henstridge, Sherbourne Road, Templecombe, Somerset, BA8 0PL.
Enquiries: 07837 585970

Sunday, July 17, 2011 - Wakefield MAG Treasure Hunt

Organiser: Wakefield MAG
The Thinking Riders Rideout. Multiple clues, Multiple answers, Multiple destinations, Multiple opportunities to get totally lost. 1st, 2nd & 3rd place prizes for the most correct answers, plus booby prize for coming last.
Location: Meet 9:30am (to get clues/instructions) at the Grey Horse, Kirkgate, Wakefield, WF1 4EJ
Web: <http://wakefield.mag-uk.org>

Sunday, July 17, 2011 - North East MAG Region Annual General Meeting

Organiser: North East Regional Motorcycle Action Group
AGM From 1pm Sunday 17 July 2011. PLEASE BRING YOUR MEMBERSHIP CARD - NO CARD NO VOTE. For more details contact the Regional Rep. Disco Friday Night Bands on Saturday Night.
Free Camping from Friday 15th July PLEASE PRE-BOOK CAMPING (100 LIMIT).
Location: The Moorcock Inn, Hilltop Eggleston, Middleton-in-Teesdale, Co. Durham. DL12 0AU

Saturday, July 23, 2011 - Aberystwyth Bike Show & Party 2011

Organiser: MAG Aberystwyth

The fabulous Boogelators will play their brilliant music into the wee small hours - put it in your diary NOW..!

Ticket: £5.00pp (Family ticket for 2 adults & 2 u16 = £10.00. Cheque payable to 'MAG Aberystwyth' and

SAE to Bwlch Gwyn, Ystymtuen, Ponterwyd, Aberystwyth, SY23 3AE. Payment by Paypal to:

bwlch.gwyn@btinternet.com FREE camping on Friday and Saturday night.

Location: Aberystwyth Rugby Club Plascrug, Aberystwyth, Dyfed, SY23 1HL.

Web: <http://www.magaberystwyth.co.uk>

Email: bwlch.gwyn@btinternet.com

Friday, July 29 - Sunday, July 31, 2011 - 25th Classic & Custom Motorcycle Show

Organiser: Triumph Owners MCC (Berkshire Branch)

Special 25th Anniversary event. Old Manor Cafe ride-in, static exhibition. Special guest Chester Dowling

signing copies of his new book. Auto Jumble, Club stands, trade stalls and raffle. Two live Rock n' Roll

bands, real ales & BBQ.. Bar & food Friday & Saturday, cooked breakfast available Saturday & Sunday.

Ticket: Show Entry: £3.00 per person - Camping on site available from 3pm on Friday: £5.00 per tent.

Location: Reading Abbey Rugby Club, Peppard Road, Emmer Green, Reading, RG4 8XB.

Enquiries: Mick : 0118 978 8113

Email: bob@berkstomcc@btinternet.com

Friday, August 5 - Sunday, August 7, 2011 - Burning Budgie Rally

Organiser: West London Harley Riders

Rally & Bike Show. Stalls, Food, Bands, Ride-out, Showers, Camping. Not just Harleys, all welcome

Location: Chiltern Sports & Social Club, Maple Lodge Close, Maple Cross, Herts WD3 2SQ

Web: <http://www.wlhr.org>

Yorkshire Pudding Rally

Hesley Wood Scout Camp, Chapeltown, Nr Sheffield, South Yorks.

5-7 August 2011

Strictly pre-book only:- www.yorkshirepuddingrally.co.uk. Tel: 0800 988 3199. Cheques payable 'Yorkshire Pudding Rally', PO Box 750, Warwick, C34 9FU.

No cars. No vans. No pedestrians. No excuses.

Thursday, August 11, 2011 - South Devon MAG Annual General Meeting

Organiser: South Devon MAG

South Devon's first AGM.8pm start. Please bring your membership cards. There will be nibbles afterwards!

Location: The Welcome Stranger pub, Liverton (old A38 near Newton Abbot)TQ12 6JA

Friday, August 12 - Sunday, August 14, 2011 - End of the Road Rally

Organiser: MAG Cornwall

Traditional green field Rally in historic countryside at the most southerly point of mainland UK. Trade Stalls, Rideout, Real Ale and Live Music. Restricted numbers, first come first served. All profits to MAG.

Tickets: £12.00 advance (the first 50 also get a badge), £15.00 on the gate. Send an SAE and Cheque payable to 'MAG Cornwall' to: End of the Road Rally, 23 Parkway, St Austell, Cornwall, PL25 4HR.

Location: Predannack Paint Ball Site, Lizard, Cornwall, TR12 7AU.

Enquiries: 07778 565945

Web: <http://www.facebook.com/home.php#!/pages/MAG-Cornwall/111280468942007>

Ganton Gathering

Friday, August 19 - Sunday, August 21, 2011

Organised by Scarborough MAG in aid of the MAG Foundation (Reg.d Charity: 1100274)
Traditional chilled rally with marquee, trade stalls and bands & disco both nights. Custom show. Good Food available & Quality beers on site at pub prices - please support the Bar as they support our event.
Tickets: £15.00 strictly pre-book (Under 16's free - must be accompanied by adult). Cheque payable to 'Ganton Gathering' with stamped addressed envelope to: 26 Linden Road, Scarborough, YO12 5SN.
Debit/Credit cards by 'phone during office hours: 0844 248 0191 (£1.50 per ticket booking fee).
Disabled car drivers, please phone: 07832 125836 after 6pm (book by 1st August).
NO CARS, NO VANS, NO PEDESTRIANS, NO EXCUSES. NO COLOURS WORN ON SITE PLEASE.
Enquiries: 0844 248 0191
Web: <http://www.gantongathering.com>

Saturday, August 20, 2011 - The Bristol Bike Show

Organiser: The Bristol Bike Show
A free motorcycle show held on closed roads in central Bristol.
Location: St Nicholas Market, Corn Street, Bristol BS1 1JG
Web: <http://www.thebristolbikeshow.co.uk/>

Saturday, August 20, 2011 - The Bristol Bike Show After Show Party

Organiser: Bristol MAG
After show party. Live band, bar, camping, BBQ. All proceeds go to Bristol MAG.
Location: Bristol Saracens RFC, Bakewell Memorial Grd, Station Rd, Cribbs Causeway, Bristol BS10 7TT
Web: <http://bristol.mag-uk.org/>

Sunday, August 21, 2011 - Darlington MAG bike show

Organiser: Darlington and District MAG
DAD MAG are putting on their 2nd free bike show
Location: Skinner Gate, Darlington, DL3 7NJ

Friday, September 2 - Sunday, September 4, 2011 - The chill Out Rally III

Organiser: R4C (Riders for Charity)
Rally in aid of good causes
Location: The Watchfield Inn, Watchfield, Highbridge TA9 4RD
Web: <http://www.riders4charity.co.uk>

Stormin' the Castle

21st Motorcycle Rally and Custom Show

Witton Castle, Witton Le Wear, Co. Durham, DL14 0DE

Pre Book: £25, Kids (5-15) £5. OTG: £35 (only available to those arriving on motorcycle or trike).

Car Passes: pre book only £35 (very limited number only).

Cheques (with SAE) payable: "Stormin' the Castle Ltd", PO Box 293, Durham, DH1 4XS.

www.storminthecastle.co.uk or 0870 225 8352. Pre-book deadline: 20th August

Friday, September 2 - Sunday, September 4, 2011 - Wakinyan Rally 2011

Organiser: Salutation MCC

Top Bands. Rock DJ. Rock Karaoke. Rock Quiz. Trade stalls. Silly games. Raffle. Ride out. Food incl. exotic Aussie nosh. 24 hour toilets.

Location: Stork Prior Sports & Country Club, Weston Hall Road, Stoke Prior, Bromsgrove, Worcs B60 4AL

Web: <http://www.wakinyanrally.co.uk>

Wednesday, September 7, 2011 - Horncastle Bike Night

Organiser: Mid Lincs MAG

Say goodbye to the summer by joining hundreds of bikers and trikers at this annual event. Hot food and drinks available. All profits go to MAG.

Location: Boston Road Horncastle Lincolnshire

Web: <http://www.mid-lincs.mag-uk.org>

Friday, September 9 - Sunday, September 11, 2011 - GWR Rally 2011

Organiser: Weston & North Somerset MAG

Traditional green field rally with bands, real ale, cider, etc

Location: Sandford, North Somerset, BS25 5PF. On the A368 not far from the ski slope

Web: <http://north-somerset.mag-uk.org/gwr.html>

Friday, September 9 - Sunday, September 11, 2011 - Wozwolf Rally 2011 - Teenage Kicks

Organiser: Wozwolf RC

4 bands (2 Friday, 2 Saturday) plus Chaos Roadshow disco and the usual fun of a Wozwolf Rally showers and proper toilets

Location: At a new location near Matlock Bath

Web: <http://www.wozwolf.co.uk>

Friday, September 23 - Sunday, September 25, 2011 - Mabon Rally

Organiser: Cernunnos MCC

Trad rally Pre-booked tickets guaranteed a rally badge. Good pub grub - Silly games - Bonfire - Raffle Free hot drinks all weekend - Cheap breakfast. Run out on Saturday.

Location: Robin Hood pub, Clifton Reynes near Olney, North Buckinghamshire, MK46 5DR

Web: <http://cernunnos-mcc.org>

Wednesday, September 28 - Carmarthen MAG Annual General Meeting

Organiser: Carmarthen MAG

Our first AGM. Please bring your membership cards. No card, no vote!

Location: New Dairies Club, Water Street, Carmarthen, SA31 1RG (entrance to Car Park via Pentrefelin St)

Web: <http://carmarthen.mag-uk.org>

Friday, September 30 - Sunday, October 2, 2011 - Yer Tiz Rally

Organiser: Devon MAG

Camping in glorious Devon countryside. Band both nights in the club-house, fire, ride-out, MAG catering on-site. Showers/wet room, disabled access/toilets. T.B.C: Bike show with trophies, silly games, stalls.

Location: North Tawton Rugby Club, Devon EX20 2ED

Web: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/North-Devon-MAG-Motorcycle-Action-Group/177919692219560?ref=ts#!/event.php?eid=205005836210216>

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