House of Commons
Transport Committee

The Government’s Motorcycling Strategy

Fifth Report of Session 2006–07

Report, together with formal minutes, oral and written evidence

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The Transport Committee

The Transport Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration and policy of the Department for Transport and its associated public bodies.

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The current staff of the Committee are Tom Healey (Clerk), Annette Toft (Second Clerk), Clare Maltby (Committee Specialist), Louise Butcher (Inquiry Manager), Tony Catinella (Committee Assistant), Ronnie Jefferson (Secretary), Henry Ayi-Hyde (Senior Office Clerk) and Laura Kibby (Media Officer).

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1 Introduction

1. Motorcycling has experienced strong growth in recent years, following a decline in popularity in the late 1980s and 1990s. With more people turning to the motorcycle as an alternative to the motor car, it is important that the relative merits of these modes of transport are examined and that motorcycling is made as safe as possible both for those who undertake it and for other road users. It is a cause for some concern that the Government’s objective of increasing motorcycle use will, if it is successful, result in more deaths and injuries on the roads unless there is a very substantial reduction in motorcyclist casualty rates. These are 42 times higher than for car occupants and around three times higher than for pedestrians or cyclists.1

2. Against this background of growth the Government decided to develop a national strategy for motorcycling as ‘a priority’.2 An Advisory Group on Motorcycling was set up to identify and address the many issues and challenges that motorcycling raises, such as rider safety, vehicle security, and design standards. This culminated in their Report to Government, published in August 2004.3

3. Drawing on the 2004 report, in February 2005 the Department for Transport published The Government’s Motorcycling Strategy.4 The principal aim of the strategy is to ‘mainstream’ motorcycling, so that:

…all the organisations involved in the development and implementation of transport policy recognise motorcycling as a legitimate and increasingly popular mode of transport. We want to see an end to old stigmas and stereotyping – motorcycling can be a modern, practical way of getting around, and we all need to recognise it as such.5

4. Off-road, there is a serious problem with so-called ‘mini motos’. These are miniature motorcycles imported largely from the Far East and often used illegally by children and/or in an anti-social manner. Tackling this problem and putting a stop to it would improve the quality of life for hundreds, if not thousands, of people in communities across the country.

5. We announced in November 2006 that we would hold an inquiry into the Government’s Motorcycling Strategy.6 The Terms of Reference for the Committee’s inquiry were to look at:

- progress made by the Department so far in implementing the 2005 Motorcycling Strategy; and

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1 Table 2, p9
3 http://www.bmf.co.uk/gagem/report-040802.pdf
4 http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/roads/vehicles/motorcycling/thegovernmentsmotorcyclingstrategy
5 The Government’s Motorcycling Strategy, foreword
6 PN 82/2005–06; 2 November 2006
• whether the Department is still on target to deliver the eight longer-term objectives by 2010.

The inquiry also considered:

• the changes to motorcycle licensing arrangements proposed in the Third Driving License Directive; and

• what action the Government might take to reduce the risk posed by mini-motos, go-peds and other motorised two-wheelers which are not legal for road use.

6. The Committee took evidence from industry representatives, environmental and road safety groups, the Association of Chief Police Officers and the Minister for Transport, Dr Stephen Ladyman. We thank them for their contributions.
2 The Motorcycling Strategy

General

7. The *Government’s Motorcycling Strategy* was published in February 2005. Its aim is ‘to facilitate motorcycling as a choice of travel within a safe and sustainable transport framework’. The strategy has a strong focus on safety, including:

- making appropriate provision for motorcyclists on the highway, including road design and maintenance;
- working with manufacturers and others to encourage safer bike design;
- promoting correct helmet fitting; and
- improving rider training and testing.

Other objectives include: promoting the environmental benefits of cleaner bikes and encouraging riders to keep their bikes to legal noise levels; considering recommending that bikes be allowed to use bus lanes and advance stop lines; and measures intended to reduce motorcycle theft.

8. The Strategy was developed in tandem with the motorcycling industry and followed the establishment of the Advisory Group on Motorcycling in 1999. The Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) welcomed the fact that the industry was involved in developing the Strategy rather than having a strategy forced upon them and saw this as a direct result of the better relations that developed after the Advisory Group was set up.

9. Once drawn up and published in February 2005, the Strategy was, however, put on hold due to the timing of the 2005 General Election, followed by Ministerial changes in the Department for Transport. The Motorcycle Industry Authority (MCI) estimates that work really began ‘in earnest’ in spring 2006.

10. After the Strategy was published, further work by the Institute of Highway Incorporated Engineers (IHIE) was published. The IHIE guidelines for motorcycling, *Improving safety through engineering and integration*, were launched in April 2005 and built on and complemented the Strategy. IHIE told us that the Guidelines sought “to highlight the role motorcycling can play in an integrated transport system and to help raise awareness of practical measures that engineers can undertake”. In particular, the IHIE are concerned that their Guidelines be taken forward at the local level:

IHIE believes that the Government should be prescriptive about the motorcycle strategy in the next round of Local Transport Plan advice. The Government Offices
for the Regions should make it clear that they expect to see firm deliverable provisions for Motorcycles in the next round of LTP submissions.11

11. Our witnesses agreed that the Strategy is an important step forward for motorcycling and is one that has been proposed for a number of years by the industry. The MCI told us that rider organisations envisaged such a strategy in the mid-1990s and that the absence of one has created

…barriers to progress for this important mode, both in terms of improving motorcycle safety and also in terms of realising the congestion beating and pollution reducing characteristics of this mode of transport in wider transport policy.12

Mr Carey-Clinch of the MCI told us that these problems persist to the current day. He hopes that the actions contained in the Strategy will tackle the problem. He did not see why other types of vulnerable road user groups such as pedestrians and cyclists had had a Strategy while motorcyclists had not.13

12. Witnesses also identified the advantages that it is anticipated the Strategy will secure and reinforce. Of particular interest were the social inclusion benefits of motorcycling. David Short from MAG spoke of the benefits to rural areas where he considers low cost two-wheeled transport to be an excellent means of engaging youth with employment and inculcating a sense of social responsibility, diverting them away from a potential life of crime.14 Both Trevor Magner, from the British Motorcyclists’ Federation (BMF) and Sheila Rainger of the RAC Foundation agreed with these benefits. Ms Rainger told us that the statistics bear out the thesis that the majority (65 per cent) of motorcycle journeys are for business, work or education compared to one in three car journeys.15

13. Not all of our witnesses agreed, however, on the value of the Strategy. RoadPeace told us that there is not enough emphasis in the Strategy on making motorcycling a safer mode of transportation. They believe that “to have a motorcycle strategy that ‘aims to mainstream’ the most dangerous road user mode without even mentioning the risk it poses to others is inexcusable”.16 The question of what constitutes ‘mainstreaming’ was put to the Minister who told us that it means that motorcycling should no longer be seen as “an anarchic activity that rebellious teenagers engage in and therefore we should be trying to discourage it” and that

What it is intended to convey is that we see it as a legitimate form of road transport that we actively want to encourage and we want people to consider it as an alternative to the motor car as a contributor to tackling congestion and reducing carbon emissions.17

11 ibid.; ACPO supported this view, Ev 34
12 Ev 3
13 Q3
14 Q12
15 Q65
16 Ev 108
17 Qq 217–218
14. We pressed the Minister as to whether ‘mainstreaming’ is really encouragement to individuals to take up motorcycling over, for example, driving motor cars. After some prevarication, the Minister stated that he does want people “for whom riding motorcycles is an option to consider seriously whether using a motorcycle to go to work, to commute, is a way that they could contribute to reducing congestion on the roads and the efficiency of their travel”. He was then even more explicit that for some people it would be better to give up their motor car and ride motorcycles.18

15. There were other concerns. The BMF were unsure as to the efficacy of the Strategy unless the Department deploys more resources on delivering and developing it.19 Stephen Plowden called it a “deeply unsatisfactory and at times disingenuous document. It reads as if it had been produced by a dodgy PR firm, not by a Department of State”.20 When this was put to the Minister, he said that such an assessment was “cobblers”. He defended the document for the buy-in it had achieved from the industry and lauded its aims of improving congestion and safety and reducing pollution. He argued that the Strategy identifies the real concerns of motorcyclists and sets about constructively to address them.21 The Minister did state, however, that the effects of the Strategy would be unclear for a number of years:

Whether in the long term it makes a real difference to motorcyclists we have yet to see, we will not know for several years, but there is good buy-in to the strategy and it is having an impact.22

16. The Minister told us that the premise behind the Government’s Motorcycling Strategy is to “mainstream” motorcycling. When questioned, this appeared to mutate into a commitment to encourage motorcycling. We question whether the safety case and environmental concerns detailed in this report bear out such a policy.

17. The industry is very happy with the Strategy and believes that it will help make motorcycling safer and motorcyclists more accepted by car drivers as legitimate road users. One would expect this to be so, considering the role the industry played in drawing up the strategy in the first place. It is clear that for the Strategy to succeed it must have the long-term backing of the industry. We commend the Government for drawing it into the process and recommend that they continue to work with the industry to take the Strategy forward.

18. That said, the Strategy does not set out a vision for motorcycling so much as it encourages discussion, improves guidance and engages the motorcycling community in policy development and dissemination. The Strategy was developed with the industry, and while this seems sensible, it is not clear that there was rigorous consideration of views from outside the industry in developing the Strategy. We recommend that the Strategy be reviewed after a period of five years and that when the review is undertaken

18 Q231 and Q233
19 Ev 23
20 Ev 49
21 Qq 205–206
22 Q207
that the basis for the Department’s consultation is broadened to include the views of those outside the motorcycling industry.

**Achievement against actions**

19. The Strategy contains 44 actions, 27 of which were due to be completed by February 2007 and a further eight by 2010. Actions are deliverable by the Department for Transport and its Agencies, the industry and other stakeholders. This range of bodies engaged with the Strategy is what makes it, in the view of Mr Brown of the MCI truly a ‘community document’. Our witnesses told us that the actions were all well-targeted and achievable, provided that the Government provides the necessary level of investment.

20. A list of the actions to be achieved by February 2007 and achievement against them is provided in the table in the Appendix, below. Although many of the actions are late or incomplete, this can largely be ascribed to the disruption caused by the 2005 General Election.

21. Overall, we think that the targets set in the Strategy are sensible and we support them. The Government provided the Committee with evidence that many of the actions in the Strategy are on course to be completed on time – this is for both those with the 2007 deadline and those in the longer term. Where the February 2007 deadline has not been met, we accept that this is largely due to the delay caused by the 2005 General Election. We would like the Government to inform the Committee as these short-term actions are achieved.
3 Safety

22. Motorcyclists are killed and injured in proportionately higher numbers than any other road user; the figures have not reduced significantly over the past ten years. Motorcycles are also more likely to be involved in accidents with other vehicles and pedestrians than any other transport mode. This is clearly not acceptable. The Strategy rightly contains actions to improve rider and road user safety where motorcycles are present.

Accidents

Table 1: Road casualties by selected road user type, 2000 to 2005

Great Britain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
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<tr>
<td>Pedal cyclists</td>
<td>20,612</td>
<td>19,114</td>
<td>17,107</td>
<td>17,033</td>
<td>16,648</td>
<td>16,561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorcycle riders</td>
<td>26,513</td>
<td>27,135</td>
<td>26,628</td>
<td>26,733</td>
<td>24,201</td>
<td>23,484</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorcycle passengers</td>
<td>1,699</td>
<td>1,675</td>
<td>1,725</td>
<td>1,678</td>
<td>1,440</td>
<td>1,340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car drivers</td>
<td>133,928</td>
<td>132,318</td>
<td>129,024</td>
<td>123,786</td>
<td>122,045</td>
<td>119,567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car passengers</td>
<td>72,871</td>
<td>70,484</td>
<td>68,401</td>
<td>64,556</td>
<td>61,813</td>
<td>58,735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other road users</td>
<td>64,660</td>
<td>62,583</td>
<td>59,720</td>
<td>56,821</td>
<td>54,693</td>
<td>51,330</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total motorcycle</td>
<td>28,212</td>
<td>28,810</td>
<td>28,353</td>
<td>28,411</td>
<td>25,641</td>
<td>24,824</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorcycle as % of all casualties</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All casualties</td>
<td>320,283</td>
<td>313,309</td>
<td>302,605</td>
<td>290,607</td>
<td>280,840</td>
<td>271,017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Department for Transport Road Casualties Great Britain 2005

Table 2: Domestic passenger casualty rates by mode 2004

Great Britain

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Rate per billion passenger kilometres</th>
<th>Average kilometres travelled to be exposed to a 1 in a million risk of being killed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rail(a)</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>6,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus or coach</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>2,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Van</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedal cycle</td>
<td>34.7</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two wheeled motor vehicle</td>
<td>105.1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) Financial year data

Source: Transport statistics Great Britain 2006, DfT. Table 1.7
23. Some have argued that these figures demonstrate that motorcycles are an inherently dangerous and unsafe mode of transport and that they should be subject to some kind of curb or limit, perhaps even an outright ban. Don Matthew from Sustrans, the sustainable transport charity, told us that with the general trend in the UK towards slower speeds, particularly in urban areas, that most motorcycles “do not really fit in with that ambiance” and that “the amount of high powered machines is becoming, in a sense, quite out of sync with what we are trying to achieve with sustainable communities”. Mr Plowden agreed that it is hard to see why anyone except the police, military and emergency services, needs a powerful, heavy machine, as did the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) who could see little justification for producing powerful vehicles that can reach speeds of more than twice the maximum speed limit. Mr Plowden suggested that motorcycles be limited to 125cc.

24. The Minister was not keen on the idea of limiting motorcycle power or speeds, although he did give us an overview of the work the Department has done on the potential of intelligent speed adaptation (ISA). The work found that ISA is technically possible for motorcycles but the Minister stressed that there are no plans to implement such a system. The industry, unsurprisingly, also rejected any suggestion of limiting motorcycle power, speed or use. Mr Brown from the MCI told us that it is unfair to single out a group which is in itself vulnerable and say that it should not exist.

25. Motorcycle accident rates are far too high. They have been for ten years. It is time to consider radical action to tackle this problem. A case was made to the Committee for limiting the speed of the more powerful motorcycles, though some technical issues still need to be resolved. The Government’s work on Intelligent Speed Adaptation is encouraging. We recommend that the Government commission a companion piece of research on the viability of introducing speed limiters on motorcycles in order to stimulate a sensible debate of the options.

Training and testing

26. Considering how dangerous motorcycling can be, it is vital that motorcyclists are properly trained. At present, to ride a motorcycle on the road you must be at least 17 years old (16 for a moped) and have a driving licence which allows you to ride motorcycles (category A). To be able to ride on the road all learner motorcyclists and moped riders must complete Compulsory Basic Training (CBT). A CBT certificate must be produced before one can take the practical motorcycle test. It has a two-year life. If an individual does not pass both the theory and practical tests in that time then the CBT course must be retaken. One must display L-plates until the full test is passed. After two years size and power restrictions are removed, although it is possible to ride more powerful motorcycles.
before the end of the two year period if you are over 21 through the Direct Access Scheme (DAS) and the Accelerated Access Scheme (AAS).

27. The industry states that motorcycle training and testing is comprehensive and probably better than driver training for motor cars. It is not, however, without its difficulties. The MCI is concerned that changes to the test due to be introduced in 2008 as a result of the Second EU Driving Licence Directive (2000/56/EC) have been introduced too vigorously by the UK Government. Consequently, the Driving Standards Agency (DSA) has been forced to create large and expensive off-road riding areas, reducing the number of available motorcycle test centres from around 250 to approximately 65. The MCI believes that this will leave candidates with far greater travelling distances to their test; that training and the test itself will become more expensive; and that, consequently, there will be a drop-off in the number of people taking the test.

28. Mr Plowden had broader concerns about whether motorcycle training was, per se, effective. He referred the Committee to a study done for the Department of Transport at the University of Salford in the 1970s that showed that in almost every comparison motorcyclists who had been through the RAC/ACU training scheme officially approved at the time had higher crash rates than those who had not. He also questioned the efficacy of post-test training and cited a 2003 survey by the Cochrane Library which found that there is “no evidence that post-license driver education is effective in preventing road traffic injuries or crashes”.

29. Mr Plowden was of the view that the real problem is therefore not with training but with driver attitudes. The MCI told us that in order to really affect driver behaviour you have to ‘get them young’, possibly through some form of driver education in schools. The Minister agreed that education to change attitudes was the key to improving road safety. He pledged that the Government’s review of road safety would address this. The document was published on 26 February 2007 and announced a “systematic reform of the way people learn and maintain safe driving skills” which would include “education to influence attitudes long before people reach 17”. It is not clear whether this will include motorcycles.

30. RoSPA identified another weakness in the training and testing system: a lack of statutory register for motorcycle instructors. RoSPA told us that training competencies and professional qualifications for motorcyclist trainers need to be developed. It welcomed the
DSA’s voluntary registration scheme and recommended that, subject to an evaluation of its effectiveness, it should become compulsory. The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) was also supportive of the voluntary register. ACPO operates a ‘BikeSafe’ scheme in which police motorcyclists help and advise on safety and driver competence. ACPO believe that the register will enable it to work much more closely with the training industry and provide its customer base with a list of recommended training organisations for the first time. The Minister was open-minded as to the utility of a compulsory register.

31. The motorcycle training and testing regime seems to us to be robust, particularly compared to the testing and training undertaken by car drivers. We seek a guarantee from the Driving Standards Agency that this will not be compromised by the consolidation of testing centres that has been necessary as a result of the new measures to be introduced in 2008.

32. We welcome the overhaul of driver learning and training promised in the road safety review. We hope the Government will include motorcycling as part of its education programme for young people and would expect the Government to give a very good reason if it is not.

33. The voluntary register of motorcycle trainers is welcome. We agree with the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents that, subject to an evaluation of its effectiveness, it should be made compulsory. We recommend that the Government undertake such an evaluation within two years of the register coming into force.

**Staged access to motorcycles**

34. On 27 March 2006 EU Member States agreed on the new rules for driving licences in Europe, which had initially been proposed by the European Commission in 2003, these form the Third European Driving Licence Directive. The intent of the new rules is to reduce possibilities of fraud, guarantee freedom of movement for EU drivers, and reinforce safety on European roads. The Third Directive has significant implications for motorcyclists as it introduces a system of staged access by age to higher powered vehicles. This is outlined in the box below:

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40 Ev 44
41 http://www.bikesafe.co.uk/
42 Ev 34
43 Q266
44 Full details of the Directive here:
45 information provided by the British Motorcyclists' Federation, Ev 23
### Third EC Driving Licence Directive: changes for motorcycling

There will be four categories comprising:

- **AM Moped** (<50 cc 45 km/h)
- **A1 Light Motorcycle** (<125 cc 14 kW)
- **A2 Intermediate Motorcycle** (<35 kW 0.2 kW/kg)
- **A Unlimited Motorcycle** (>35kW)

There will be a rigid age ladder in which A1 will be accessible from age 16 (17 in the UK) with A2 two years later and A two years after that. Hence, by progressive access a Category A motorcycle will not be accessible until age 21 in the UK while under the Second EC Driving Licence Directive it is accessible from age 19 under progressive access. The minimum age for direct access to Category A is to be raised from age 21 to 24.

For progressive access, there will be dual requirements of two years experience on each category of motorcycle followed by a practical test on the category of machine to which the rider intends to progress.

Categories A2 and A are subject to power and power-to-weight-ratio limits but the Directive proposes that minimum test vehicles are subject to minimum capacity limits of 400 cc for A2 and 600 cc for A.

*Source: British Motorcyclists' Federation*

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35. Motorcycling organisations oppose the staged access provisions of the Directive and were grateful to the UK Government for abstaining on the final vote in Council on the basis of their objections. The industry is now looking for the Government to show similar understanding in implementation and to use the “lightest touch possible”. Mr Short from MAG told us that unless the Government is careful, staged access could make it more difficult to gain a motorcycle licence, certainly at a younger age, with the consequence of diverting people directly into cars.

36. Others were more supportive of staged access. Mr Plowden argued that it should be taken further and that car driving alone should not be taken as experience for riding a motorcycle. He recommended that no one, whatever their age, or their experience with driving cars, should be eligible to apply for a licence to ride a motorcycle who had not held a full moped licence for a certain time with a clean record.

37. Better training and sensible access to higher powered vehicles will help to improve rider safety. Although the Third European Driving Licence may not be the best possible permutation of staged access, we believe that access to higher powered motorcycles should only come with experience. We look to the Government to implement the scheme sensibly and to report back within a reasonable timeframe as to its effects.

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46 Ev 3
47 Q41
48 Ev 60
Motorcycles access to bus lanes

38. Bus lanes are made by Traffic Regulation Order under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. The TRO limits the lane’s use to buses and any other vehicles the local authority decides to allow. This may include coaches, bicycles, motorcycles, taxis (but not private hire vehicles), goods vehicles and dial-a-ride services for disabled persons. It can be any combination of these, although it is not usual for all classes to be included. The relevant Guidance is Local Transport Note 1/97, Keeping Buses Moving. Action x of the Strategy proposes to revise this guidance to allow a more permissive approach, the Minister explained:

What it is going to do is move away from the position that the assumption should be that motorcycles should not be in bus lanes, to take a position that says it is up to local authorities to look at local conditions and make a decision.

39. This change is supported by the results of a study begun in London in 2002. Transport for London (TfL) told us that provisional results from this trial found that there is a “neutral safety benefit” of allowing motorcycles in bus lanes. Trials in Bristol and Sheffield in the mid-1990s both found a 25 per cent decrease in motorcycle accidents during the period they were permitted to use the bus lanes, compared with the immediate preceding period. London TravelWatch hopes to see other benefits. It told us that allowing the appropriate use of bus lanes for motorcycles would provide an opportunity to bring these two road users together: training bus drivers in observation for bikes and cycles, and promoting the safe use of the inside lane.

40. The Minister takes an even-handed approach. He believes that while motorcycles are “perfectly safe” in bus lanes in certain places, they are “entirely inappropriate” in others and that the people who design bus lanes should have an open mind when taking a decision when they design the bus lanes.

41. The balance of evidence suggests that the Government is right to revise its guidance to local authorities on the use of bus lanes. We see no reason why a more permissive attitude should not be taken by local authorities when deciding whether to allow motorcycles to use bus lanes. The Government was, however, late in delivering this revised guidance.

49 In London these are made under section 6 of the Act and are called ‘section 6’ orders
50 Those allowed to use a bus lane must be displayed on the sign announcing it in accordance with the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002
51 Q272
52 Ev 105
53 Ev 22
54 Ev 94
55 Q272
42. The Committee did not intend to look at motorcycle emissions when it issued its terms of reference for this inquiry in November 2006. During the course of our inquiry, however, it has become apparent that motorcycles are not the environmentally-friendly vehicles that they are often taken for and promoted as, as the figures below demonstrate:

Table 3: Motorcycle emissions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Grammes per passenger km</th>
<th>Grammes per vehicle km</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cars and taxis</td>
<td>Powered two-wheeled vehicles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carbon monoxide</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>16.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benzene</td>
<td>0.0062</td>
<td>0.0451</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methane</td>
<td>0.012</td>
<td>0.136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other volatile organic compounds</td>
<td>0.248</td>
<td>2.225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 butadiene</td>
<td>0.0024</td>
<td>0.0289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Particulates</td>
<td>0.012</td>
<td>0.098</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Defra/Netcen and DfT Transport Statistics.

43. The cycling organisation CTC explains that the higher emissions figures are due to heavier, more powerful motorcycles (those over 500 cc) which have poor fuel economy. These vehicles now make up almost half of all motorcycles and the proportion is rising. This in turn means that the share of total distance traveled on larger motorcycles is a good deal higher (around 4,000 km/year compared with less than 3,000 km/year for smaller motorcycles). They also carry one third fewer passengers per kilometer. This is a fact that Government itself acknowledges in its Strategy. The Minister did not give a convincing answer on this when we questioned him. He suggested that national action might be possible if there was no satisfactory agreement at European level and stated that an emissions debate might be best addressed in the context of the Energy White Paper.

56 Data from 2002, given in Hansard, 1 March 2005, c1864W
57 Ev 96; Sustrans agreed that motorcycles are far more polluting than is supposed (Q180)
58 DfT, Compendium of Motorcycling Statistics, 2004, chart 3.6 page 23
59 Calculated by CTC from: DfT, Transport Trends, 2004, tables 1.1 and 2.1
60 The Government’s Motorcycling Strategy, p11, paras 3.2 and 3.4
61 Q243; in its supplementary memorandum, the Government did, however, stress that these figures, and those in Transport Statistics Great Britain 2006 which reveal similar trends are based on Stage 1 compliant vehicles and that later vehicles, at Stages 2 and 3, have made significant reductions in hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide and oxides of nitrogen; the Government also argues that because motorcycles make up such a small part of on-road traffic that their impact on air quality is ‘negligible’ (Ev 88)
44. Government statistics show that for many of the classes of pollutant, motorcycles are often worse than cars. If the Government wishes to encourage motorcycling (as part of wider strategies to tackle congestion and social exclusion) then it must support the development of cleaner vehicles. While we welcome the improvements made in the Euro 3 standard, we recommend that the Government do a lot more work with industry with the aim of reducing emissions from motorcycles. It is unacceptable that the heavier of these vehicles are more polluting than cars, this may be another argument in favour of reducing the maximum power and speed that is available on these vehicles.
5 Enforcement

45. The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) published its Motorcycling Enforcement Strategy for England, Wales and Northern Ireland in June 2006. It is due to be reviewed in January 2008. The intention of the strategy is to focus enforcement activities on key motorcycle collision causation factors and introduce a nationally agreed approach to enforcement to ensure that it is consistent across the country.62

46. Deputy Chief Constable David Griffin of Humberside Police explained that the motorcycling community has been concerned about significant differences of police enforcement in different counties across the country: a motorcyclist might be stopped for something in one county and not in another and dealt with in a different way. In putting together the Enforcement Strategy on behalf of ACPO, DCC Griffin has sought to achieve consistency by bringing practitioners together; developing guidance on ‘lower level issues’ (for example, the use of dark visors in daylight hours, number plates that are slightly smaller than they should be); and focusing enforcement on ‘higher level issues’ (for example, very noisy exhausts, anti-social riding). 63 Mr Short, from MAG, welcomed the new approach.64

47. There have been concerns that as more roads policing relies on technology to catch offenders, motorcyclists have been ‘ahead’ of the technology, with Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) and speed cameras unable to capture and identify motorcyclists who are breaking the law. The Minister assured us that both ANPR systems in police cars and most speed cameras now photograph vehicles from the rear. Increasing numbers of motorcyclists in breach of the law are therefore being caught and penalised.65 DCC Griffin from ACPO told us that, in addition to these technological improvements, if the police identify an area where they think a lot of motorcyclists are speeding, that is creating a hazard to them and the wider community, the local force will then, for example, install a mobile camera enforcement team in the area.66

48. One other area of concern came to our attention, that of motorcyclists evading car tax and driving without insurance. In July 2006 the National Audit Office (NAO) published its report on the Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) Account for 2005–06. This included data from a 2005 roadside survey which found that motorcyclists are by far the most likely to evade VED, with an estimated 29.6 per cent evasion. The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) believe that this occurs for four main reasons:

- that insurance is costly and people therefore ride without insurance and VED;
- that motorcycles are easily stored off-road where no enforcement action can be taken;

63 Q114
64 Q57
65 Q253
66 Qq 124–125
• that ANPR has difficulty reading motorcycle number plates; and
• that on-road enforcement is difficult with motorcyclists as they can easily evade physical detention by enforcement officers.

The DVLA planned to tackle this problem in 2006 with targeted advertisements; fitting out Agency vans to allow them to seize motorcycles; and enforcement and education activities at motorcycle rallies and shows.67

49. The Motor Insurers’ Information Centre (responsible for the Motor Insurance Database) carried out research, based on data gathered in June 2005, which indicated that approximately 150,000 motorcycles were potentially uninsured.68

50. The Minister assured us that many of the problems associated with catching speeding motorcyclists and those committing other offences are being overcome. Many speed cameras now take pictures from the rear and ANPR devices are multi-directional: motorcyclists who formerly evaded the law because of a lack of front registration plate can no longer do so. This is welcome. There clearly remains a significant problem, however, with motorcycles being untaxed and uninsured. It remains to be seen whether the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency’s action plan for 2006 will have had an impact. If there is not a marked improvement in this year’s Vehicle Excise Duty account for motorcycles, we recommend that the Government consult with the industry to get a grip on this issue.

68 Ev 33
6 Mini motos

The problem and measures in place to deal with it

51. Mini motos are a blight. Their illegal use by both children and adults makes life a misery for people in communities up and down the country.

52. Mini motos, toy bikes, gopeds, etc. come under the broad heading of Motorcycles for Use on Private Property (MUPP). Such bikes have existed in small numbers for many years, their illegal use has been an ongoing problem for enforcement agencies. According to the MCI, historically the problem has typically been one of worn out or stolen mopeds and road motorcycles ridden illegally in public places and parkland with their identities erased and number plates removed. The rise of very cheap toy and mini bike imports, mainly from China, has created much greater public concern and awareness.

53. The MCI estimates that until 2001 the mini moto market was small (around 7,000 new bikes per year), with high quality and relatively expensive machines being used for legitimate sport. Since then the market has risen substantially, HM Customs and Revenue figures indicate that around 170,000 MUPPs of various kinds were imported into the UK market in 2005. RoSPA is aware of seven deaths due to mini motos since mid-2004, five of which were children under the age of 15.

54. Although ACPO is of the view that this is a fad that has reached its peak and is now on the decline, the motorcycling industry believes that mini motos are negatively affecting its public image.

55. Sections 59 and 60 of the Police Reform Act 2002 gave police officers new powers to deal with the anti-social use of vehicles on public roads or off-road. Particularly on private land where the owner is absent, police officers were not able to stop the anti-social use of these vehicles on such land. The 2002 Act gave the police powers to seize and crush any vehicle being driven off-road contrary to section 34 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 and in an anti-social manner; or on the public road or other public place where they are driven without due care and attention or reasonable consideration for other road users, contrary to section 3 of the 1988 Act.

56. ACPO are not, however, convinced that seizure of the vehicle is always the best solution. Police Constable Phil Edwards of Cheshire Police told us that the removal of the bike does not always solve the core problem because those people likely to be riding the motorcycle generally will not own it. He explained:

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69 Ev 3
70 Ev 58 and Qq 200–201
71 Q138
72 Q26
73 Mr Short of MAG gave the Committee an overview of when and how these powers are used by the police, see Qq27–30
It will be almost a ‘pool vehicle’ that is being used by a number of people from a given area. No-one will admit to owning it. So, you can take it off them, you can deal with them for whatever offences are apparent at the time, but to crush a £60 mini moto that they do not own in any event has very little deterrent effect.74

57. The illegal use of mini motos is making life a misery for communities up and down the country. The police have powers to seize and crush mini motos if they are being driven illegally off or on the road and in an anti-social manner. Where the police have a ‘blitz’ on these vehicles in an area, it can lead to a reduction in the short-term. In the long-term, the results are not as conclusive. We recommend that the Government undertake a review of enforcement against mini motos to gauge whether police blitzes work to reduce anti-social behaviour in the longer term.

Registration scheme

58. One of the longer term solutions to the mini moto problem is a registration scheme.75 Such a scheme would require all current owners and future purchasers of mini motos to register them with the DVLA, in much the same way as presently happens with normal motorcycles and other motor vehicles. Proponents of such a scheme argue that this would make it much easier for the police to identify illegal vehicles and seize them. Mr Clinton from RoSPA told us that his organisation would be in favour of such a scheme, if only for the reason that it would make it very clear to the public, particularly parents, that mini motos are motor vehicles, they are not toys.76 ACPO agreed that there may well be long term benefits of a properly designed registration system that would force dealers to formalise the process of selling these machines.77

59. ACPO and others are not, however, convinced of the merits of registration in the short-term as it would simply be “making something that is already unlawful more unlawful”.78 DCC Griffin from ACPO drew on his 20 years’ experience in the police force to highlight the problem as he sees it:

I could take you to police stations in and around Hull, for example, with back-yards full of stripped down motorcycles that are not mini motos, they have had the registration plate removed, they have the engine number scraped off, the chassis number removed, and that has been a problem for many years. That is the reason, in essence, why we do not believe it will actually solve the problem, because the sorts of individuals who are going to ride them illegally, even with a registration scheme, would simply remove the identifying markings.79

74 Q158
75 There is particular interest in the potential of a registration scheme at the present time due to the introduction of a Private Members’ Bill in the House of Commons by Graham Stringer MP. This Bill, which received Second Reading on 2 March 2007, proposes a registration scheme for all off-road vehicles.
76 Q103
77 Ev 34
78 ibid.
79 Q131
Other witnesses agreed that the type of person likely to be riding illegally anyway would ignore a registration scheme.\textsuperscript{80}

60. MCI is concerned that such a scheme would be unworkable for other reasons. It told us that a registration scheme would require “hundreds of thousands of vehicles not currently registered for road use to be traced and identifying serial numbers to be recorded. In many cases these vehicles do not have unique ID applied at the point of manufacture and so a system to apply unique ID marks indelibly would have to be agreed and funded”.\textsuperscript{81}

61. The Minister agreed with many of these criticisms. He told us that a registration scheme would be difficult to enforce and expensive to set up.\textsuperscript{82} He estimated the costs at approximately £10 million to set up and £2 to £3 million a year to run. It would probably take at least 12 months and maybe two years to get a scheme up and running.\textsuperscript{83}

62. There are arguments both for and against a registration scheme for off-road vehicles. Most of our witnesses doubted the benefits of such a scheme. They argued that it is not a question of inadequate law but of sufficient enforcement. Proponents of the scheme believe, however, that it would make the police’s job a lot easier. For example, legislation could be introduced that would allow the police to seize any motorcycle or mini moto without a registration, being driven anywhere. Provided that the cost and the administrative burden is not prohibitive, this Committee does not see why a scheme could not be taken forward, or at least trialled, in a large conurbation such as Manchester. The results of such a trial could inform debate on a national scheme.

Other potential solutions

63. In addition to a registration scheme, other potential solutions to the mini moto problem were put to us, these focused on three areas: education, provision of areas to ride these vehicles legally, and restrictions on sales.

64. The road safety charity Brake recommended that the Government introduce compulsory road safety education in schools and colleges. This education should be comprehensive and warn young people of the risks of the road, and should include education about the dangers of mini-motos and similar vehicles.\textsuperscript{84} Ms Rainger from the RAC Foundation highlighted the importance of educating parents about these vehicles before they purchase them for their children. She believes that if it were made clear to parents that by allowing their children to use these machines that “they are putting their children at risk of being killed, they would not support and facilitate them in this.”\textsuperscript{85}

65. The RAC Foundation also believes, however, that education and enforcement could only go so far. There should be better provision of safe and legal off-road facilities so that

\textsuperscript{80} MAG and MCI (Q26) and RAC Foundation (Q99)
\textsuperscript{81} Ev 3
\textsuperscript{82} Q245
\textsuperscript{83} Q261
\textsuperscript{84} Ev 105
\textsuperscript{85} Q91; Mr Clinton of RoSPA generally agreed with this (Q193)
young people could have access to a place where mini-motos and off-road motorcycles could be ridden legally. Mr Short from MAG agreed and likened the situation with mini\nmotos to that of skateboards in the early 1990s and youth shelters more generally. DCC Griffin from ACPO had a similar view and told us that a scheme in Hull has reduced the\nanti-social behaviour in some of the most deprived parts of the city significantly and local\npeople look forward to their children being able to participate in the scheme.

66. We also received evidence about the restriction of sales of mini motos. The industry\nbelieves that many of the vehicles coming to the UK, particularly from the Far East, are\npoorly constructed. RoSPA agreed and told us that Trading Standards should take a more\npro-active approach. The industry believes in general, however, that the import and sale\nof these vehicles should not be restricted. The Department for Trade and Industry explained the regulatory regime for mini motos:

Their sale is regulated in the UK by the ‘SMR’ Supply of Machinery Regulations (1992) which transpose the provisions of the EU Machinery Directive (originally 1989). DTI is responsible for Machinery Directive policy although practical enforcement of the regulations is carried out jointly by the Health and Safety Executive, for industrial products, and, as in this case, by the Trading Standards Departments (TSDs) of the Local Authorities.

The SMR lay down the essential health and safety requirements of products within their scope. They also enable a wide variety of measures to be taken, where justified, against products that do not fulfil these requirements and against those who are responsible for offering them for sale.

67. Some of our witnesses advocated tackling the mini moto problem with better\neducation. It is particularly worrying that parents are purchasing these vehicles for their children without understanding that they can be dangerous. It is not clear, however, that it is a case of not understanding, as it is profound and abiding fecklessness. That is much harder to ‘educate’ away. We fear that parents simply will not take responsibility without some kind of shock tactic. We therefore recommend that the Government consider including mini motos as part of its excellent Think! Campaign on road safety.

68. It is not simply a question of parental responsibility, however. There should be a duty on retailers to sell these vehicles responsibly. Equally, the fact that some companies have been giving them away in promotions or as free gifts is irresponsible and unacceptable. If the problem persists, the Government should make the case to the

86 Ev 27
87 Q24
88 Q139; the Auto-Cycle Union produces best practice guidelines and guidance notes on off-road motorcycling, these can be downloaded from the ACU website: http://www.acu.org.uk/
89 Q21
90 Ev 44
91 Qq18–19
92 Ev 110
EU Trade Commissioner to restrict the imports of these goods if they are of a particularly low standard, as the industry appears to think is the case.

69. We commend the Auto-Cycle Union and those local authorities up and down the country who are pro-actively providing off-road facilities for young people to learn to ride motorcycles in a safe and controlled environment. We would like to see more of these programmes and hope that local authorities will consider the advantages when looking at their annual spending priorities.
List of recommendations

General

1. The Minister told us that the premise behind the Government’s Motorcycling Strategy is to “mainstream” motorcycling. When questioned, this appeared to mutate into a commitment to encourage motorcycling. We question whether the safety case and environmental concerns detailed in this report bear out such a policy. (Paragraph 16)

2. The industry is very happy with the Strategy and believes that it will help make motorcycling safer and motorcyclists more accepted by car drivers as legitimate road users. One would expect this to be so, considering the role the industry played in drawing up the strategy in the first place. It is clear that for the Strategy to succeed it must have the long-term backing of the industry. We commend the Government for drawing it into the process and recommend that they continue to work with the industry to take the Strategy forward. (Paragraph 17)

3. That said, the Strategy does not set out a vision for motorcycling so much as it encourages discussion, improves guidance and engages the motorcycling community in policy development and dissemination. The Strategy was developed with the industry, and while this seems sensible, it is not clear that there was rigorous consideration of views from outside the industry in developing the Strategy. We recommend that the Strategy be reviewed after a period of five years and that when the review is undertaken that the basis for the Department’s consultation is broadened to include the views of those outside the motorcycling industry. (Paragraph 18)

Achievement against actions

4. Overall, we think that the targets set in the Strategy are sensible and we support them. The Government provided the Committee with evidence that many of the actions in the Strategy are on course to be completed on time – this is for both those with the 2007 deadline and those in the longer term. Where the February 2007 deadline has not been met, we accept that this is largely due to the delay caused by the 2005 General Election. We would like the Government to inform the Committee as these short-term actions are achieved. (Paragraph 21)

Accidents

5. Motorcycle accident rates are far too high. They have been for ten years. It is time to consider radical action to tackle this problem. A case was made to the Committee for limiting the speed of the more powerful motorcycles, though some technical issues still need to be resolved. The Government’s work on Intelligent Speed Adaptation is encouraging. We recommend that the Government commission a companion piece of research on the viability of introducing speed limiters on motorcycles in order to stimulate a sensible debate of the options. (Paragraph 25)
Training and testing

6. The motorcycle training and testing regime seems to us to be robust, particularly compared to the testing and training undertaken by car drivers. We seek a guarantee from the Driving Standards Agency that this will not be compromised by the consolidation of testing centres that has been necessary as a result of the new measures to be introduced in 2008. (Paragraph 31)

7. We welcome the overhaul of driver learning and training promised in the road safety review. We hope the Government will include motorcycling as part of its education programme for young people and would expect the Government to give a very good reason if it is not. (Paragraph 32)

8. The voluntary register of motorcycle trainers is welcome. We agree with the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents that, subject to an evaluation of its effectiveness, it should be made compulsory. We recommend that the Government undertake such an evaluation within two years of the register coming into force. (Paragraph 33)

Staged access to motorcycles

9. Better training and sensible access to higher powered vehicles will help to improve rider safety. Although the Third European Driving Licence may not be the best possible permutation of staged access, we believe that access to higher powered motorcycles should only come with experience. We look to the Government to implement the scheme sensibly and to report back within a reasonable timeframe as to its effects. (Paragraph 37)

Motorcycles access to bus lanes

10. The balance of evidence suggests that the Government is right to revise its guidance to local authorities on the use of bus lanes. We see no reason why a more permissive attitude should not be taken by local authorities when deciding whether to allow motorcycles to use bus lanes. The Government was, however, late in delivering this revised guidance. (Paragraph 41)

Emissions

11. Government statistics show that for many of the classes of pollutant, motorcycles are often worse than cars. If the Government wishes to encourage motorcycling (as part of wider strategies to tackle congestion and social exclusion) then it must support the development of cleaner vehicles. While we welcome the improvements made in the Euro 3 standard, we recommend that the Government do a lot more work with industry with the aim of reducing emissions from motorcycles. It is unacceptable that the heavier of these vehicles are more polluting than cars, this may be another argument in favour of reducing the maximum power and speed that is available on these vehicles. (Paragraph 44)
Enforcement

12. The Minister assured us that many of the problems associated with catching speeding motorcyclists and those committing other offences are being overcome. Many speed cameras now take pictures from the rear and ANPR devices are multi-directional: motorcyclists who formerly evaded the law because of a lack of front registration plate can no longer do so. This is welcome. There clearly remains a significant problem, however, with motorcycles being untaxed and uninsured. It remains to be seen whether the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency’s action plan for 2006 will have had an impact. If there is not a marked improvement in this year’s Vehicle Excise Duty account for motorcycles, we recommend that the Government consult with the industry to get a grip on this issue. (Paragraph 50)

Mini motos

The problem and measures in place to deal with it

13. The illegal use of mini motos is making life a misery for communities up and down the country. The police have powers to seize and crush mini motos if they are being driven illegally off or on the road and in an anti-social manner. Where the police have a ‘blitz’ on these vehicles in an area, it can lead to a reduction in the short-term. In the long-term, the results are not as conclusive. We recommend that the Government undertake a review of enforcement against mini motos to gauge whether police blitzes work to reduce anti-social behaviour in the longer term. (Paragraph 57)

Registration scheme

14. There are arguments both for and against a registration scheme for off-road vehicles. Most of our witnesses doubted the benefits of such a scheme. They argued that it is not a question of inadequate law but of sufficient enforcement. Proponents of the scheme believe, however, that it would make the police’s job a lot easier. For example, legislation could be introduced that would allow the police to seize any motorcycle or mini moto without a registration, being driven anywhere. Provided that the cost and the administrative burden is not prohibitive, this Committee does not see why a scheme could not be taken forward, or at least trialled, in a large conurbation such as Manchester. The results of such a trial could inform debate on a national scheme. (Paragraph 62)

Other potential solutions

15. Some of our witnesses advocated tackling the mini moto problem with better education. It is particularly worrying that parents are purchasing these vehicles for their children without understanding that they can be dangerous. It is not clear, however, that it is a case of not understanding, as it is profound and abiding fecklessness. That is much harder to ‘educate’ away. We fear that parents simply will not take responsibility without some kind of shock tactic. We therefore recommend
that the Government consider including mini motos as part of its excellent Think! Campaign on road safety. (Paragraph 67)

16. It is not simply a question of parental responsibility, however. There should be a duty on retailers to sell these vehicles responsibly. Equally, the fact that some companies have been giving them away in promotions or as free gifts is irresponsible and unacceptable. If the problem persists, the Government should make the case to the EU Trade Commissioner to restrict the imports of these goods if they are of a particularly low standard, as the industry appears to think is the case. (Paragraph 68)

17. We commend the Auto-Cycle Union and those local authorities up and down the country who are pro-actively providing off-road facilities for young people to learn to ride motorcycles in a safe and controlled environment. We would like to see more of these programmes and hope that local authorities will consider the advantages when looking at their annual spending priorities. (Paragraph 69)
## Appendix: Progress against targets in the GMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Achieved?</th>
<th>Comments by Department for Transport</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action ii) – Manufacturers to promote the benefits of the environmentally better performing bikes, as well as continuing to improve emissions performance.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>The motorcycle industry continues regularly to promote the environmental benefits of small and medium sized powered two wheeler use; small engine capacity motorcycles and scooters are now among the UK’s best selling models.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action iii) – A campaign led by the motorcycle industry, retailers and rider user groups to encourage riders to keep their machines road legal for noise.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>The Motorcycle Industry Association (MCI) is planning a media campaign in the early Spring of 2007 to discourage the use of illegal exhaust systems. BMF and MAG have indicated their full support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action iv) – Highways Agency will be including motorcycles as a mode of transport to be addressed in its Safety Action Plan. Ensure that the particular needs of motorcyclists are taken into account, where appropriate, in the design, management and maintenance of the motorway and trunk road network.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Motorcyclists have now been included as an integral part of the Safety Action Plan and included as a specific reference in the Safety Operational Folder for Area teams to heighten awareness of issues specific to motorcyclists when designing and maintaining our roads.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action v) – Publicise the Institute of Highway Incorporated Engineers (IHIE) guidelines on the provision for motorcyclists on the highway, with local highway authorities and Highways Agency; and keep under review need for further guidance in the light of experience and research.</td>
<td>TAL published late</td>
<td>The IHIE guidelines, which were published in April 2005, will be publicised in the forthcoming Traffic Advisory Leaflet on Motorcycles in Bus Lanes. The IHIE and the DfT are examining possibilities of hosting the guidelines on IHIE and DfT websites, which will allow wider dissemination of the information. The Manual for Streets is also in preparation and promotes the guidance under its section on Motorcycle Parking. We will continue to review the need for further guidance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action vi) – Revise the Code of Practice on Maintenance Management to take account of motorcyclists.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>‘Well-maintained Highways’ – the revised code of practice for highways maintenance management, was published in July 2005. The code of practice has a number of references to the needs of motorcyclists, and also makes cross-reference to the IHIE guidance mentioned in Action v.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action ix) – Review the general guidance on Travel Plans and Government guidance to Departments.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>The DfT is finalising its own travel plan, which will include specific reference to powered two wheelers. The Department completed a review of travel planning on the Government Estate in September 2005. The findings contributed to the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Status</td>
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<tr>
<td>Action x) – Review Local Transport Note 1/97 &quot;Keeping Buses Moving&quot; during 2005 and include consideration of the position on motorcycles as part of that review in the light of the results of research.</td>
<td>TAL published late</td>
<td>The TAL was issued for peer review on 29 November 2006.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action xii) – Work with stakeholders to consider the MAIDS project and any other relevant research.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>A preliminary Department review of the literature on the Motorcycle Accident In-Depth Study (MAIDS) project was completed in Spring 2005. This identified 26 Major Findings but also identified a lack of conclusions or proposals to address these findings. Stakeholders have also considered the MAIDS project including the Motorcycle Action Group (MAG). The Department will continue to review motorcycle accident data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action xiv) – Support motorcycle manufacturers’ and retailers’ initiatives to improve rider knowledge of braking systems. Investigate potential road safety problems caused by poor quality replacement brake linings.</td>
<td>Late</td>
<td>Information was gathered via an online survey, which also identified riders’ experience of replacement brake linings. To date we have received over 500 responses and are on course to have results available and disseminated for Spring 2007.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action xv) – Review current practice of purchasing tyres and engage with the tyre and motorcycle retailers to reach conclusions. Investigate whether risk justifies an additional tyre requirement for the MOT.</td>
<td>Late</td>
<td>Tyre purchasers’ current practices are included in the Department’s Motorcycle Survey, identified in Action xiv. Results from the survey (available in Spring 2007), will help to quantify the scale of this issue and whether there is sufficient justification for an additional MOT requirement on tyre marking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action xvii) – Support collaboration by user groups, trainers and retailers to promote correct helmet fitting. Motorcycle retailers to raise awareness with riders on the importance of the right clothing to reduce injury and improve conspicuity.</td>
<td>Late</td>
<td>We are in the advanced stages of developing a consumer information programme and provided it is viable, expect to seek the views of industry experts and other key stakeholders including the motorcycle and road safety lobbies through a consultation process, during 2007. Any such scheme will also address the importance of correct helmet fitting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action xviii) – Investigate with user representatives the issue that some machines are fitted with mirrors that give them poor rear vision.</td>
<td>Late</td>
<td>The Department is investigating the extent of the problem. Motorcyclists’ experience with rear vision is included in the Department’s Motorcycle Survey, identified in Action xiv. Results from the survey (available in Spring 2007), will help to quantify the scale of this issue and whether there is sufficient</td>
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<td>Action</td>
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<td>xxii)</td>
<td>Measure motorcyclist casualty rate as a secondary indicator to the number of casualties.</td>
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<td>xxiv)</td>
<td>Consider undertaking research into the effects of fatigue in motorcyclist accidents and driver skills, knowledge and attitudes in relation to motorcycle safety.</td>
<td>Late</td>
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<td>xxvi)</td>
<td>Review pre-test training and the Direct Access Scheme. Extend the exercise with a view to delivering a better CBT.</td>
<td>Late</td>
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<td>xxvii)</td>
<td>Undertake a public consultation on a range of options for improving pre-test training after the EC’s proposals for driving licences have been promulgated in a Directive.</td>
<td>Late</td>
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<td>xxix)</td>
<td>The DSA is working with the MCI to develop national standards for training, and for post-test training for licence holders, especially newly qualified riders, those upgrading their bikes, and those returning to motorcycling after a break.</td>
<td>Late</td>
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<td>xxx)</td>
<td>Undertake research to establish training best practice with a view to opportunities for trainers to gain professional qualifications to establish their credentials as trainers. DSA is working with MCI and training industry to develop competences for trainers.</td>
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<td>Action xxxii) – Ensure that the insurance industry is kept abreast of training developments so that insurance discounts can be considered by the industry.</td>
<td>Late</td>
<td>DSA has kept the insurance industry up to date with the development of the voluntary quality assurance scheme for motorcycle trainers. It would be premature to open discussions with the insurance industry about discounts until the voluntary scheme is up and running. However, during the coming year the Agency will pursue these discussions with the insurance industry in the light of the scheme's take-up and performance.</td>
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<td>Action xxxiii) – Once DSA has developed post-test training, present the arrangements to the Pass Plus Board to be considered as the basis for extending the scheme to motorcycles.</td>
<td>Late</td>
<td>Once DSA has established the voluntary quality assurance scheme for motorcycle trainers the Agency will be in a position to make informed recommendations to the Pass Plus Board about extending Pass Plus to motorcyclists. This is planned for Summer 2007.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Action xxxv) – Undertake research to develop guidelines for best practice on Speed Awareness courses.</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>Research reviewing the literature on successful interventions for speeding and other risky behaviours began in October 2005. The final report was published in March 2006. At present, ACPO has a holding policy on new speed awareness courses and the National Driver Offender Steering group (NDORS) led by ACPO is formulating full guidance on these courses based on the research findings.</td>
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<td>Action xxxvii) – The proponents of a road safety GCSE in Great Britain to present their case to the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA).</td>
<td>Not an answer</td>
<td>The Motorcycle Industry Association (MCIA) is taking forward this action. In June 2006 MCIA issued &quot;Links – connecting Citizenship and Road User Education&quot;, a teaching resource for Key Stage 4 (14 to 16 year olds) which provides lesson plans on road safety themes that can be used for teaching the Citizenship curriculum. MCIA is also considering the scope of a BTEC qualification, rather than GCSE.</td>
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<td>Action xxxviii) – Review of DfT involvement in sports sponsorship and its effectiveness at communicating road safety messages to key target audiences.</td>
<td>Partly achieved</td>
<td>The review of sports sponsorship was completed in January 2005. The Department has sponsored the British Superbikes Championship in 2004, 2005 and 2006. In 2006 we expanded our activities under the name &quot;The Academy&quot;, working with former champion John Reynolds and a range of manufacturers of vehicles and accessories to convey safety messages to this key audience. We are carrying out an external audit of sponsorship and review of BSB activity, which is due in March 2007.</td>
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<td>Action xxxix) – DfT advertising to continue to develop, focusing on the most dangerous situations and behaviours.</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>A new TV, radio and poster campaign 'Take longer to look for Bikes', aimed at urban car drivers and motorcyclists, was launched in January 2006 and continues to be aired. We are now working on additional communications to target urban motorcyclists specifically, to be launched February/March 2007. We are also involved in an on-going partnership with Emap media in conjunction</td>
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<td>Action xl) – For 2005 DfT to publish a calendar showing both national and local initiatives conducted by local government and non-government stakeholders throughout the year.</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>We expect to have an initial version of the calendar by February 2007, and the RAC Foundation will take the lead on producing updates on a roughly quarterly basis with the support of DfT.</td>
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<td>Action xlii) – Support local enforcement strategies against a significant minority of motorcyclists who routinely fail to comply with road traffic law, as an integral part of police programmes on motorcycling.</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>We are currently looking at rider risk aversion courses to fit in the police driver offender retraining portfolio alongside driver improvement and speed awareness.</td>
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Formal minutes

WEDNESDAY 21 MARCH 2007

Members present:

Mrs Gwyneth Dunwoody, in the Chair

Mr Clive Efford
Mrs Louise Ellman
Mr John Leech
Mr Eric Martlew
Mr Graham Stringer

Draft Report (The Government’s Motorcycling Strategy), proposed by the Chairman, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 69 read and agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the Fifth Report from the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chairman do make the Report to the House.

Ordered, That the provisions of Standing Order No. 134 (Select committees (reports)) be applied to the Report.

[Adjourned till Wednesday 28 March at 2.30 pm.]
Witnesses

Wednesday 24 January 2007

Mr David Short, Campaigns Manager, Motorcycle Action Group; Mr Craig Carey-Clinch, Director of Public Affairs, and Mr Nich Brown, Director of Research and Statistical Services, Motor Cycle Industry Association

Mr Trevor Magner, Senior Government Relations Executive, British Motorcyclists’ Federation; Ms Sheila Rainger, Campaigns Manager, RAC Foundation

Wednesday 7 February 2007

Mr David Griffin, Deputy Chief Constable, Humberside Police, and Mr Phil Edwards, National BikeSafe Co-ordinator, Association of Chief Police Officers

Mr Kevin Clinton, Road Safety Adviser, Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents; Mr Don Matthe, Policy Adviser, Sustrans, Mr Stephen Plowden, Transport Planner

Dr Stephen Ladyman MP, Minister of State for Transport, and Mr Andrew Colski, Head of Vulnerable Road Users Branch, Department for Transport

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03 Motor Cycle Industry Association, Supplementary memorandum
04 British Motorcyclists’ Federation
05 RAC Foundation
06 RAC Foundation, Supplementary memorandum
07 Association of Chief Police Officers
08 Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents
09 Sustrans
10 Mr Stephen Plowden
11 Mr Stephen Plowden, Supplementary memorandum
12 Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, Supplementary memorandum
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20 Brake
21 Transport for London
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Oral evidence

Taken before the Transport Committee

on Wednesday 24 January 2007

Members present:

Mrs Gwyneth Dunwoody, in the Chair

Mr David Clelland
Clive Efford
Mr Philip Hollobone

Mr John Leech
Graham Stringer

Memorandum submitted by The Motorcycle Action Group

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Motorcycle Action Group and the original National Motorcycle Council (NMC) were delighted when the government established the Government's Advisory Group on Motorcycling (GAGM) in 1999. It appeared that for the first time, motorcycling was being taken seriously by government. Through meaningful consultation between motorcycle interest groups, agencies and other parties a truly joined up strategy to mainstream motorcycling and to consider its application into an integrated transport strategy could, at last be achieved.

2. At the heart of the issue is the recognition of the freedom of consumers to choose their preferred mode of transport. Freedom of choice is one of the cornerstones of British Society, a freedom which needs to be exercised responsibly and within the law.

3. Motorcyclists welcome this opportunity to be recognised as a vehicle user group who are able to demonstrate environmental benefits, reduced traffic congestion and a contribution to the growth of the UK economy by providing a low cost, efficient means of mobilising the workforce. This is especially relevant in rural areas where public service transport is not readily available to match the demands of the workplace. “Wheels to work” schemes in North Yorkshire are excellent examples of where affordable mo-ped and scooter transport is made available to young people through partnership schemes to enable them to travel to and from work. This has positive benefits in that it engages young people in the benefits of employment, bringing with it social responsibility and a diversion from anti social behaviour and a life of crime.

4. Notwithstanding the potential benefits motorcycling can bring, there is a recognition that motorcyclists are vulnerable road users and that road casualty reduction is a commendable government objective. Motorcyclists, irrespective of where the blame lies in the event of collisions, will always be “second best”. Nevertheless motorcyclists often perceive that casualty reduction measures focus too heavily on motorcyclists themselves rather than tackling the root cause which is often carelessness and lack of consideration on behalf of others. Motorcyclists recognise they are vulnerable but are able to make those choices on a balance of benefits which they as individuals derive from riding a motorcycle.

5. The motorcycling community welcomes the publication of the Government’s Motorcycling strategy which was a direct outcome of the Government’s Advisory Group on Motorcycling. It provides a very positive way forward to engage motorcycling into a fully integrated transport strategy which will play its part in contributing to the expansion of the UK economy, the environment and provide fulfilment for those who make the choice to ride motorcycles.

6. The Strategy, published in February 2005, outlined 44 actions. The implementation of the strategy is being progressed by the National Motorcycle Council, (NMC), in partnership with the Department for Transport, who became members of a restructured NMC in late 2005. The NMC is made up of representatives from the motorcycle interest groups, the motorcycle industry, DfT, other agencies and organisations who can make a positive contribution to the delivery of the strategy.

7. The 44 actions have been grouped into the following areas. Task forces manage each area:

(a) Traffic Management, Planning and Transportation.
(b) Technical, Engineering and Environment.
(c) Training, Testing and Licensing.
(d) Road Safety and Publicity.

8. Timescales for the delivery of the strategy range from “Already implemented” to “2–5” years.
BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE SUBMITTER

1. David Short is a member of the NMC. He is full time employee of the Motorcycle Action Group in the capacity of the Campaigns Manager. He has been in post since October 2006.

2. David Short retired from the police service in March 2006 having completed over 30 years service. He retired in the rank of Chief Superintendent and was the senior officer in charge of the “Eastern Area of North Yorkshire”, one third of England’s largest County. Mr Short is a life long motorcyclist and during his police service he initiated the “Bike Safe” casualty reduction scheme. He was awarded the Prince Michael of Kent Special Road Safety award in 1998 for his innovative approach to road casualty reduction. Bike Safe is now a National police motorcycle casualty reduction education programme.

3. David Short was a member of the team which compiled the Association of Chief Police Officer, (ACPO), Road Deaths Investigation Manual. He has been the Senior Investigating officer in a number of high profile fatal collisions involving police officers. David Short represented ACPO on the Government Advisory Group on Motorcycling. He holds a BSc in the Social Sciences and is a member of the Institute of risk management.

FACTUAL INFORMATION

1. In relation to specific actions allocated to the motorcycle interest groups, ie the Motorcycle Action Group and the British Motorcyclists Federation, there are two.

Action (iii)

A campaign led by the motorcycle industry, retailers and rider user groups to encourage riders to keep their machines road legal for noise.

Action (xli)

Engage with the press to discuss how they can work with us so that irresponsible riding which endangers the riders themselves and other road users, is not encouraged.

2. In relation to (iii) above the MAG, BMF and MCI are working with the Federation of European Motorcyclists Associations, (FEMA), to produce guidelines which will be reviewed by the Technical, Engineering and Environmental sub group for implementation in the UK. In addition, letters of support have been sent to one of the motorcycle magazines which has been encouraging quieter exhaust systems. The NMC recognise the negative impact of noisy exhausts, especially when compounded by irresponsible riding. The appointment of a new Campaigns Manager to the MAG will present an opportunity to develop a national campaign to address this issue. This will involve manufacturers, retailers and trading standards.

3. In relation to (xli) above, regular meetings have been established with editors of motorcycle magazines to try and persuade a more responsible editorial and features. This appears to be having some positive effect, as outlined in 2 above. It would however be a fair observation that the irresponsible elements of the motorcycle media are little different from other periodicals in other walks of life. The “laddish” culture pervades in some Mountain Biking, motoring and “lifestyle” magazines such as Zoo, Nuts and Loaded magazines.

4. It is fair to say that given the relatively recent publication of the National Motorcycle Strategy, February 2005, and the complexity of many of the recommendations, much of the implementation is medium to long term and still ongoing. Attached to this report is a power point presentation made by each of the sub groups in September 2006 which outlines progress to date.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

1. Whilst significant progress is being made on the implementation of the strategy there are areas of concern. Most evident is the slow pace and in some areas an apparent reluctance to consider motorcycles with in the Local Transport plans of Unitary and local authorities. Despite the best efforts of motorcycle interest group activity some LA’S do not seem to be entering into the spirit of the strategy which specifically recommends that motorcycles should receive appropriate attention in future reviews of planning guidance and documents, Action (vii) and Action (viii), to continue to encourage local authorities to give proper consideration in their LTP’s to appropriate provision for motorcyclists.

2. It is recommended that Regional Government take a more proactive stance in holding LA’S accountable for the implementation of these actions.
CONCLUSION

The Government’s Motorcycle Strategy is a milestone in the integration and mainstreaming of motorcycling into society. I know I speak on behalf of the Motorcycling community when I say that we will work diligently and tirelessly with the government, agencies and organisations in delivering the actions.

15 December 2006

Memorandum submitted by The Motor Cycle Industry Association

INTRODUCTION

1. The UK motorcycle industryturns over in the region of £3 billion per annum and employs approximately 15,000 people.

2. The Motor Cycle Industry Association (MCI) was founded in 1910 and is the sole UK trade body representing the non retail motorcycle industry. In this respect, the MCI represents over 90% of the established UK industry, including manufacturers, importers, accessory manufacturers, factors, related products and services and some motorcycle dealers.

3. The MCI is funded through membership subscription, though the majority of its income comes from the yearly Motorcycle Show at the NEC in Birmingham. This is organised and managed by Motor Cycle Industry Exhibitions Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of MCI and attracts between 150–200,000 visitors per annum.

THE GOVERNMENT’S MOTORCYCLE STRATEGY

Background

4. MCI is pleased to be associated with both the development and the implementation of the Government’s Motorcycle Strategy (GMS). A motorcycle strategy for the UK was first envisaged by the MCI and riders organisations some ten years ago. The lack of a strategic policy framework for motorcycling in the UK was creating barriers to progress for this important mode, both in terms of improving motorcycle safety and also in terms of realising the congestion beating and pollution reducing characteristics of this mode of transport in wider transport policy. Motorcycles are also cheaper to run, can assist social inclusion (particularly outside large cities), produce much lower emissions during “real world” journeys in congested traffic, do less damage to the roads and are versatile and convenient for users.

5. Motorcycles or “Powered Two Wheelers” (PTW) are viewed by a number of stakeholders as dirty, noisy, dangerous and anti-social (despite large improvements in casualty rates; 26% below the 1994–98 baseline of casualties per mile travelled) and noticeable reductions in deaths and serious injuries since 2003.

6. This image has in part been sustained by authorities at local, regional and national level failing to recognise the opportunities offered by a single track vehicle which can help reduce journey times, cut congestion and reduce pollution. In part, negative images have also been sustained by risky riding behaviours and a perception of danger, in addition to some negative “stereotyping” of motorcycling.

7. The failure to recognise the benefits of PTWs in overall transport policy may well have been based on safety concerns, but this is counter productive. A key aspect of casualty reduction is vulnerability reduction, making a safer environment for road users. In policy terms motorcycling has often been viewed as more akin to a two wheeled car, than a bicycle with an engine. This has led to a “Cinderella” environment for PTW users, where policies and initiatives to reduce motorcyclists vulnerability have been largely ignored or denied to riders, either through the lack of specific facilities, or denial of shared use of facilities for other vulnerable users.

8. The personal and environmental benefits of PTW use are increasingly recognised by non motorcycling audiences. The number of PTWs in use has risen by 81% and distance ridden by 42% since 1995. Whilst rider casualties have risen much more slowly (and have fallen noticeably since 2003) this remains a concern for industry, which has dramatically improved tyre, suspension, chassis, braking and engine management technology over many years.

9. A significant number of casualties arise through rider error, however UK and European research has consistently shown that the majority of motorcycle casualties result from the actions of other road users, mainly car drivers, (see Annexe C). Advances in road user and vehicle factors mean that significant future potential casualty improvement will come from the road environment and infrastructure MCI worked closely with DfT to assist the Institute of Highway Incorporated Engineers to produce the UK’s first guidelines on reducing motorcycle casualties through highway design, traffic management and maintenance practices.

10. Action to reduce rider vulnerability should be a primary concern, as for other vulnerable groups, but it is notable that funding (post test rider training/infrastructure and other RS outside of publicity) to reduce these external threats does not reflect the disproportionate vulnerability faced by PTW-users.
Development of the Strategy

11. Although all main political parties and Ministers of both this and the previous administration had accepted the need for a more strategic policy approach to motorcycling by around late 1995, work did not start on this ground breaking initiative within the then DETR until late 1998. After initial meetings chaired by Baroness Hayman, an Advisory Group for Motorcycling was established and chaired by Lord Whitty, with David Jamieson continuing in this role after 2001. (The terms of reference for the Advisory Group are in Annex A). The strategy was completed and announced in February 2005. It is the first of its kind in Europe, with similar work only existing thus far in Australia.

Strategy Implementation

12. The General Election in 2005 and ministerial changes, plus the need to develop an implementation structure meant that implementation work only started in earnest in Spring this year (2006).

13. In Autumn 2005, the MCI, with the support of motorcycling organisations, approached Ministers with a proposal to restructure the National Motorcycle Council (NMC) in order for it to act in partnership with the DfT on implementing the strategy. Previously the NMC had been an umbrella body representing the interests of the motorcycle community as a whole.

14. The National Motorcycle Council was restructured from an existing non governmental motorcycling representative group and launched in February 2006. Motorcycle organisations who had a direct role in implementing the Strategy were joined by the DfT. Chairs of the individual task forces manage and coordinate the activities of each group, with these reporting into regular “plenary” sessions, which are chaired by either a senior DfT official or the Minister of State.

Strengths

— The NMC brings together a diverse, but relevant range of stakeholders which are committed to implementing the Gvmt’s Motorcycle Strategy.

— The Strategy is the first of its kind in Europe and seeks to reduce rider vulnerability and “mainstream” motorcycling as a legitimate transport mode though road safety work, integration, traffic management, technical and infrastructure improvements.

— Ministers are “signed up” to the strategy and view the work as best practice. Indeed, the current Minister of State, Dr Ladyman has presented the strategy as a major tool for understanding and tackling road safety issues at the European Council of Transport Ministers in Verona in November 2006. He also opened the 2006 International Motorcycle Show in Birmingham.

— The strategy represents a “shared responsibility” approach to road safety and policy development, where all stakeholders, including Government work towards a common goal; reduced casualties and increased opportunities.

— Officials within the DfT who are supportive and wish to make progress.

Weaknesses

— Ministers are not usually available to chair and attend each and every plenary session. Direct Ministerial support and intervention in the work of the old Advisory Group was undoubtedly a key factor in “driving” work forward.

— A clear “lead” in the DfT as a whole for the Strategy is not clearly apparent. Prior to the Strategy it was the Minister and RS Division which represented that lead.

— An impression of mixed divisional “sign up” and support within the DfT.

— Engagement across Government Departments is also poor. DCLG and DFES have a role to play in both integration and education, but seem unwilling to engage.

Specific Strategic Actions

15. The Government’s Motorcycle Strategy contains 44 individual actions and related responsibilities. MCI is involved at various levels in discussion relating to most of these, but for the sake of brevity MCI will update the Select Committee only on those areas where it has a direct responsibility.

II Manufacturers to promote the benefits of environmentally better performing bikes as well as continuing to improve emissions performance.

16. PTW emission limits are now set by the European Union. The first limits were set in 1999, Euro 3 limits were implemented in 2006. The fast rate of progress since 1999 represented significant R&D challenges
which the industry is pleased to have met. Industry will continue to meet its responsibilities in this area as the environmental and vehicle emissions debate continues to evolve at a technical level within Europe (see Annex B).

17. Commuter motorcycling accounts for two-thirds of PTW trips and represents one of the cleanest forms of motorised transport for trips where walking, cycling and public transport are not viable. PTWs move freely through traffic jams and as a result leave a smaller carbon footprint over a shorter period of time on any given urban commuting journey. This benefit is noted even for large motorcycles (whole emissions output over real-time journeys in congested areas), though clearly the much smaller and very popular commuter motorcycles under 125cc are extremely fuel, space and time efficient.

18. Innovation is also fundamental to the future of the industry with manufacturers looking at alternative fuels and other green technologies. Two examples in recent years are the Piaggio “Zip & Zip” (electric and petrol) and the Vectrix scooter (Electric). A clear priority will be developing markets for alternative fuelled PTWs as the technology develops.

III A campaign led by the motorcycle industry, retailers and rider user groups to encourage riders to keep their machines legal for road noise.

19. All PTWs sold within the UK for road comply with noise limits as set out in European Directives. However noise remains a nuisance and the Government’s strategy rightly sets out to tackle this problem.

20. MCI manufacturers encourage after sales compliance through publicity and working with established rider organisations and aim to launch a new rider-facing campaign for the start of the 2007 riding season (March).

21. The problem with “illegals” will continue to persist, which is why the MCI also supports targeted enforcement campaigns in addition to education and publicity.

XIV Support motorcycle manufacturers and retailers initiatives to improve rider knowledge of braking systems. Investigate potential road safety problems caused by poor quality replacement brake linings.

22. This item is currently being led by a DfT research project and associated rider survey. The survey is understood to close during December 2006. Next steps will be determined after an initial report. The rider survey is also understood to tackle elements of Action XV.

XXI A greater emphasis on the merits of other motorcycle models as alternatives to sports bikes, providing a wider picture of motorcycling possibilities in the UK.

23. The industry manufactures a broad range of PTWs ranging from small 50cc scooters to the very largest long range cruiser and touring motorcycles. Diversity has always been a key note of the motorcycle industry which caters for riders tastes from commuter and utility to sports biking, touring and overland travelling.

24. The industry has put emphasis on encouraging the merits of different motorcycle types in recent years. Some examples have been the MCI’s Ride to Work campaign which is now a yearly event, focussing on commuter motorcycling and encouraging PTWs as an alternative to car borne traffic congestion. Work on encouraging motorcycle inclusive Local Transport Plans have also provided an opportunity for local publicity regarding the wider role of PTWs.

25. There has been a large amount of public focus on sports bike riding, partly due to associations with safety problems and aggressive riding. This has tended to magnify the significance of sports bikes beyond their actual impact as a proportion of the whole market. In 1995, sports bikes represented up 38% of the market and scooters 22%. Sports bikes now account for 27% of new bikes, but scooters are now at 32% This shows that activities designed to promote PTW diversity have had a significant effect.

XXX Undertake research to discover more about the training industry to establish best practice with a view to opportunities to gain professional qualifications to establish their credentials as trainers. Develop competencies for trainers.

26. DfT have commissioned TRL to research training, testing and identifying best practice. MCI have assisted whenever requested. MCI have worked closely with DSA and MRTA, between us we developed and agreed a set of competencies for post-test trainers. These will form the requirements for trainers wishing to register with the DSA as approved post-test trainers on the voluntary register which will be launched in February 2007.
The proponents of a road safety GCSE in Great Britain to present their case to the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA).

27. In 2005 MCI visited NI Govt and Exam Board (CCEA). This was followed by a proposal to introduce qualification in England which CCEA said was not financially viable.

28. With support from GoSkills a proposal was made to Edexcel (awarding body) but the lack of proven demand made it unviable. MCI have since approached other awarding bodies. The DSA has now shown interest in producing a qualification with Edexcel and the MCI has offered to work in partnership on this initiative. To ensure success, support from an awarding body is essential before approaching QCA, therefore this project will need at least another two years to develop.

Engage with the press to discuss how they can work with us so that irresponsible riding which endangers the riders themselves and other road users is not encouraged.

29. Regular forums are held with the key editors and publishers in the motorcycle media and a range of road safety matters are discussed (next one due in January 2007). The results have thus far been an increase in editorial coverage in areas relating to rider skills, and non performance motorcycling activity. Features on better riding and touring activity have also raised awareness of responsible riding. It is expected that this trend will continue given the increasing diversity of customer tastes in motorcycle types.

30. In addition the motorcycle industry in Europe (ACEM) will shortly be launching new guidelines for advertising and promotion which will further reduce the instances where coverage or advertising gives the impression of racing on public roads. The new guidelines will also be aimed at influencing the coverage generated by journalists who road test machines from industry fleets.

31. The industry’s Motorcycle Show, which is held each autumn at the NEC in Birmingham showcases new safety technologies and allows a platform for training and road safety organisations in an arena which is under the close attention of the national and international motorcycle media.

32. MCI will continue to work with the media organisations responsible as part of its ongoing commitment to this action.

MINI MOTOS

33. Alongside the Motorcycling Strategy, the Select Committee wishes to enquire into the following area.

“what action the Government might take to reduce the risk posed by mini-motos, go-peds and other motorised two-wheelers which are not legal for road use.”

34. Mini motos, toy bikes, go-peds, etc come under the broad heading of Motorcycles for Use on Private Property (MUPP). Such bikes have existed in small numbers for many years, their illegal use has been an ongoing problem for enforcement agencies, partly exacerbated by a lack of places for young people to ride these bikes.

35. Historically, the problem has typically been one of worn out or stolen mopeds and road motorcycles ridden illegally in public places and parkland with their identities erased and number plates removed. The rise of very cheap toy and mini bike imports, mainly from China, has created much greater public concern and awareness.

36. Until 2001, the mini moto market was small (around 7,000 new bikes per year), with high quality and relatively expensive machines being used for legitimate sport. Since then the market has risen substantially, HM customs and Revenue figures indicate that around 170,000 MUPPs of various kinds were imported into the UK market in 2005.

37. Sales have been conducted outside of the mainstream motorcycle industry, with individual entrepreneurs bringing on containers of machines and selling them through a variety of non industry retail outlets, eBay and other mail order. However, after four years of unfettered growth, there are signs that this fashion may be passing as import figures for the first half of 2006 were lower than the period 12 months earlier.

38. The level of concern about safety and nuisance caused by the mainly young riders of these machines resulted in three Ten Minute Rule Bills and numerous Parliamentary Questions during the last Session of Parliament.
Current Legislation.

39. Legislation is clear. Unless the MUPP, or any other motorcycle is taxed, insured, MoT’d (if applicable) and has been registered with DVLA and carries a number plate, it cannot be ridden legally outside of the owners garden gate, or front door unless the rider has the specific permission of a landowner. The rider must be at least 16 and hold a provisional licence and insurance for a 50cc MUPP and wear an approved crash helmet. If the MUPP is larger than 50cc, the rider must be at least 17, qualified to ride and have the relevant documentation. The law is clear.

Future Arrangements.

40. MCi does not believe an off road licensing or registration scheme would be effective in reducing public concern or justifiable to the majority of legitimate users. Making something which is already illegal, on so many counts, even more illegal suggests that current enforcement techniques need to be improved or have been given low priority.

41. For DVLA to establish a comprehensive record that police and local authorities could rely on would require hundreds of thousands of vehicles not currently registered for road use to be traced and identifying serial numbers to be recorded. In many cases these vehicles do not have unique ID applied at the point of manufacture and so a system to apply unique ID marks indelibly would have to be agreed and funded.

42. The unintended consequences of off road registration could impact in an expensive and bureaucratic fashion on legitimate off road motorcycle sport and recreation, while in the meantime, those who already ride MUPPs illegally will simply remove their new number plates and carry on as before (as was much the case with ad hoc illegal riding of a few years ago).

43. The MCI strongly supported the Home Office summer “offensive” which sought to increase enforcement and seize machines. Action in Coventry was taken as part of the “offensive” and it is reported that the seizure of around 60 illegal vehicles meant public complaints fell by around 80%. Enforcement of existing regulations works if it is given the correct level of priority.

44. However, there are two other key aspects which need to be considered

1. Support for off road riding areas. The Auto Cycle Union has a successful model for engagement which has been shown to be effective at reducing public complaints where it is applied. Unfortunately, despite the support of local authority officers, proposals for such schemes often falls due to lack of support from elected council members. Local Authorities need additional support from Government to create these diversionary areas. This is essentially the same problem that was faced with BMX bikes and skateboards 20 years ago. Public concerns were largely addressed by provision.

2. Education needs to be targeted in schools and also at parents who in many cases buy these machines for their teenage children. Clearly a knowledge of current rights and responsibilities is lacking both among young people and their parents. Road user education in schools is one tool which can be employed. Others should be aimed at the parents themselves.

The Third European Driving Licence Directive

45. Both the Second and Third European Directives require consideration.

The Second Directive.

46. Much of this European legislation was implemented in 1997. The remaining elements specific to certain aspects of motorcycle training, including “brake and swerve” manoeuvres are to be implemented in 2008.

47. MCI is concerned that the Second Directive has been implemented in far more rigorous fashion than was perhaps envisaged by the European Union, necessitating the creation of large and expensive off road riding areas. The effect will be to reduce the number of available motorcycle test centres from around 250 to approximately 65, leaving candidates with far greater travelling distances to their test. The motorcycle test will become more expensive as will training. MCI predicts a significant impact on the numbers of people presenting themselves for a motorcycle test both before and after the provisions are introduced.

The Third Directive

48. Although the concept of progressive licensing is something that the industry broadly supports, the effect of the existing Second Directive was never evaluated and training best practice was not considered.
49. Consequently, the Third Directive seeks to impose additional barriers to gaining a motorcycle licence that are not based on the results of subsequent in-depth research by the EU. Indeed, MCI feels that the provisions of the Third Directive were pushed through amid a vacuum of understanding, or willingness to understand and reason about the nature of motorcycle safety and the benefits that motorcycling offers to policies for reducing congestion and pollution. MCI is grateful to Ministers for speaking against the motorcycle aspects of the Directive in Council and for abstaining in the Council vote.

50. The scope for confusion about the training and testing regime, increased and unaffordable cost to candidates and reduced levels of motorcycling as a result of the Third Directive is very high. Should the Third Directive be implemented in a way that discourages potential motorcyclists, any consequent reduction in casualties from simply reducing the numbers of this vulnerable road user group would have little to do with genuinely improving their safety. This was the main failure of the 1981 Transport Act, which merely acted to discourage motorcycling, rather than improve safety for those who ride.

51. MCI seeks the Select Committee’s support for Ministers and Officials to implement the Third Directive with the lightest touch possible in order that future motorcyclists are well prepared for the road without being overburdened by complexity.

In Closing.

52. MCI has welcomed the opportunity to respond to this forthcoming enquiry and will be pleased to assist the Transport Select Committee in its deliberations, either by giving oral evidence or by the provision of further information.

53. Although current motorcycle safety statistics or the current market situation has not been commented upon above, Annex C gives a brief outline of these important areas.

54. 2003 saw an unwelcome peak in motorcycle casualties, but since then, numbers have fallen steadily. MCI feels that this has in part been due to an increased awareness of motorcycle safety issues, investment in training developments, policy and integration work and the announcement of the Government’s Motorcycling Strategy.

55. It is clear that progress in reducing casualties will only continue to be made if the strategy is fully implemented by Government and other authorities, motorcycling is fully mainstreamed in the transport mix and opportunities are taken to reduce vulnerability while at the same time maximising the opportunities for this important mode of transport.

18 December 2006

Annex A

Terms of Reference; Advisory Group for Motorcycles

The Terms of Reference for the Advisory Group are to explore:

— the safety record of motorcyclists and agree on measures to be taken to improve safety, including general road user behaviour and consideration of training and licensing arrangements;

— the environmental impact of motorcycles and to agree what measures, if any, should be taken in light of the conclusions reached by the Group; and

— the role of powered two wheelers of all sorts in an integrated transport policy including the scope for traffic management measures that are beneficial to motorcyclists and contribute to that policy.

Road Safety Division is the lead DfT division and administers the group as well as being responsible for drawing together PTW policy across the Dept.

Advisory Group Structure

Full plenary meetings of the Advisory Group take place quarterly.

Five task forces work as sub-groups reporting back to the main Advisory Group. MCI is represented by various officers on each group.
### Task force and DfT Div Lead

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistics (Stats)</th>
<th>Common basis for PTW stats, including road safety, usage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fiscal &amp; environment</td>
<td>Fiscal and environmental issues for PTWs, and tools available to influence PTW development and use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research <em>(Research)</em></td>
<td>New research requirements, incl. into causation of accidents and behavioural aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated transport and traffic management * (Traffic Management)</td>
<td>Roles of PTWs in integrated transport, and transport engineering and planning measures to facilitate safe usage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle safety &amp; security (VSE)</td>
<td>Vehicle design developments and security of PTWs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, three ad-hoc groups have developed since 2001.

- Publicity Assists DfT in determining effective safety publicity (leaflets and TV advertising) as part of the “Think” campaign.
- Post Test Training Considers effective policy development for post test training, Bikesafe and Rider/Driver offender improvement programmes.
- Advanced Stop Lines A small group to monitor and evaluate experimental ASL access by PTWs in East London. TrL are leading research in this area with the DfT.
- MCI are members of each group.

### Plenary Meetings

Quarterly plenaries discuss the work of the task forces decide which areas need to be explored in greater depth, explore policy issues and look at each area in the context of the forthcoming national motorcycle strategy. Delegates from both Government and member organisations are expected to have an understanding the technical and policy issues in a broad range of areas, particularly those covered by the task forces and be able to set this against an understanding of UK policy development structures and their relationship with both European regulation and regional/local policy priorities.

All issues are set against the context of developing PTW policy which facilitates a safer, more accessible and secure environment. Hence in addition to safety, traffic management and research issues take a high priority as the UK Gvmn still has competence in these areas as opposed to Europe. Development in areas such as design standards (the PTW itself) and environmental issues are mainly discussed in the relevant task forces, with the head of each group reporting the results of deliberations to the plenary group. This is because most issues in this area are now determined by European regulation. Specific manufacturing issues are never discussed at plenary sessions.

The Minister attends part of most meetings depending on the Parliamentary diary. Changes to the daily timetable in Parliament (the end of late night sessions), means his attendance is not as regular as it used to be. However, it is unusual for him to miss an entire meeting.

### Reporting

In 2001, an interim report was published by the Advisory Group. This can be found on the DfT website or can be obtained from MCI. The report outlined ongoing work in a number of areas and indicated where future action will be focussed.

The full strategy was published in February 2005.
THE NATIONAL MOTORCYCLE COUNCIL

Responsible for implementing the Government’s Motorcycling Strategy and the key actions outlined in the schedule.

The NMC is structured as follows:

NMC Membership includes the following organisations:
Department for Transport
Driving Standards Agency
ACPO
British Motorcyclists Federation
Motorcycle Action Group
Motor Cycle Industry Association
RAC Foundation
LARSOA
Motorcycle Riders Training Association
Transport for London
Motorcycle Retailers Association
Kill Spills (anti diesel spillage lobby)
Highways Agency
Institute of Highways Incorporated Engineers
Despatch Association

Annex C

PTW REGISTRATIONS AND CASUALTY FIGURES SINCE 1983
Casualty Rates and Traffic 1994–98 and 2005

Casualty Rate (per 100 million kms ridden): 1994-98 vs 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rates</th>
<th>1994–98</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>% change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KSI</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>−28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slight</td>
<td>452</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>−25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>619</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>−26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PTW Casualty Numbers 1994–98 and 2005

PTW User Casualties (total recorded): 1994-98 vs 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numbers</th>
<th>1994–98</th>
<th>2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fatal</td>
<td>467</td>
<td>569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious</td>
<td>6,008</td>
<td>5,939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slight</td>
<td>17,547</td>
<td>18,316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>24,023</td>
<td>24,824</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PTW Fatality Rates

Fatalities among users of PTWs continue to cause concern. In 2005, 569 PTW users were killed, down from an aberrant high of 693 in 2003 (to give perspective, this was around 100 more deaths than in the surrounding years).

The average chance of being killed on a PTW in 2005 was 1 in 10 million vehicle kms.
Annex B

European Whole Vehicle Type Approval: Exhaust pollutants - standards and timetable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mopeds (less than 50cc)</th>
<th>Scooters and motorcycles greater than 50cc</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Euro 1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Euro 2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Euro 3</strong></td>
<td><strong>&lt;150cc</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Euro 3</strong></td>
<td><strong>&gt;150cc</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CO (g/km)</th>
<th>HC (g/km)</th>
<th>NOx (g/km)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Test procedure**

- ECE 47
- ECE 40 (urban, with warm-up)
- ECE 40 (without 40 sec warm-up)

**1999**

- EURO1
- EURO2
- EURO3

**2000**

- EURO1
- EURO2
- EURO3

**2001**

- EURO1
- EURO2
- EURO3

**2002**

- EURO1
- EURO2
- EURO3

**2003**

- EURO1
- EURO2
- EURO3

**2004**

- EURO1
- EURO2
- EURO3

**2005**

- EURO1
- EURO2
- EURO3

**2006**

- EURO1
- EURO2
- EURO3

**2007**

- EURO1
- EURO2
- EURO3

**2008**

- EURO1
- EURO2
- EURO3

**Notes:**

- Applies to new homologations (vehicle types)
- Applies to new vehicle registrations

Derogations:
1. Trials and enduro bikes Euro 2 limits apply to new types from 1/1/04 and to all first reg’ns from 1/7/05 (see Directive 2002/51/EC Article 2 para 4)
2. For Manufacturers of <5000 per type Euro 3 applies from 1/1/08 (See Directive 2002/51EC Article 3 final para.)

Witnesses: Mr David Short, Campaigns Manager, Motorcycle Action Group (MAG), Mr Craig Carey-Clinch, Director of Public Affairs, Motor Cycle Industry Association (MCIA) and Mr Nich Brown, Director of Research & Statistical Services, Motor Cycle Industry Association (MCIA), gave evidence.

Chairman: Good afternoon, gentlemen, you are very welcome to the Committee. We do have one or two little bits of housekeeping before we actually come to you. Members having an interest to declare.

Mr Clelland: Member of Amicus.

Clive Eardley: Member of the Transport and General Workers Union.

Graham Stringer: Member of Amicus.

Q1 Chairman: Gwyneth Dunwoody, ASLEF. Gentlemen, would you first, for the purposes of the record, identify yourselves, starting on my left and your right?

Mr Brown: Thank you, Chairman. My name is Nich Brown, I am the Director of Research and Statistical Services at the Motor Cycle Industry Association.

Mr Carey-Clinch: My name is Craig Carey-Clinch, Director of Public Affairs for the Motor Cycle Industry Association.

Mr Short: Madam Chairman, I am David Short, I am the Campaigns Manager for the Motorcycle Action Group.

Q2 Chairman: Did any of you have a short statement you wanted to make before we begin, or may we go straight to the questions?

Mr Short: Madam Chairman, I would just like to announce that our organisation, the Motorcycle Action Group, is one of the two leading rider interest groups in the country and we represent approximately 45,000 to 50,000 motorcyclists. We are delighted to be here engaging in this debate today.

Q3 Chairman: Long may that be your attitude, Mr Short, that is very good and we are very pleased to see you all here and very pleased to get the opportunity of talking to you about this subject. Is there a particular reason why we need a national motorcycling strategy?

Mr Carey-Clinch: Yes, a strategy is important from the point of view of securing safety improvements, accessibility and security for motorcycle users. There is no such strategy that has been formed so far; there are many for other different types of vulnerable road user groups, and the situation of safety and both accessibility and integrated transport really demands the need for such a strategy.

Q4 Chairman: What do you think of the motorcycling strategy which was published in 2005?

Mr Brown: It is fair to say that the motorcycling strategy is a very comprehensive document. In my previous incarnation working in local government, working for the road safety department and working with pedestrians and cyclists I saw the way that the walking and cycling strategies were developed. The department did a very good job learning from those processes, the process of the strategy went very well in my view. It is a starting point, I believe, but it is a very comprehensive, wide-ranging one. The number
of action points involved, the number of agencies and local authorities and other organisations that are required to deliver the strategy really does make it a community document and that has to be a good thing for motorcyclists.

Q5 Chairman: Has anything changed since it was published two years ago?
Mr Brown: A lot has changed, yes. Several of the actions have already been completed and we can provide a list of those actions, or we have done in our briefing document so far. The key to it is how it goes on to be implemented and there the Department for Transport has shown great willingness to work with the motorcycle community and other interested bodies.

Q6 Chairman: You think they are showing leadership?
Mr Brown: It would be fair in this context to say that it is not a question of one side leading; I really do believe that this is a community-based situation. Again, from my past experience in local government there has been a tendency to ignore motorcyles and that has been reflected in a worse than necessary casualty situation, a higher than necessary theft problem and, if you look at the statistics, from about 1996 when local authorities started to first take motorcycling seriously you can see a divergence between rising use of motorcycles, which rose at a higher rate than casualties did, and that speaks volumes for how important it is for local authorities and national government to get involved in positive measures that address motorcycling.

Q7 Chairman: You said that implementation of the actions in the strategy did not begin until Spring 2006, which was nearly a year after its publication.
Mr Brown: I am sorry if I gave you that impression. All the way through since publication a lot of those things that have been implemented and are currently being worked on were already in train as part of the Government Advisory Group process which preceded publication of the strategy.

Q8 Chairman: Do you want to tell us about the National Motorcycle Council; what does it do and what is its strategy?
Mr Carey-Clinch: If I may, Madam Chairman, a little piece of history. The National Motorcycle Council was a coalition of motorcycling organisations brought together to discuss issues of common concern, pretty much predominantly transport policy and motorcycling. When the NMC was working in the mid Nineties it talked to Government about the idea of generating a national strategy, and once the advisory group was convened by ministers in late 1998–99 the NMC pretty much fell into dormancy. With the publication of the strategy the previous members of the NMC felt that it was an opportunity to offer such a body as an umbrella with government and through which to offer and implement the national strategy. Ministers were quite keen to support that idea.

Q9 Chairman: Between you, you were particularly asked to achieve seven of the actions set out in the strategy. Will you get that done by February 2007? I can take you through all the actions if you like, but they are promoting the benefits of environmentally better performing bikes; a campaign to encourage riders to keep their machines road legal; support the manufacturers' efforts to improve rider knowledge of braking systems and road safety problems.
Mr Carey-Clinch: In the broadest sense some of these actions are, by necessity, on-going. The first thing to do is to establish the need for these—this was done within the strategy—and then to convene the people who can actually make a difference to some of these and to start on-going discussions, particularly on the issue of encouraging different types of bike usage and emphasis on different types of bikes.

Q10 Chairman: Let us take it the other way around; is there anything in that list that you think is unachievable?
Mr Carey-Clinch: In the list of actions, particularly with regard to the motorcycle industry, no, and I would say in the longer term for the other actions for Government and the deadlines that have been set, they are all achievable provided we get the necessary level of engagement.
Chairman: The necessary level of engagement. Mr Leech,

Q11 Mr Leech: Just on that particular point, are any of the points that you were asked to look at ones that you feel you should not have been asked to look at or ones that you feel uncomfortable with?
Mr Carey-Clinch: Certainly from the point of view of working within the strategy, no. The strategy itself, although as representatives of our organisations we had to agree those, we also had wider memberships both from the industry and, at the risk of speaking for my colleague Mr Short here, and the riders group. There had to be sign-up from within the industry and the riders and the other stakeholders involved and they all have.

Q12 Clive Efford: A lot of people say that motorcycling is extremely dangerous and that it should be curtailed; what would your view on a statement like that be? What would your response be?
Mr Brown: You can look at the numbers involved in two ways: you can look at the absolute numbers of people involved and you can look at the proportionality, and generally when motorcycling is criticised it is criticised because it is one of the most vulnerable groups. In terms of proportions of road users, we account for a lot of casualties, but in actual fact the risk, if you look at it in absolute terms, at the moment is running at around one death for every 10 million kilometres motorcycled on the road. We are working, as are the riders groups, the trainers, local government and all the agencies, to try and reduce that rate—as we are with all road user groups, but I think it is unfair to single out a group which is in itself vulnerable and say that it should not exist.
There is a misconception that motorcyclists bring a lot of the risks upon themselves, and clearly the figures do not bear that out. The clear majority of motorcycle accidents that result in a rider casualty are caused by the actions of other road users, and it is unfortunate that people do not pay attention to that.

**Mr Short:** If I may, Madam Chairman, from the rider’s perspective we have to appreciate that motorcyclists are a recognised transport mode, it is an expression of individuality and personal choice. The fact that we have a government motorcycle strategy is fantastic news, in terms of myself as a lifelong motorcyclist, seeing it being recognised as such by Government. We have to look at the proportionality in terms of reducing the greenhouse gas emissions which are very, very high at the moment. Certainly in terms of the rural area which I come from, low cost two-wheeled transport is an excellent means of engaging youth with employment and inculcating a sense of social responsibility, diverting them away from a potential life of crime. We must therefore look at the benefits weighed against the risk factor which you outline.

Q13 Clive Efford: From the driving perspective, then, how could you make motorcycling safer, what could be done in your view?

**Mr Short:** There are some excellent initiatives which have taken place in terms of the department’s Think! Campaign and we have seen some quite hard-hitting television advertisements which have highlighted the necessity to “Look once, look twice, think bike”, going back to an earlier campaign. Training is the key and making motorists aware of the potential dangers, not just of motorcyclists but, let us be honest about this, other vulnerable road users, whether they be on horseback or whether they are cyclists. Anybody outside that protective cocoon of a car with air bags and side impact bars can generate a mindset that I am all right and it does not matter so much about other people. We have to overcome that, and I am speaking there from my 30 plus years as a senior police officer until I retired last year, a lot of it on traffic. There is a mindset which we must engage with and encourage everybody that to use the roads has a responsibility on other people as well. It is about that educative process.

**Mr Carey-Clinch:** If I may add something, if you look at the progress of casualty reduction across the board we seem to be reaching a sort of low level and it has been very difficult to address beyond that in terms of reducing casualties. This implies that some very innovative ideas are required, rather than just relying on traditional road safety methodology. One particular area, particularly with driver training and I would say also with rider training, is the issue of road user education—pre-driver training, particularly as part of the school curriculum. There have been some positive noises made about that of late and Dr Ladyman himself also made a statement just after Christmas, but a curriculum within schools that asks young people to recognise their rights and responsibilities as potential road users of the future can help to generate an environment where road safety is something you think about, not as an add-on or inconvenience as a teenager or a young person.

Q14 Chairman: Mr Carey-Clinch, I do not want to be too unkind but if you look at the road casualty by selected road user type, pedal cyclists have come from 20,000 down to 16,000 plus, but then when you look at motorcycle riders the difference is 26,000 down to 23,000 and hardly any changes at all in passenger figures. That would seem to indicate that some sections of the road are trying very hard to learn the lessons and some are not. Are you really saying that there is not a great deal more that you can do for motorcycles, riders and passengers, and it will just have to be everybody else who does something different?

**Mr Carey-Clinch:** I believe there is an enormous amount more that can be done and the fact that in last year’s casualty statistics the greatest gains were made amongst motorcycle users shows that we are really only starting to get to the root of the problem and are beginning to make progress downwards. It should be noted that we are looking at a backdrop here where motorcycle mileage and use increased incredibly over the last 10 years.

Q15 Chairman: I do not think anybody is disagreeing with you but the figures are pretty stark, are they not; even amongst car drivers they have come down proportionately more?

**Mr Brown:** Madam Chairman, the car as a technical platform for deploying safety measures—seatbelts, airbags, crumple zones, the fact that it is a protected tin box, offers a lot more physical opportunities for protecting the occupants, and the cyclist, the pedestrian, the motorcyclist the horse-rider does not have that kind of technological advantage. There are some disadvantages to that: the strengthening of car windscreens has prompted fears that that makes it more difficult for a car driver at a junction to see a vulnerable road user, especially a motorcyclist or a cyclist approaching, and there is research being carried out by the Department to look into that. With all the right intentions, the engineers and the politicians point the resources in the direction of where something can be done, but there can be unintended consequences. For the motorcyclist, the environment in which the motorcyclist operates is where a lot of the risk lies. Work that we have been doing with the Institute of Highways and Incorporated Engineers and other local authorities throughout Europe has been showing to us that we think the estimate of how important the road itself is to road user safety is such that (a) it has been underestimated and (b) with all the progress that has been made with education and training and vehicle design, it is probably the road management, the road design which offer the greatest opportunities for casualty reduction in the future.

**Chairman:** I am sure various people will want to come onto that. Mr Stringer.
Q16 Graham Stringer: Can I move on to mini-bikes. Do you believe that the nuisance they are causing is giving a negative view of motorcycling in general and is there anything that can be done about that?

Mr Carey-Clinch: Unfortunately, yes, the public image of the problem caused by these motorcycles for use on private property, which includes these mini-bikes, is knocking onto the image of motorcycling. We are making efforts to ensure that the public knows there are two distinct issues at play here, and this is also where road user education comes in. It is an issue that we have had to face this year.

Q17 Graham Stringer: What do you think can be done about it?

Mr Carey-Clinch: We had a number of initiatives which we put forward from diversionary schemes through to enforcement. What we have seen has been a success factor was the Home Office campaign last summer, combined with the work of the Auto-Cycle Union on lobbying for diversionary schemes in local authority areas. We have the powers, but it is how they are applied. For example in Coventry we saw a reduction of 80% in complaints from the seizure of just a relatively a few number of bikes and a local publicity campaign.

Q18 Graham Stringer: Do you think that the Government should move to restricting the import and sales of these vehicles?

Mr Carey-Clinch: I believe there may be a lot of unintended knock-on effects to other products. I do not have a complete answer to that, but it is something where I do not believe it would be—

Q19 Chairman: Is that a yes or a no?

Mr Carey-Clinch: No, they should not.

Q20 Graham Stringer: Do you believe that they are safe? I do not mean that people fall off them and hurt themselves but do you think their fuel pipes are safe, do you think they are structurally safe, do you think they are fit for purpose, to use a word often used in this place nowadays?

Mr Brown: If I can put some figures to that, historically a well-designed children’s motorcycle, built by one of the major manufacturers, built for eventually an introduction to competitive motorcycle sport, if those are the sort of bikes we are talking about then the import volume we are talking about is roughly 7,000 a year in total. What has changed over the last three years has been the exponential growth in copies of these machines from the Far East and, last year, our estimates were such that we believe there was something like 170,000 of those machines brought in. If we look at the figures for the first six months of this year, for the first time we have seen no increase in imports of those machines. They are mostly from China but we recognise that products from China can be extremely high quality if that is what is ordered by the people who are importing them, but unfortunately most of these bikes are being imported by people who operate outside of the motorcycle industry; basically, they are not viewing them as motorcycles, they are not part of the motorcycle trade. That is an important distinction.

Q21 Graham Stringer: That is very interesting, but do you think they are dangerous? Are they likely to blow up, are they likely to fall apart when being driven? Do you have any evidence or statistics you can give us on that?

Mr Carey-Clinch: We do not have any evidence or statistics on quality standards. All the bikes, as I say, are imported and sold outside of the mainstream industry, but we are concerned about quality standards on things like chain guards, brakes and things like that, and we are actually looking with the Department at how we can evaluate what is coming in and whether any other action should be taken with regard to that, so there are concerns, yes.

Q22 Graham Stringer: You mentioned that the law was enforced in Coventry; do you think that generally the law is being enforced sufficiently?

Mr Short: May I pick that up, Madam Chairman? There is sufficient legislation there to deal with this problem, which is antisocial behaviour, entry-level criminality, call it what you like. Under the existing crime and disorder reduction partnership approach, whereby you have got multi-agency meetings involving police, probation, local authorities, looking at specific problems in specific areas because, if we are honest about this, this is not a blanket UK-wide problem, this is localised in certain areas.

Q23 Chairman: Was that what happened in Coventry?

Mr Short: Yes.

Q24 Chairman: They targeted specific areas with the multi-agency group.

Mr Short: That is correct, Madam Chairman, and what you get then is the enforcement side, you get targeted police in to actually crack down in those particular problem areas, which allows us to seize them under section 59 of the Police Act 2002 to actually crush them if they are not insured, which is a very effective way. Also, the other side in terms of diversionary schemes, is actually looking at opportunities where these things can be ridden legitimately in a safe environment which is properly risk-managed. I do not think the problem is that dissimilar to what we had some years ago with youngsters on skateboards everywhere, and we now see in areas skateboard parks being set up which are properly managed and where the youngsters can go. It is the same with youth shelters where youngsters can go and congregate. It is that problem-solving approach which is the police national intelligence model which is nationwide now which can actually look at the problem, if it is identified, and deal with it, given the existing legislation procedures which are already there.

Q25 Graham Stringer: Do you have national statistics on complaints, deaths on these bikes?
Mr Short: The only national statistic which I have to hand at the moment is that in some police basic command units there have been in excess of 4,000 complaints in the last 12 months, and in certain areas more than 40% of calls to police basic command units have been about mini-motos. I have not got any data on death or serious injury.

Q26 Graham Stringer: Do you think it would be helpful and make policing more effective if, like other motor vehicles, both the vehicle and the owner and driver were licensed?

Mr Short: The problem there is that just as we have at present with motor vehicles which should be licensed, there are still those people who will not license them and will not have a driving licence. They are the same people who would actually tend to criminally use these types of machines. I am not sure, therefore, that by making it a blanket requisite for some sort of registration scheme it would actually catch those people who are causing problems.

Mr Carey-Clinch: It is also important to look at the context and where the problem came from. Before the rise of the £50 mini-moto we still had complaints about young people using worn out or stolen machines which the number plates and identification were erased from, causing whatever local mayhem they did. Our concern about a registration scheme, although it is an idea that would be well-motivated, is that I do believe that number plates and suchlike would simply be removed. There are problems of identification that come from that or numbers are erased or changed, and the knock-on effects, the unintended effects for instance on legitimate owners of other motor vehicles, both the vehicle and the owner and driver were licensed?

Mr Short: Under the Police Reform Act 2002, section 59, if antisocial behaviour emanates from the use of a motor vehicle, that individual can be given a warning and within 12 months if that behaviour is once again demonstrated then the police can seize and crush the machine. They do not have to wait the full 12 months, it might be the following day.

Q27 Chairman: Mr Short, do you want to comment on that?

Mr Short: If I may, Madam Chairman, the existing powers are there already. If antisocial behaviour is borne out by these motorcycles, mini-motos, then providing a warning is given they can be seized and, if they have not got insurance—and these things will never have insurance because they will never meet all the other stringent standards—they can be crushed.

Q28 Clive Efford: When you say, Mr Short, “if a warning has been issued”, can you explain how the warning is issued before the bike is seized?

Mr Short: Under the Police Reform Act 2002, section 59, if antisocial behaviour emanates from the use of a motor vehicle, that individual can be given a warning and within 12 months if that behaviour is once again demonstrated then the police can seize and crush the machine. They do not have to wait the full 12 months, it might be the following day.

Q29 Clive Efford: But we are talking about stopping and identifying the same bike twice.

Mr Short: Not necessarily. That is one element of it, but the other element is—there are more strings to the bow—the use of insurance. If the machine does not have insurance—and it will not have—and an officer reasonably suspects that it will not have insurance, then it can be seized immediately.

Q30 Clive Efford: And crushed?

Mr Short: Absolutely. This is happening very effectively around the country. We used it in North Yorkshire when I was the area commander, very effectively, on cars, and it has been used around the country. There is a very good practice guide on the Together, Crime Reduction Toolkits website, which gives a guide on good practice on how to do this.

Q31 Clive Efford: The problem that the police describe to me in my area in dealing with this is that because quite often these are very young and very reckless people that ride these bikes, they do not pursue them. Therefore, because there is no number plate, no identifying plate, it is very difficult for them to identify the bike quickly and deal with the problem.

Mr Short: It is the identification of the individual rider that is the real issue that matters, and if you are using the intelligence-led approach you are probably using CCTV and you probably have a profile on these particular individuals because experience
suggests that they are also breaching the law in other areas as well. If you target the individual and find the individual then it is not usually as problematic to find the machine as well.

**Mr Carey-Clinch:** This is where targeted local enforcement in particular problem areas and gathering police intelligence is always very useful. At the end of the day I strongly feel that the number plates would simply be removed and you still have this problem of who is riding the bike at any particular time because these things tend to get handed around. If you have got the intelligence then the police are aware of movements and activities. This was certainly one of the success factors behind the targeted schemes in Coventry and near Glasgow as well.

**Q32 Clive Efford:** I just want to get my head round why do we have them at all? Why are we making these tiny little bikes?

**Mr Brown:** We do not; we do not make them in the UK. It is really that young people, just by nature of being young people, are always looking for a new fad, a new form of excitement.

**Q33 Chairman:** Somebody is importing them, Mr Brown, and they are probably British, do you not think?

**Mr Brown:** Yes, absolutely. As I said before there was an established trade of about 7,000 units a year of the major manufacturers, with very well-built, well-designed bikes being distributed through motorcycle dealerships, mostly specialising in sporting bikes. The difference now is that these things get given away with mobile phones, they can be sold by a newsagent’s shop or the local off licence and because they have been imported at such a low price from China there has effectively been a flooding of the market. That has opened up the prospect of buying one of these things to a lot of people who would not otherwise have been serious enough to afford to buy one.

**Q34 Clive Efford:** You have not answered my question; why do we not just set a minimum specification for a motorised two-wheeled bike which bans them completely?

**Mr Brown:** There is already a British standard, which is somewhat out of date, which is being looked at again—we are involved with the British standards people to try to beef that standard up. That is precisely the approach that we think is likely to work.

**Q35 Clive Efford:** Mr Carey-Clinch, earlier on you said that if we were to ban them completely it would stop other things or stop people importing them which would restrict the import of other machines. What did you mean?

**Mr Carey-Clinch:** Unfortunately, it is impossible to give a comprehensive answer but I would imagine that by banning one particular product there are implications in international trade agreements.

**Chairman:** There must be protection and safety rules. Mr Leech.

**Q36 Mr Leech:** We have spent quite a lot of time talking about mini motorcycles and if we have people coming here from the car manufacturing organisations we would not start having long discussions with them about group riding, but unfortunately people within the motorcycling organisations are often seen as though in some way they are defending mini motorcycles. Do you not think you would actually benefit from distancing yourselves from these sorts of activities, by taking a much firmer line along the lines of some of the questions you have had here this afternoon, because I think that is partly why motorcycling gets a bad reputation because you do not seem to be taking a hard line against mini motorcycles or off-road biking.

**Mr Short:** Actually, the stance from the Motorcycle Action Group, as a rider interest group, is that we actually want to distance ourselves from these things, they are not more of a nuisance than motorised skateboards or any other mechanical device but these things happen to look like motorbikes. That is one side of it. Having said that, the problem is there and we do not want to just wash our hands and say it is somebody else’s problem, we want to assist and help in trying to find a solution under the current regime. As I have already alluded to earlier, there are opportunities for looking at diversion schemes to get these things used in a legitimate and a safe environment and certainly members of the Motorcycle Action Group are engaging with local authorities around the country where this is being considered. I take your point and you make it well, but we would rather they were not about. Having said that, they are about and we will engage and try to help solve the problem within the existing framework.

**Mr Carey-Clinch:** Defending the activities of the legally ridden motorcycles I do not think has ever been the business of any responsible motorcycling organisation. Our concern is that in order to crack a nut we may be in the process of discussing the biggest sledgehammer ever. Illegal riding is already illegal; we do not condone it, we very strongly supported what seemed at the time the extreme grab and crush actions very eloquently proposed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, but we supported that approach. It is quite clear that there is a massive problem here, but we seek to look for ways that tackle the problem without having unintended or knock-on effects on the wider world of motorcycling, something which of course we are very keen to detach this problem from.

**Q37 Mr Clelland:** Going back to conventional motorcycling, do you think the current level of training for motorcyclists is adequate?

**Mr Brown:** The interesting thing is that motorcycle training over the last 25 years or so has gone through a revolution that I would say that car driver training has not gone through. It is interesting that when the 1981 Transport Act effectively dissuaded a whole generation of people from taking up motorcycling as soon as they could, what we see subsequent to that is a growth in casualties amongst car users. This
illustrates that really when we are talking about casualties amongst young people we are talking about casualties that are derived from their attitudes to road use, the way that they use vehicles, not necessarily the vehicles themselves. Having said all that, the reason why motorcycle training has been through that revolution and why we have compulsory basic training standards which must be met before a motorcyclist is allowed out as a learner, why there is effectively almost universal professional training before a motorcyclist takes their test and why organisations like the Institute of Advanced Motorcycling see more people coming to them for motorcycle training once they have passed their test than before is because riders are understanding the value of gaining from other people’s experience and learning how to use a motorcycle responsibly and safely. The bottom line here is that you do not need to ride a motorcycle for very long to understand that the flip side of all the positive experiences of being directly connected with the environment is that you really do not want to be too directly connected with the environment and that falling off or crashing or somebody crashing into you is something that you want to avoid at all costs. Despite common perceptions on this, riders are actually at great pains to make sure that they do not cause themselves or the bikes damage by crashing.

Q38 Mr Clelland: Do you think there should be any changes under the current regime?
Mr Carey-Clinch: We are about to see a major shake-up in 2008 when there will be an additional half an hour’s testing before a rider is allowed onto the road to take their licence test. This testing will take place off-road, it will need to take place on a relatively large area of land controlled by the DSA and this will reduce the number of test centres available to motorcyclists from over 220 to around about 65 for the whole of the UK. That has a number of implications for the availability of testing. I believe that the content of that testing will show that a motorcyclist’s ability to brake or to steer sharply to avoid somebody crossing into their path, for instance, will be very much better tested than it is now. What I am concerned about is that if tests are not readily available because the super centres where the tests take place are so few and far between, we may see an increase in the trend we are already seeing amongst all classes of vehicle driver for not just bothering to take a test at all, not bothering to obtain a licence. That would be my concern. I have no evidence to show me that motorcycling takes place in that unlicensed state to any great extent, but my fear would be that if we do not have enough opportunities for people to take the test and take the training we may see that after 2008.

Q39 Mr Clelland: Can I refer to the proposed European Third Directive which is suggesting a staged access to motorcycles; do you think that is a good idea?
Mr Carey-Clinch: In principle progressive access to motorcycling does make some sense, but again it has to be compared and contrasted to the regime that other road users do face. We see a complete revision of the motorcycle test approximately every 10 to 15 years; the car test, apart from a few add-ons, has not been fundamentally revised since about 1937. Our concern is that the accessibility to such training, as Nich Brown has just pointed out, is an issue for this. There is the cost to the rider and again it will knock-on in an unintended way but, more importantly, lessons from the 1981 Transport Act were never really learned. Making access more difficult, particularly when there has been no supportive research in the previous regime to put it into place—simply making it more difficult to get on a bike does not tackle the extremely important issue of in-use motorcycle safety and our concern with the European approach on the third directive is that the results of the second directive changes in 1997 were never evaluated in terms of their impact on safety, and we strongly suspect that the thing that is being missed once again is reducing the vulnerability and improving the safety of users with the machines that you use.

Q40 Mr Clelland: How do you intend to deal with this lack of enforcement of the directive? Once this comes in, how do you deal with it?
Mr Brown: We have been working closely with both the Department for Transport and the Driver Standards Agency. We have focused mostly on what is happening in two areas: the run-up to the 2008 extra test and also the creation by DSA of a register for post-test trainers, so the adoption of voluntary standards for people who train riders who have a licence and who wish to extend their skills beyond that. Really we are talking here about positioning skills, observation skills, the kinds of things that keep riders out of harm’s way. Once the 2008 changes are in place and we can see the effect of the reduction in the number of test centres, that is the time when those big issues have been removed, or at least we know what we are dealing with, that is the time when we should be looking at how the third driving licence directive is implemented. The window between 2008 and 2013 is big enough, I think, for the job to be done right.

Q41 Mr Clelland: Do you think the UK Government is doing enough to mitigate the effects of these changes when they come in?
Mr Carey-Clinch: We were particularly grateful to ministers for abstaining on the vote in Europe on this. We did not feel that the third directive approach was necessarily the right one to take, but we have what we have and it is the responsibility of ministers now, particularly working with the DSA, to ensure that the implementation is done in a way that is most effective in terms of real-time improvements in safety and, unfortunately, it has to be said in this case with the lightest touch possible to go alongside the improvements that the DSA are already making to motorcycle training.
Mr Short: One of the potential consequences which I fear the new proposed regime might have is a knock-on effect in terms of suppression of the motorcycle market. Every time we see a new change
in legislation there has always been a dip in motorcycle registrations. That may be, to some people, a desirable position, but my concern is that it actually dissuades people from taking part in a form of transport which does give people a better appreciation of the rural environment and the potential dangers of having respect for everybody else, which does in turn make you a better driver. I am absolutely convinced about that. My fear is that by making it more difficult to gain a motorcycle licence, certainly at a younger age, it will simply divert people directly into cars. One of the problems that I see, which is a real problem for society at the moment, is the number of deaths of young people—multi-occupancy, youngsters in cars at two or three o’clock in the morning. We are not seeing just one death, we are seeing two or three in one accident with a single vehicle, no other vehicles involved. My fear is that we are putting people into a situation where they could be better equipped, had they taken the motorcycle route. We are also increasing, potentially, the amount of road space taken up by vehicles when congestion really is a problem, and the other knock-on effects in terms of environmental pollution. There is a big picture, therefore, which we need to consider very carefully in terms of the nuances of the third driving licence directive.

Mr Short: I am sure that Mr Brown, who was a former safety officer, might have more to say.

Q46 Chairman: Mr Brown, is it safe for motorcyclists in bus lanes?

Mr Brown: In my experience, yes, absolutely. We need to bear in mind the benefits of road users being able to see each other, and I think the experience in the London congestion charging zone, whereby dissuading cars from being on the road we have seen an increase in pedestrian activity, pedal cyclist activity and motorcycle activity. All those groups have reduced their casualties and the casualties from conflicts between those groups also reduced—from the figures that I have seen from Transport for London—and there is a very clear lesson there. I was involved, when I worked for Avon County Council, in the scheme which put motorcycles into bus lanes in Bristol. I was a resident of a street that bordered onto a bus lane, so I have used them by cycle and motorcycle and my personal experience is that it works extremely well. Where the deliberation to date and the studies to date have perhaps being lacking is that the studies always focus on what might be happening within the bus lane and there has been no benchmark study to look at the problems motorcyclists face when they are not allowed to use bus lanes. Motorcycles having to make progress through congested traffic, by overtaking traffic in the face of oncoming vehicles is something that simply has not been taken into account.

Q47 Chairman: Mr Brown, before you get away from that, how long has the scheme in Bristol run?

Mr Brown: 1996 was when we introduced it. The Scheme was made permanent in March 1996, in fact it had run experimentally since 1994.

Q48 Chairman: Would they have access to information of the effect on motorcycles and the extent of injuries before that and after that?

Mr Brown: An 18-months before and after survey was carried out and there was an 18-month experimental period. The casualty figures before the experimental period were compared to the casualty figures after it, and the result was that the county council agreed that it was a safety benefit for motorcyclists in particular but with knock-on safety benefits for other people.

Q49 Chairman: Could I ask you to give us a note with those figures?

Mr Brown: Yes.

Q50 Clive Elfed: Can I come back on something that was just said about motorcyclists being forced to drive on the wrong side of the road in order to overtake. As a former professional driver I have lost count of the number of times I have been blinded by headlights coming towards me on the wrong side of the road; what gives a motorcyclist the right to assume that they can overtake people by driving up the wrong side of the road?
We all have to overtake on the wrong side of the road depending on whether there are enough lanes available. Unless there is a solid line then it is permissible in law.

Q51 Clive E: I am just keen to know from somebody who represents the industry, when there is stationary traffic and it is dark, what sort of advice do you give, what do you encourage motorcyclists to do in those circumstances? In my constituency, which quite often is heavily-congested in south-east London, I see the most extraordinary risks being taken by motorcyclists. You seem to be suggesting in what you just said that that is acceptable, that they drive on the wrong side of the road when there is a traffic jam.

Mr Brown: It is acceptable to use the traffic lanes for opposing traffic if there is no solid white line, and it does not matter which vehicle, if there is an obstruction in the way and it is clear and safe to complete the overtaking manoeuvre then all classes of vehicle can do it. Our advice is—and we have several channels by which we give this advice—that if it is clear and safe to do so then it is perfectly legal, there is no problem, and if it is not clear and safe to do so then our advice is not to overtake.

Clive E: Can I just ask one other thing? Security: why is it so easy to nick bikes?

Q52 Chairman: Which one of you is an expert on nicking bikes?

Mr Short: I know a lot about nicking bikes, Madam Chairman, though I have not actually done it myself. The problem with motorcycles is that they are so easy to literally pick up by two burly blokes and sling in the back of the white Transit van—or whatever colour it might be. Since taking up the post of campaigns manager I have also taken on the role of chair of the National Motorcycle Crime Reduction Group and we are looking at a strategy to actually develop and deliver quite a number of issues. It is a problem; you can physically chain a motorcycle to a barrier and some of the efforts that councils are making to provide secure parking are to be commended, but at the end of the day no matter what size chain you put around there would be some form of bolt cropper which would crop and remove away, so the issue again is about engaging with local authorities, looking at how we can actually improve motorcycle parking and cycle parking for that matter, closed circuit television monitoring, better lighting, to actually target harder to prevent the thefts happening in the first place.

Mr Brown: We do have the technology and it is fitted to the larger motorcycles, but the type of motorcycles that we are talking about are the lightweight ones, the small engine size that younger people can ride. Because they are small they are particularly easy to carry away and in fact I know one local campaigner on motorcycle security who got started down that track because his daughter’s moped was taken away in a shopping trolley. If riders can be persuaded to use a locking device, a physical locking device, every time they park their bike, then that is a help, but if they have nothing solid to lock it too then the bike can literally be taken away. If the wheels are physically locked but the bike is not locked to something immovable, then it can be wheeled away on one wheel or it can be put on some kind of a castor and taken away relatively easily. An immobiliser is not going to prevent that from happening and, again, it is an example of where technology that has been proved on cars does not necessarily translate the same benefits directly to other vehicles.

Q53 Chairman: Mr Short, are you up on the technology of immobilising bikes?

Mr Brown: I would just like to come back to the issue about bus lanes if I can. Dr Ladyman was intending to write to local authorities to give them discretion to allow motorcycles in bus lanes; would you agree or disagree that it would be better for either all local authorities allowing motorcycle users to use bus lanes or no local authorities allowing it so there is no doubt between different local authorities what motorcycles could or could not do?

Mr Short: From the point of view of common standards across the country which avoid confusion then, yes, it would be ideal if you were travelling from one town to another you were not in any doubt, people were not in any confusion in terms of other road users like pedestrians or cyclists. That would be the ideal position to move towards, without a doubt.

Q54 Mr Leech: If that is not going to be the case and it is going to be up to different local authorities, would you prefer local authorities to have the discretion or would you prefer to say if not all local authorities are going to have them it is better to have none?

Mr Short: One of the things that has come out of the strategy is that we would like to see a greater engagement with the motorcycle interest groups in terms of informing local transport policy, and if we could get a better buy-in and greater engagement to have a reasoned argument of the benefits, then I think that is the way forward that local authorities with local motorcycle forums and other interest groups could actually develop their local transport systems suitable for their locality.

Mr Carey-Clinch: To a degree also there are local situations which may arise: for example, a bus lane going across the front of a primary school, there would have to be a different set of considerations for allowing motorcycles and I would argue cycles, access to a lane such as that compared to examples of something like the M4 bus lane which is operating very successfully. The DFT is in the process of...
finalising an advisory note to local authorities on bus lanes which talks about some of the considerations that need to be put in force, but it must be said that within the local transport planning context—and this links back to the aims of the national motorcycle strategy—we do need much more hands-on and decisive input from DfT in terms of advising local authorities on local transport plans, bus lanes and other issues and also working with regional offices in order to try and impress the standards which Government itself said it wanted to do in the strategy.

Q56 Chairman: In what sense? The difficulty, Mr Carey-Clinch is that you will realise that Government is eternally being told that it should not be too prescriptive in the demands of local government and yet you appear to be saying they should set down a series of motorcycle directives saying that before they prepare a transport plan they must automatically include these series of policy decisions, is that what you are saying?

Mr Carey-Clinch: Madam Chairman, we often hear about this in a sort of contrast between what Government feels local authority should be doing and vice versa, but it is quite interesting in the case of motorcycling policy that local authorities in one breath are saying they do not want the Government telling them what to do but also saying about the motorcycle policy that the Government is not giving us advice. When it comes to advisory notes like PPG13, traffic advisory leaflets and things like that, which are not necessarily prescriptive they do provide local authorities with the tools with which they can act.

Q57 Chairman: Finally, before we allow you to go, because it has been very interesting, do you really genuinely believe that the law is being sufficiently enforced in relation to motorcycles?

Mr Short: I think so. One of the good things to come out of my career was the Bikesafe Scheme which I like to lay claim to founding in North Yorkshire many years ago with the help of colleagues. What we started there in North Yorkshire was to address a specific problem. That is now a national programme with its own Association of Chief Police Officers portfolio, held by Mr Griffin in Humberside. What is heartening to see is that there is a common ACPO prosecution policy which is adopted across the country, and I think that is tremendous. All the rider groups have been able to comment on it and motorcyclists know exactly where they stand. It combines the three approaches of the enforcement fast-tracking, excessive speeders, the driver improvement scheme, opportunities and things like that. It also looks at and engaging with local authorities in terms of improving engineering on roads, signage, road surfaces and things like that, but also Bikesafe itself in terms of educating and promoting that post-test training awareness amongst the more mature riders has had a positive effect. In fact, I read in my local paper today that the North Yorkshire Police are claiming a reduction of 31% in terms of killed and serious injuries amongst motorcyclists in the last year through this three-pronged approach. That is an encouraging way forward and I think it needs encouragement as well and recognising the benefits that post-test training, and police assessments can give to this.

Mr Carey-Clinch: To be a little more direct, I would say that the police are engaging where they are able to and they are definitely looking at enforcement and engagement policies and working in partnership with us all, but I do find myself somewhat at odds with this view that we can turn traffic policing into roads policing, blurring the edges of that, reducing resources for the very real issues like the problems we are having with mini-bikes, and also when it comes to the spread of Bikesafe, having fiscal limits really put on the fact that there is simply not an investment or economic ground to take these things to a much more logical and better conclusion. In general terms, therefore, I would say that a reduction in road traffic policing and a reduction in policing generally does need to come under some scrutiny.

Q58 Graham Stringer: The RAC and the AA estimate that there are about two million cars driving about without insurance; do you have an equivalent figure for motorbikes?

Mr Brown: We do not have an equivalent figure. I am not aware of any organisation that has specifically taken that research to motorcyclists but I will endeavour to find an answer to that if I can.

Q59 Graham Stringer: Do you have any gut feelings as to whether it is more or less?

Mr Brown: In all honesty, no.

Q60 Mr Leech: Completely unrelated to everything that we have had so far, there seems to be an anomaly where there are still electric bikes that people can drive around without tax and insurance on the road. Do you have any views on these particular vehicles?

Mr Carey-Clinch: To give a general answer, the new technologies and alternative fuels do need to be encouraged right across both the car and the motorcycle industries. The law regarding these things is a bit unclear in terms of power and speed of the motive force used, and that is something which perhaps could be clarified.

Mr Brown: My understanding is that it is actually fairly clear that an electrically-assisted bicycle you can ride from the age of 14 with no insurance and no tax, but that is not the same as an electrically powered motorcycle. We are talking about fairly small electric motors assisting people up hills on bicycles; that is the area where there is less regulation, but for all motor vehicles, no matter what the fuel is, the road regulations are essentially the same requirement.

Mr Short: If it is a mechanically-propelled vehicle, irrespective of the motive power, then it is required to comply with the registration, licensing and insurance.
Q61 Chairman: Could I finally ask you one question, gentlemen? Have you in your talks, either with the Department for Transport or with the Home Office, explored the ability to offer training to young persons whilst they are at school before they can officially ride on motorcycles on the open highway?

Mr Brown: The answer to that is yes. The Department for Transport is particularly interested in this—we call it road user education, basically within the school curriculum. We have discussed it with the Home Office and tried to discuss it with the Department for Education and Skills; there are a number of tools out there which can be used and put into the schools context. I would rather hope that there is more engagement on that issue, particularly with the current emphasis on young people and driver safety.

Q62 Chairman: Are we to take it that there is a real drive to try and get education as a means of creating a better road safety plan for the future?

Mr Carey-Clinch: From the motorcycle industry and user side, yes, but the reciprocating support from Government is still somewhat weak.

Q63 Chairman: Finally, Mr Short, on enforcement. I was very glad to hear about North Yorkshire but could we honestly ask you if we were to ask of ACPO next week how many of your counties are really actively pursuing this sort of policy, what sort of honest answer would we get?

Mr Short: The answer that you would get, Madam Chairman, is that this is a national programme, an ACPO-agreed policy and yes we have adopted it. If you were to dig deeper you might find it has been adopted at different levels of energy.

Q64 Chairman: Is it part of HMI’s responsibility to look at this area as part of the core facilities of a particular force?

Mr Short: Road safety is a responsibility of police alongside the local authority, it is a joint responsibility, and it is one area of inspection which HMI does look at. Nationally I think most of the 43 police forces are actively engaged in it, but the level would depend on what their other priorities are, I would suggest.

Q65 Chairman: Yes. We could assume really that in some cases if you had a chief officer who was very concerned about road safety and about improving the figures, there would be an energetic campaign, and in some others without using a pejorative word, there might be rather less energy.

Mr Short: Indeed. One of the sad incidents of this last year was not looking at the amalgamation of police forces because we have still got this problem where we have small police forces which have big drains on their budget, the finances are finite and they have to go where their priorities are. I have been banging on about this for the last 31 years and until road casualty reduction is seen as a key policing priority I am afraid it will not attract the attention which I am sure that most of us in this room would like to see.

Q66 Chairman: Mr Short, you are getting a little close to home, so at that point I am going to say thank you very much to you all, it has been an extremely interesting and informative session and I am grateful to you all.

Supplementary memorandum submitted by The Motor Cycle Industry Association

Thank you for your note requesting further information regarding 1. details of the 1996 Bristol Study into allowing motorcycles into bus lanes and 2. the number of uninsured motorcycles.

1. Avon County Council first resolved to introduce motorcycles to bus lanes in Bristol using an Experimental Order at the meeting of the Planning, Highways and Transport (Highways and Transport) Sub-Committee on 14 February 1995. The experimental order came into effect in June of that year and was confirmed as a Permanent Order on 12 March 1996 when the Committee, anticipating the imminent Local Government Reorganisation, strongly recommended that its four successor Unitary Authorities should extend the scheme to their areas (which each has subsequently done).

In returning to the reports of the time, I find that I must correct the statement I made to the Transport Select Cttee in relation to the length of the before and after study. Experimental orders provide for up to 18 months duration, but the imminent reorganisation of local government meant the Bristol Bus-Lane study was concluded earlier. Avon County Council’s study compared the motorcycle accident data covering the 36 months (12 June 1992–11 June 1995) immediately prior to the experiment and the 6 months of the experimental period (12 June–11 December 1995). I believe that during the 36 months prior, accidents involving motorcyclists averaged 1.1 per month, compared to 0.8 during the six-months of the experiment, suggesting a 25% decrease, and that no motorcycle accidents were recorded in the bus lanes and no collisions with pedestrians or cyclists were recorded. I have found results from an 18-month experiment by Sheffield City Council during 2003–04 which also reported a 25% decrease in monthly average motorcycle accidents.

2. I have not yet found any further estimates of uninsured riding. The Government’s Motorcycle Strategy recognises that the Greenaway Report into motor insurance did not produce figures on this question, but suggests that uninsured riding may be proportionately higher than uninsured driving if the figures for VED evasion prove a reliable indicator—although it should be noted that the total number of motorcycles involved would be far lower than the total number of cars involved. It is also worth considering that it may be difficult for an investigation to distinguish between reports of uninsured motorcycles being used as...
Transport as distinct from reports relating to the abuse of mini-motorbikes on the highway, which will by
definition be uninsured for the purposes of the Road Traffic Act, which appears to have little to do with
"Transport" as such. There is an assumption that motorcycles which are untaxed will also be uninsured,
although this is not necessarily the case—the various databases recording which vehicles are taxed, or
insured, or MOT’d have only recently been linked to allow such patterns to be investigated and I understand
there are plans to identify and prosecute uninsured vehicle keepers from the DVLA records.

7 February 2007

Memorandum submitted by the British Motorcyclists’ Federation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

(i) This submission cites the need for The Government’s Motorcycling Strategy to enable motorcycling to
be considered objectively rather than being regarded negatively as it has in the past. It is also necessary to
recognise its role as transport and to mainstream it in the transport mix so that it can be taken into
account in the planning process.

(ii) The positive attributes and shortcomings of motorcycles are examined and show that there are net
benefits from accepting motorcycles as transport while putting the shortcomings into perspective and noting
that all modes of transport have their drawbacks as well as benefits.

(iii) The progress of addressing the actions from The Government’s Motorcycling Strategy through the
National Motorcycle Council and its four sub-groups since publication of the document is considered.
While some good progress has been made, the primary objective of mainstreaming motorcycling has not yet
been achieved. The BMF has concluded that greater involvement by the Minister of Transport and more
resources being deployed on delivering and developing the strategy would be desirable.

(iv) The BMF stated its concerns about the likely negative impact without any anticipated safety benefit
from the retrospective amendments to the Second EC Driving Licence Directive which will lead to an
extended motorcycle test in 2008. In parallel, with the we have expressed grave concerns about the
motorcycling proposals in the Third EC Driving Licence Directive which will replace the already complex
requirements of the Second EC Driving Licence Directive by three categories of motorcycles, new minimum
test vehicle specifications, a rigid age ladder for access, an increased age for direct access and an obstacle
course for progressive access. Both directives cut across the positive proposals made by the strategy on
licensing, testing and training and the BMF has warned on the dangers of “gold plating”.

(v) Finally, on mini-motos, while they are outside the remit of the BMF, we expressed concern that
generating more regulations without enforcing them will not address illegal use but curtail legitimate off-
tarmac and off-road activity. Motorcycling is already the victim of more and more regulations when the
enforcement of existing laws would be more effective. We also call for provision to be made so that mini-
motos can be ridden legally in a safe environment.

1. The need for a national motorcycling strategy

1.1 Motorcycling has too often been overlooked as a legitimate mode of transport while other
alternatives to the car which are often vulnerable modes such as walking, cycling and public transport have
found favour. Motorcycling has also frequently been the victim of ignorance and prejudice not only from
the public but from government and official bodies.

1.2 Hence there was a need to not only raise awareness of the positive aspects of motorcycling but to put
the shortcomings, which indeed exist for all modes, to be put in perspective so as to equitably inform choice.

1.3 Safety, while an important issue which should and is being addressed has overshadowed the positive
attributes of motorcycling. We, therefore, welcome Action 22 of The Government’s Motorcycling Strategy
in which casualties expressed as a rate of exposure will be regarded as a secondary indicator to the total
number of casualties. There should also be recognition of the causes of motorcyclists’ casualties rather than
condemning them purely on the basis of numbers of casualties.

1.4 A strategy is essential to provide official recognition of the legitimacy of motorcycling as transport,
the benefits that increased motorcycle can bring and how the infrastructure should be adapted to improve
their usage and to make it safer. Attempting to reduce casualties by limiting access to motorcycles is not
acceptable but instead it should be by facilitating motorcycling as a choice of travel within a safe and
sustainable transport framework.
2. Benefits and shortcomings of motorcycling as transport

2.1 The recognition of motorcycling as transport enhances choice for travellers enabling them to make informed decisions about travel.

2.2 Motorcycles do not cause congestion due to their limited requirements for road space than other vehicles. When they encounter congestion, they are readily able to circumvent it by filtering through stationary and slow moving traffic. Hence motorcycle use makes a positive contribution to reducing congestion.

2.3 While in free flowing traffic when the majority of vehicles are cars or larger vehicles motorcycles require a “safety bubble” and occupy similar space to a car. When conditions become more congested, and speeds are reduced their requirements for road space are also reduced. Motorcycles use parking space more efficiently than other vehicles where in a kerbside car space five or more motorcycles can be parked.

2.4 Motorcycles provide convenient door-to-door travel for all journeys being able to negotiate urban conditions with minimal delays while still having the capability to make longer inter-urban journeys.

2.5 Where public transport is limited or non-existent, distances are too great to walk or cycle and access to a car is not an option, motorcycles are a solution to social exclusion enabling individuals to seek employment and educational opportunities which would not otherwise be available.

2.6 While some motorcycles would benefit from improvements in fuel consumption, through their inherent efficiency, low energy requirements and abilities to make progress in congested conditions motorcycles are less polluting and produce less CO2 than other motorised modes. They are also subject to emissions limits under EC Type-Approval in which Euro 2 limits for new motorcycles have been in force since mid-2003 and Euro 3 operative from early 2007.

2.7 Unlike public transport which requires extensive investment in vehicles and infrastructure and walking and cycling where segregation from traffic is desirable, motorcycling can be optimised by relatively low cost changes to the infrastructure such as parking provision, better maintenance of surfaces and access to priority schemes like bus lanes and advanced stop lines.

2.8 Safety is cited as the main concern with regard to motorcycling. However, while it is important and steps should be taken to improve it, the same concerns do not appear to apply to other vulnerable road users with similar levels of casualties. It should be noted that motorcycle casualty rates have either remained static or steadily fallen for many years with significant reductions in the number of casualties—with a commensurately greater fall in rate since 2003. A high proportion of motorcyclists’ casualties can be attributed to the fault of other road users, yet motorcyclists are often still targeted in casualty reduction schemes.

2.9 Noise while not a life-threatening issue is often cited as one of the main shortcomings of motorcycling and there is, indeed, a problem. However, it should be noted that motorcycles, under EC Type-Approval are not inherently noisy with new motorcycles of more than 175 cc subject to an 80 dB(A) limit with smaller machines subject to lower limits. There are also national requirements requiring in-use motorcycles to use BSI or CE approved exhaust systems. Noise nuisance is due to those who choose to use systems which are either marked NOT FOR ROAD USE or not marked at all and are illegal to sell. Hence it is an enforcement issue and one that can be easily undertaken without the aid of complex noise measuring equipment.

2.10 Motorcycling also suffers from problems of image and public perception. Initially regarded as working class transport, they have since been looked upon as an expression of rebellion and non-conformance and are now seen as something for simulating road racers during weekends and making excessive noise in the process. The majority of motorcycles are ridden quietly and in a responsible manner but overlooked because they do not attract attention.

2.11 Whilst motorcycles are an excellent mode of individual transport, they have their limitations which we accept. They are not suitable for everyone particularly the infirm, severely disabled (motorcycles can be adapted for a range of disabilities) and those who regularly carry several passengers However, they do lend themselves to business use since protective clothing can be worn over business suits with papers and even laptop computers easily carried.

2.12 The Government’s Motorcycling Strategy deals with the above points proposing measures to optimise motorcycling’s positive attributes and acknowledge the shortcomings and address them positively by making improvements without discouraging access to motorcycling. Hence there are extensive references to safety and how it can be improved to the benefit of motorcyclists.

3. Progress of The Government’s Motorcycling Strategy

3.1 It is considered to be rather early to be assessing the progress of The Government’s Motorcycling Strategy since it was published less than two years ago. The Advisory Group, which developed it, had benefited from an enthusiastic team from the Department for Transport and two equally enthusiastic ministers who had chaired the group. Unfortunately publication of the strategy was shortly before a General Election which led to a hiatus in moving forward, a new minister and a reorganisation by the DfT.
3.2 The motorcycling community had been meeting as the National Motorcycle Council for over 20 years when in 1998, A New Deal For Transport proposed that motorcycling should be considered by an Advisory Group. The NMC was able to provide members to the group and its task forces. With The Government’s Motorcycling Strategy in the public domain, it was able reform itself as the body to deliver and develop the strategy.

3.3 The plenary group of the NMC did not meet until the end of 2005 when it established the following four sub-groups to deal with specific issues:

- Road Safety and Publicity.
- Training Testing and Licensing.
- Technical Engineering and Environmental.
- Traffic Management, Planning and Transport Policy.

These sub-groups have all met at least twice since their formation and there have been two plenary meetings.

3.4 The Road Safety and Publicity Sub-Group has been responsible for the positive safety messages being made under the Think! banner. Two television advertisements have helped to revise the “Think Bike” message without suggesting that the motorcyclist is entirely at fault with collision at junction being the most recent. A longer presentation, “Perfect Day” was produced as a late-night public information programme or for organisations to show at events. The principle of considering casually rate as a secondary indicator has also been taken forward by this sub-group.

3.5 The Training, Testing and Licensing Sub-Group is working with the Driving Standards Agency where its work includes: developing the revised motorcycle test for 2008 and the “super centres” necessary to conduct it; implementing an instructor registration scheme; raising driver awareness of motorcyclists; developing interactive training aids in which a new DVD presentation was produced in November and; reviewing the direct access scheme in which the BMF favours log book training to give trainees experience of the conditions that they will encounter after passing their tests. Some of this work is being cut across by events in the European Union as explained in the next section.

3.6 The Technical Engineering and Environmental Sub-Group covers a range of issues related to motorcycle design, equipment and accessories as well as how engineering of other vehicles relates to motorcyclists eg the thickness of A pillars in cars affecting visibility of vulnerable road users. Its is dealing with questions of advanced braking systems, anti-theft devices, advice on replacing tyres, promoting correct helmet fitting and the choice of protective clothing, improve rear vision, address the issue of diesel spillage and encourage riders to choose motorcycles which will best suit their needs rather than those offering the best performance. The group is considering how best to address conspicuity in the event of the European Union’s imposing a requirement for Day Running Lights in other vehicles. The BMF in conjunction with manufacturers and retailers is actively supporting campaigns to encourage the use of legal replacement exhaust systems and silencers to address noise nuisance.

3.7 The BMF would like to see better progress from the Traffic Management, Planning and Transport Policy Sub-Group. The most positive aspect of this group was the publication of the Institute of Highways Incorporated Engineers Guidelines for Motorcycling in April 2005 which set out guidelines for motorcycles to be better considered in relation to the infrastructure. On the question of bus lane access, a Traffic Advisory Leaflet has been drafted and Local Transport Note 1/97 keeping buses moving is to be amended but the advice could be more positive. In the interim, studies on trials for motorcycles to use bus lanes have been inconclusive with regard to the effect on safety while improvements in efficiency have received little consideration. The methodology of the Transport for London Study has been questioned and it is suggested that there has been a lack of objectivity by TFL in its study and by the Transport Research Laboratory in its study in Swindon where claims that motorcycles having rapid acceleration and top speed capabilities was a relevant factor to their use of urban bus lanes. Early advanced stop line trials were positive but there appears to be a lack of resources to conduct further trials. The Highways Agency has regarded the strategy positively and includes motorcycling in its planning process such as including them in its Safety Action Plan and improving their infrastructure with Bikeguard for safety fence. Publication of The Government’s Motorcycle Strategy and the IHIE Guidelines for Motorcycling came too late to help with the inclusion of motorcycles in the second tranche of Local Transport Plans and the issue of the former to local authority Chief Executives rather than the transport planning departments did not help. However the strategy has since been sent to the relevant departments. The BMF is working locally to ensure that motorcycles are considered in the local planning process with our main priorities being their inclusion in travel plans and the provision of adequate parking. More could be done to inform on the LTP process, particularly LTP 3 anticipated in 2010 where guidance to include motorcycling will aid local efforts.

3.8 While some progress has been made in taking forward these actions, the BMF would like to see greater ministerial involvement as there had been for the Advisory Group to chair plenary meetings and drive through the actions. The DfT would benefit from more resources in implementing the strategy particularly for the Traffic Management, Planning and Transport Policy Sub-Group to undertake more priority access trials for motorcycles and to feed into advisory documents.
4. The Third EC Driving Licence Directive & Amendments to the Second EC Driving Licence

4.1 The Government’s Motorcycling Strategy has made a number of proposals to improve safety through means perceived by the UK motorcycling community to bring benefits without limiting access. Unfortunately, the European Union has chosen to bring changes to the motorcycle test under the Second EC Driving Licence Directive (to which we currently operate) and to propose the Third EC Driving Licence Directive which will lead to more complexity and expense rather than contribute to making motorcycling safer. We fear that the propensity for UK institutions to “gold plate” EU proposals will negate some of the more pragmatic and positive proposals for testing and training made in the strategy.

4.2 The retrospective amendments to the Second EC Driving Licence Directive require that collision avoidance and emergency braking exercises at over 50 km/h are included in the motorcycle test. Since this speed in greater than the UK’s 30 mph urban default speed, the Driving Standards Agency chose, not only for these exercises to be assessed off-road but that other assessments of manoeuvring should also be assessed. With exercises for other vehicles which are to be conducted off-road, this has led to the acquisition of land for 60 or more “super centres” where much if not all of the cost will be passed on to driving test candidates. The BMF questions whether there will be any benefit to road safety by the addition of this off-road element of the motorcycle test and the collision avoidance exercise since an emergency stop from 30 mph is already undertaken on-road. The revised motorcycle test is due to be implemented in the autumn of 2008.

4.3 Of greater concern to the House of Commons Transport Committee is the Third EC Driving Licence Directive which has just completed its Second Reading in the European Parliament where all attempts to delete the motorcycling proposals for more measured consideration later, amend them to something more appropriate or to oppose the whole directive have been defeated. While there are positive aspects of the Directive such as increased medical checks and the elimination of “licence tourism” we do not consider that the changes to motorcycling will improve safety but instead make taking up motorcycling more expensive, difficult to understand and, from its complexity, virtually impossible to enforce. This, in particular is expected to negate some of the proposals in the strategy particularly the review of direct access. The Third EC Driving Licence Directive is expected to be implemented by 2012.

4.4 The changes that the Third EC Driving Licence Directive will make to motorcycle licensing will be extensive.

4.4.1 There will be four categories comprising:

| AM Moped (< 50 cc 45 km/h) | A1 Light Motorcycle (< 125 cc 14 kW) |
| A2 Intermediate Motorcycle (< 35 kW 0.2 kW/kg) | A Unlimited Motorcycle (> 35kW) |

4.4.2 There will be a rigid age ladder in which A1 will be accessible from age 16 (17 in the UK) with A2 two years later and A two years after that. Hence, by progressive access a Category A motorcycle will not be accessible until age 21 in the UK while under the Second EC Driving Licence Directive it is accessible from age 19 under progressive access. The minimum age for direct access to Category A is to be raised from age 21 to 24. There is no evidence to suggest that increasing the ages of access will bring about a safety improvement.

4.4.3 For progressive access, there will be dual requirements of two years experience on each category of motorcycle followed by a practical test on the category of machine to which the rider intends to progress. Again we consider the requirement for a practical test to be unnecessary since under current arrangements only two-years experience is required under current arrangements with no evidence of safety being compromised.

4.4.4 Categories A2 and A are subject to power and power to weight ratio limits but the Directive proposes that minimum test vehicles are subject to minimum capacity limits of 400 cc for A2 and 600 cc for A. This is unnecessary and will require training centres to change their fleets at considerable expense. This may be amended under the Comitology process but should be currently regarded as a threat.

5. Off-Tarmac Activity and Mini-Motos

5.1 In its introduction, The Government’s Motorcycling Strategy states, “This strategy . . . applies to on-road motorcycling,” and that DEFRA is responsible for the Government’s position on what it incorrectly refers to as “off-road” motorcycling. In practice, this is primarily a question of off-tarmac use since the rights of way issue is concerned with unmetalled public roads where road use regulations apply. Hence off-tarmac and off-road issues are outside the remit of the strategy.

5.2 The BMF is concerned by the increased use of mini-motos although this problem is not new since unroadworthy and stolen motorcycles have been used on rough ground for many years. Our main worry is the detrimental effect from the effect that the general perception of mini-moto use has on lawful trail riding on public roads (which are unsurfaced) with the legal requirements to do so and that measures proposed to address illegal off-road riding will curtail the activities of legitimate trail riders. The BMF, in representing road-riding motorcyclists including trail riders is unable to engage with mini-moto users.

5.3 Similarly to the issue of noise nuisance, there are already sufficient powers available to the enforcement community to deal with mini-motos Some police forces already do so although this is often in the form of short lived “crack downs” rather than sustained enforcement. The BMF sees no point in
generating more regulations when there is no will or resources to enforce them, particularly when they are ill-conceived and can adversely affect legitimate off-road users such as those involved in regulated competitions and those off-tarmac like trail riders. Those who choose to ride unlawfully will not be affected by more regulation.

19 December 2006

Memorandum submitted by the RAC Foundation

INTRODUCTION

1. The RAC Foundation is an independent charity established in 1991 to disseminate information, promote research and campaign on matters around the environmental, economic, mobility and safety issues relating to the use of motor vehicles. Foundation policies and views are wholly independent of RAC plc.

2. The RAC Foundation is represented on the National Motorcycle Council and two of its subgroups.

PROGRESS MADE BY THE DEPARTMENT SO FAR IN IMPLEMENTING THE 2005 MOTORCYCLING STRATEGY

3. The Foundation wholly supports the stated aim of the Government’s Motorcycling Strategy, “to facilitate motorcycling as a choice of travel within a safe and sustainable transport framework.” We believe that the motorcycle has an important role to play in securing mobility both in urban areas, where the motorcycle is an essential tool for cutting congestion; and in rural areas where the motorcycle can represent an affordable mobility solution to those not able to meet the costs of running a car, particularly young people needing to travel long distances for work or education.

Why should motorcycling be regarded as a mainstream mode?

4. Our 2002 research report, Motoring Towards 2050, cited the advantages of motorcycling as being:
   (a) a congestion beater;
   (b) economical on road space and parking space;
   (c) using less fuel than a car; and
   (d) polluting less.

5. The popularity of motorcycling has risen sharply in recent years, as these advantages are recognised by the travelling public.

6. Motoring Towards 2050 called for:
   (a) action to tackle high theft rates through increasing the provision of free, secure parking;
   (b) better training for all road users to bring down accident rates;
   (c) safety campaigns such as “Think Bike”;
   (d) better street design to remove problems which disproportionately affect motorcyclists, such as badly-placed manhole covers or poorly designed traffic calming;
   (e) motorcycles to be allowed to use advanced stop lines and bus lanes;
   (f) reduction in VAT on safety equipment; and
   (g) exemption for motorcyclists from congestion charging.

7. The majority of these issues have been recognised by the Government’s Motorcycling Strategy and the Foundation welcomes the actions being taken to progress them, while recognising that resource constraints have sometimes affected the speed at which implementation is moving.

8. The Foundation has recently accepted responsibility for making progress on action 40, the compilation of a calendar of campaign activity.

9. The RAC Foundation also welcomes the emphasis given in the Strategy to ending “old stigmas and stereotyping.” The fact that motorcycling is a vulnerable transport mode has often been used as a pretext for discouraging its wider take-up, despite the evident advantages on congestion, cost and environmental grounds.

10. The RAC Foundation has been particularly concerned that the focus on absolute numbers of fatalities and casualties, in the context of the 2010 casualty reduction targets, has presented a misleading picture of recent safety trends. When measured per motorcycle kilometre, the casualty rate has been falling since 2003, but this is often ignored in favour of the “headline” statistics. The Foundation would like to see further emphasis on the casualty rate trends, as set out in Action 22.
MINI-MOPEDS AND MOTORISED TWO-WHEELERS NOT LEGAL FOR ROAD USE

11. The Foundation believes that this problem can best be tackled by local enforcement, education, and alternative provision rather than additional regulation.

12. Education campaigns should be aimed at young people who are using these machines inappropriately, and their parents, and be backed up with enforcement against persistent offenders. Some local authorities are already conducting campaigns along these lines, using existing powers. However, the RAC Foundation believes that education and enforcement would be most effective if the provision of safe and legal off-road facilities was also made a priority so that young people in each local authority area have access to a place where mini-motos and off-road motorcycles can be ridden legally.

13. The RAC Foundation would like the Government to encourage co-ordinated thinking among local authorities to share best practice on this issue, and to encourage local authorities to engage in dialogue as a means to reduce local opposition to the provision of such a site. The ACU has carried out research which suggests that the provision of a well-managed site leads to a reduction in nuisance complaints.

15 December 2006

Witnesses: Mr Trevor Magner, Senior Government Relations Executive, British Motorcyclists’ Federation, and Ms Sheila Rainger, Campaigns Manager, RAC Foundation, gave evidence.

Q67 Chairman: Good afternoon to you both. You are most warmly welcome. Would you be kind enough to identify yourselves for the record?

Ms Rainger: I am Sheila Rainger, campaigns manager for the RAC Foundation. I think you are familiar with the Foundation. We are an independent charity which campaigns on issues around the environmental, economic, mobility and safety aspects of the use of motor vehicles which includes motorcycles.

Mr Magner: I am Trevor Magner. I am the senior government relations executive of the British Motorcyclists’ Federation. It is a not for profit, road riding motorcyclists’ organisation, which is independent of commercial concerns and is funded primarily by membership fees and the shows that we run.

Q68 Chairman: Do either of you want to say anything to us before we begin?

Mr Magner: I would like to say that I am very pleased to be able to discuss the government’s motorcycling strategy. I do not think we can overestimate the importance of having a national strategy on motorcycling because it puts it firmly on the transport agenda, setting the mainstream motorcycling and recognising its legitimacy as a mode of transport. We are possibly the first in the world to do that, although I am sure America has done it first somewhere. We are certainly the first in Europe.

Q69 Chairman: Do you want to tell us what you see as the benefits of motorcycling?

Mr Magner: Yes. In my written paper I state the benefits. The main ones are that motorcycling can address congestion because of the reduction of land that it takes up. When motorcyclists encounter congestion, they can filter between lanes of traffic and address it, not necessarily overtaking down the outside but going between lanes. They take up less space in terms of parking so you are using land less for transport. They can also address social exclusion because a motorcycle, particularly for younger people—we are talking about things like low-powered scooters—can allow people where distances are too great to walk and cycle, access is not possible to a care and public transport is limited or non-existent. They can seek educational or employment opportunities which they would not otherwise be able to do.

Ms Rainger: Broadly speaking we see very similar advantages to motorcycling. We think they play a very important role in securing mobility both in urban areas for congestion reasons and also in rural areas where they provide an affordable means of transport, particularly for younger people who may not be able to afford the costs of running a car. They can use a motorcycle to get to work or for education. When you look at the statistics, they bear that out in that 65% of motorcycle journeys are for business, work or education compared to one in three car journeys.

Q70 Clive Efford: Some people have said that motorcycling is extremely dangerous and therefore measures should be taken to curtail motorcycling as much as possible. What would you say to that?

Ms Rainger: Motorcycling is not dangerous; it is vulnerable and I think that is different. A vulnerable mode of transport is not the same as an undesirable one.

Q71 Clive Efford: Do you want to elaborate? What can be done to make it safer?

Ms Rainger: You touched earlier on with previous witnesses about the role of training and enforcement. There are also many things put forward in the strategy in terms of what local authorities can do to provide a safer environment for motorcycles. It is not just enforcement; it is also education and engineering. Safer road environments can tackle many of the problems which create vulnerability for motorcyclists.

Q72 Clive Efford: What is a safer environment?

Ms Rainger: Very often local authorities may situate utility covers—manholes as they used to be called—on the part of the road that a motorcycle uses. That causes grip problems in the wet. It is quite often a
problem because someone has not thought of the special needs of a single track motorcycle or cycle vehicle. That can cause problems with grip and may cause accidents. It is a straightforward thing that can easily be resolved by using some of the guidelines which have come out from the strategy.

Q73 Clive Efford: Could you give us some idea of the proportion of accidents involving motorcycles that are caused by environmental issues?

Ms Rainger: Accidents due to poor road surfaces are one of the five most common motorcycle accidents, according to ROSPA.

Q74 Clive Efford: What actions can the government take in its strategy to improve rider safety?

Ms Rainger: There are several actions in the strategy that may improve rider safety. The issues about training and encouraging riders to take post test training are very important. Also, the DfT is proposing research on how to increase other road users’—drivers’—particularly—awareness of motorcycles on the road because one of the great problems is perception. A motorist who is not familiar with motorcycles has problems looking for them at junctions. This has been proved by research. Extra research has been taking place to see if that can be dealt with in areas like driver education.

Q75 Clive Efford: Are you saying that the test for car drivers is not adequate in terms of preparing them for being aware of motorcycle users on the road?

Ms Rainger: The research has shown that motorists who are not familiar with motorcycles are not very good at spotting them at junctions or at potential points of conflict. That is something that is being looked at as part of the strategy. What the conclusions will be remains to be seen.

Q76 Chairman: I thought one of the things that a good tutor was supposed to teach you was to read the road, to take time to read the road. Are we really saying that we have a whole lot of people teaching motorists how to drive who do not teach them a right assessment of the likely hazards that they are facing?

Ms Rainger: It has been proven in some of the accident examinations that the car driver did not see the motorcyclist for whatever reason at the junction, not because their eyesight was not up to it but there was a perception problem. The perception problem is being looked at in this ongoing research from the strategy.

Mr Magner: A lot of it is about perception and whether to expect to see motorcyclists.

Q77 Chairman: I thought one of the things you do when you are teaching somebody to drive is not only to assess the road ahead of them, to read the road, but also to take from that road the information that will make them a safe driver. It seems both of you are suddenly saying, very interestingly in my view, that this is not being done.

Mr Magner: It is when people pass their test, but people get into bad habits. With most drivers, the last time they read the Highway Code is just before they take their test. Similarly, they tend to get into bad habits. They do not expect to see a motorcycle. Their habit in terms of scanning the road at a junction is that they do not tend to look for motorcyclists. In the congestion charge zone, where there has been an increased use of motorcycles and pedal cycles, although the number of motorcycles and pedal cycles has increased, the number of collisions has fallen quite significantly. That is a critical mass issue, where there are sufficient numbers of two wheel vehicles so that car users expect to see them.

Q78 Clive Efford: It is not that there are fewer cars in the congestion zone to hit them? The proportion of cars is down. Is that not affecting it?

Mr Magner: It is a question of proportion of one class of vehicle to the other in that you get a higher proportion of two wheel vehicles; hence, car users are more likely to expect to see them. You mentioned motorcycles being dangerous. Again, I would very strongly refute a statement like that. They are not dangerous; they are vulnerable. There is a concern that motorcycles tend to be treated differently to pedal cycles when very often the accident issues are very much the same and in the same order.

Q79 Mr Hollobone: If the government were to introduce road pricing on a wider scale, would you anticipate that would lead to a marked increase in motorcycle ownership and usage?

Ms Rainger: Experience in London has certainly suggested that that would be the case. The exemption in London for powered two wheelers did lead to an increase in use and we think that is a very sensible solution to congestion problems.

Mr Magner: On the issue of road pricing, in London there is a congestion charge which is a specific type of road pricing. Some of the road pricing schemes that are envisaged are to charge for roads according to how busy they are, to encourage people to drive at different times, to use different roads and so on. I would be seeking an exemption for motorcycles from congestion charging but if it is road pricing, not as an add on but as an alternative to fuel duty and vehicle excise duty.

Q80 Chairman: The government have suggested that they want it to be revenue neutral. There may be other people who have other views but the government has specifically said any changes would be revenue neutral, which almost automatically suggests that what you are asking for would already be granted and therefore what would be your attitude if both those things were already in place?

Mr Magner: If it was revenue neutral and that would mean that motorcycles were treated equitably in terms of charging, it would not be unreasonable to levy a charge on a motorcycle which is equivalent to what they would otherwise pay in fuel duty and road tax, but since they would be cheaper to run than cars there would probably be a continuing change to motorcycles.
Q81 Mr Hollobone: Coming back to the London experience, was the increased number of motorcycles on the road at the level that you anticipated?
Mr Magner: We did not know what to expect. We were pleasantly surprised that the increase continued. Motorcycle use has been steadily increasing in London long before the congestion charge anyway mainly because of access issues and cost of parking which I think has tended to discourage some car use. There was not a step change, although there was an increase in motorcycle usage. It was hard to say what we would anticipate.
Ms Rainger: Some commentators suggested that any increase in motorcycle use as a result of the congestion charge would lead to a vast increase in casualty rates. In fact, we have seen the exact opposite. The increase in numbers of motorcycle and scooter riders in London has created benefits in relation to that critical mass issue we mentioned earlier on.

Q82 Mr Hollobone: My last question is about the gender of motorcyclists. With the introduction of the congestion charge, has there been an increase in the number of female motorcyclists?
Ms Rainger: Around 15% of motorcyclists taking their test are female. Speaking personally, I have had a licence for 10 years and many women prefer to use a motorcycle or a scooter to public transport for safety reasons. They feel much safer and more secure because it is not immediately obvious that they are female.

Q83 Mr Hollobone: Has the congestion charge led to an increase in the proportion of women motorcyclists?
Ms Rainger: In London specifically or nationally?

Q84 Mr Hollobone: In London specifically.
Ms Rainger: We would have to look at that.

Q85 Mr Hollobone: Looking at the training provided for motorcyclists, is the current level of required training doing the job? Would you recommend any changes? If you do, what would they be?
Mr Magner: Generally, the level of training is good, but you can always do better. In the strategy there are proposals to improve training. For example, the register of post test training instructors is shortly due to be launched which will ensure better quality training. There is a proposal to review direct access. We would certainly like to see a logbook training system linked to direct access for motorcycles so that rather than just taking a test riders would be subject to the sort of conditions that they would encounter when they pass their test. There are also proposals for things like improvements in compulsory basic training. Then you have the voluntary schemes, post test training, where you have Bikesafe which David Short alluded to in which qualified riders can take an assessment and consider going further. Although the training is generally very good, we can do better and there are plans afoot to do so.
Ms Rainger: One of the great strengths of the motorcycle community is its emphasis on continuing professional training and continuing development. The RAC Foundation would like to see motorist groups taking up the same kind of positive approach. Most motorcycle magazines and media encourage readers to take further training, whether that is Bikesafe, going out with an observer or taking advantage of voluntary courses. It is very much promoted and I think that is very healthy.

Q86 Mr Hollobone: Staged access to motorcycles is recommended by the third EU Driving Licence Directive. Is that a good idea?
Mr Magner: The principle of staged access is a good idea and it is certainly not new. Under the existing regime, we have staged access where you can take your test on a 125, have a limited motorcycle for two years and then progress to a motorcycle of unlimited power. What the third EC Driving Licence Directive is doing is bringing in three stages for progressive access. The principle of staged access is okay but I believe the way it has been done in the third EC Driving Licence Directive is going to be bad for motorcycling in general. The safety benefits are questionable. It is going to be more expensive and more complex. It is going to make the Transport Act 1981 look like a picnic. It is going to put people off motorcycling and because of the complexity which will lead to lack of understanding and the cost you are likely to have less compliance which will possibly have the opposite effect on safety.

Q87 Mr Hollobone: Are you satisfied with the efforts made by Her Majesty’s government to mitigate the effects of these changes so far?
Mr Magner: A directive is a framework and consequently now that it has been agreed—because it was agreed just before Christmas—by the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers it is now set in concrete. There is a certain amount of rigour in it and there will be challenges under the comitology process under the Committee for the Adaptation of Technical Progress, where they can make retrospective amendments to things like the degree of testing and training required going from one category to another in progressive access; also, the minimum test vehicle specifications which at the moment are somewhat restrictive. However, that is something that is entirely up for grabs now. When the issue was being discussed, although we appreciated the UK government abstaining at the Council of Ministers, it could have lent more support to putting forward amendments to make it more user friendly because we are stuck with a very strict age ladder, where there will not be any negotiation. It will be two years between each category and an increase in the age of direct access when it is not an age group where there is a problem. It is addressing a problem that does not exist. We have to work together in looking at plans for working within the directive but in the way the
Q88 Chairman: But did not?
Mr Magner: No.

Q89 Graham Stringer: Do the RAC have figures or estimates on the number of uninsured motorbike riders there are out there?
Ms Rainger: Not currently but I can make inquiries.

Q90 Graham Stringer: It would be very useful to have those figures. In your evidence, you state that education is the key to reducing mini moto nuisance. Why do you believe that when there are websites out there which are called “Annoy your neighbour. Buy a mini moto”? Ms Rainger: We believe at the moment that there are sufficient powers. Section 59 of the Police Act does give the police forces—

Q91 Graham Stringer: That is a slightly different answer.
Ms Rainger: There are sufficient powers in law to tackle the nuisance but in order to work better, if people are to understand what the problems are, these bikes are not being bought by 16 year olds or 15 year olds. They are being bought by parents. It is illegal to buy petrol if you are under 16 so again petrol is being put in these bikes presumably by parents. I am an optimist. I think if parents came to understand the risks that they are allowing their children to face by using these machines on the public road and that they are putting their children at risk of being killed, they would not support and facilitate them in this. There are safe places to take children who want to ride motorcycles legally. The Auto Cycle Union and local groups provide safe off road environments. If parents are being pestered by a child to allow them to have a mini moto, we believe that education and making parents aware of these facilities would allow that to be taken forward in a safe way.

Q92 Graham Stringer: Is it not the case that, when there have been 26,000 complaints in greater Manchester alone over the last 12 months, that is rather hope over experience? Yes, the powers are there but when you add up all the resources that are necessary for that extra legislation, is it not going to be difficult to get rid of this nuisance behaviour?
Ms Rainger: Additional legislation will not create additional resource. It is a question of the local police forces getting together with local agencies. We have seen some very successful enforcement campaigns in Coventry and Southwark, using existing powers. The advantage of using existing powers is that action can be taken immediately.

Q93 Graham Stringer: Legislation does not create extra resources but if you restrict the imports and the sales, if you license the riders and the vehicles so that they are easy to identify, you do reduce the problem without extra resources.
Ms Rainger: The powers are sufficient and it is a question of local will and local resource.

Q94 Graham Stringer: Do you share the view that the problem of mini motos is making the perception of motorcycling worse?
Mr Magner: Yes, I would agree with that statement. One of the problems that we have at the moment is that there has been some fairly negative legislation aimed at the issue of off tarmac riding, meaning riding on green, unsurfaced roads where you have to prove usage and so on. It is a bit of a legal minefield which is why I never did more than dabble in it. They are being tarred with the same brush as the mini motos because people say, “Oh yes, motorbikes. They are making a nuisance of themselves, aren’t they?” That is rather unfortunate. The BMF does not have any direct dealings with the mini moto fraternity because they are not road riding motorcyclists and are very often children but I am a bit concerned at the prospect of registering all motorcycles that are used off road. When I say “off road” I mean not on green lanes because the same rules apply as would apply to using surfaced roads. The people you want to target will not put their registration plate on anyway. Consequently, all the people who flout the law will just continue in the same way and unless it is backed up by adequate enforcement moreregulation is a waste of time. It just needs to be properly enforced.

Q95 Graham Stringer: Essentially, you agree with the previous witnesses and the RAC on these issues?
Mr Magner: Yes.

Q96 Graham Stringer: Do you think the minimum age for obtaining licences to drive motorbikes should be increased?
Ms Rainger: A young person who has been on a moped or motorcycle has an advantage when it comes to driving a car in terms of their understanding of the road environment and the kind of vulnerability that they face even inside a car. The current system creates these advantages and raising the age might cause that to be reduced.

Q97 Graham Stringer: What if you raise the age for a motorcycle licence and a car from 16 to 17 to 17 or 18? You could still get benefits and you may well reduce the numbers of very young people who are killed in motorcycle and car accidents.
Ms Rainger: We are not in favour of raising the minimum age of driving at this point.
Mr Magner: We are not in favour of raising the age for a driving licence for motorcycling. What is going to happen if the ages were raised for both classes of vehicle? The benefits of the motorcycle to address social exclusion would then be lost.
There was a question in the earlier session about power assisted cycles. One way of getting round this which would effectively allow younger riders on to motorised vehicles—at the moment, the power assisted cycles that can be ridden in the same way as a pedal cycle from the age of 14 are required to be electric and 200 watts maximum. That is not very powerful. That is two light bulbs, unless you have low energy light bulbs. Some of our EU partners allow one kilowatt as a maximum power output and they can be both motorised and electric. They call them mofas or sparmets, according to where they are. If you change the classification of a power assisted cycle, you would give people some experience on safe, low speed, motorised vehicles before they go on to mopeds. With regard to the licensing, you can ride a moped which is under 50cc with 45 kilometres per hour maximum speed capability at the age of 16 and a light motorcycle at 17. One of the things that we have been suggesting for a long time to provide an incentive for young moped users to take training and a test is that if they pass their test at 16 they may have provisional entitlement to a light motorcycle.

Q98 Clive Efford: On these mini motos, I take your point about some of the problems with enforcement and having registration plates but I have been overwhelmed by the number of complaints I get and I am concerned about the amount of police resources that are being diverted to this. Why do we have them at all?

Ms Rainger: There is a legitimate off road sporting use for young children who want to start off in motor sport. The problem is not that legitimate market; it is with the new market.

Q99 Clive Efford: These mini motos are incredibly small. They are not the sort of bikes that you are talking about, are they?

Ms Rainger: I think Valentino Rossi started off on a mini moto.

Mr Magner: They vary in size. You see the ones that are used purely for competition where they are not much bigger than a roller skate but the sort of mini moto that there is concern about that is causing the problem is the slightly larger one which is, if you like, a scaled down children’s bike.

Ms Rainger: A large number of complaints still come about stolen mopeds. In my area in north London, kids are out on stolen mopeds. They are legitimate mopeds which have been stolen and abused.

Q100 Chairman: If there were 26,000 complaints in any other field in transport do you not think there would be enormous outrage and demands that police begin to target in a very precise way people who are committing these offences?

Ms Rainger: Absolutely. The use of these small bikes on the road is illegal. We do not support it. It is just a question of dealing with it in the right way or the most effective way.

Q101 Clive Efford: They are so cheap and so readily available. I believe one company was giving them away with some building tools and there is a mobile phone company that will give you one if you sign up to a certain contract for a mobile phone. These things are so prevalent now and they are so cheap. On the one hand, they seem to have solved to some degree the theft of bikes in my area because they are so readily available, but this problem has reached such an epidemic proportion that surely people within the motorbike fraternity accept that we cannot keep throwing police resources at this. We have to take out the source.

Ms Rainger: This is why we are calling for education. I do not believe that any parent will knowingly want to give their child a toy that would risk their life. We would like to get that point across very clearly and as loudly as possible.

Q102 Chairman: Unfortunately, history does not show that. Experience teaches us that there are a whole lot of extraordinarily stupid people around who are quite happy to buy some very dangerous toy without apparently understanding that when you crack a skull on the whole it is not to the advantage of the human frame. What do we do about them? Why do we assume that education will automatically deal with this problem? Were it the case, would we still have 26,000 complaints in one year in Manchester?

Ms Rainger: Where there has been educational enforcement we have seen positive results.

Q103 Chairman: Enforcement or education?

Ms Rainger: Both together, hand in hand I believe.

Mr Magner: Very often exponents of road safety will talk about the three Es: enforcement, education and engineering. They all have to work together. This is also a case in point. When it comes to the engineering side of it, it is all very well saying to people, “You cannot do this. You cannot do that”, but there ought to be more provision made where people can legitimately use these in a safer environment.

Q104 Chairman: What you are being asked is something different. In New York there are many educational programmes encouraging people not to leave windows open above a certain height. What affected the number of admissions to A&E and the number of deaths from falls of children from windows was the imposition of a byelaw which said every window above a certain height should either be strongly barred or unable to be opened. Surely what is terribly serious is not just whether you tell people, “This is not a very good idea” but whether you need to take more active enforcement that stops people being able to have access to these particular vehicles. You would say that is not the case?

Mr Magner: I would not have a problem with more enforcement. It is the willingness and ability to conduct the enforcement. I would rather see enforcement than new regulation which people will ignore anyway.
Q105 Clive Efford: Do you accept that there has been such an explosion of problems caused by these mini moto bikes that there is not an infinite amount of resources out there to carry out this enforcement and deal with this problem?

Mr Magner: As David Short said, there are enough regulations and laws, not just motoring ones but antisocial behaviour laws, that can be invoked to deal with it.

Chairman: You have both been very helpful. Thank you very much indeed. We are very grateful to you.

Supplementary memorandum submitted by the RAC Foundation For Motoring

ABI have advised the following, which I hope is helpful to the Committee. Please note the caveats:

Further to Kate Hopton’s email of 7 February, we have made enquiries of our colleagues at the Motor Insurers’ Information Centre (the people responsible for the Motor Insurance Database).

They have carried out some research, based on data gathered in June 2005, which indicated that approaching 150,000 motorcycles were potentially uninsured. They’re not sure to what extent the figures need to be adjusted to take account of any “seasonal” motorcycling, but it’s the best they can do I’m afraid.

2 February 2007
**Wednesday 7 February 2007**

Members present:

Mrs Gwyneth Dunwoody, in the Chair

Clive Efford
Mrs Louise Ellman
Mr Eric Martlew

Mr Lee Scott
Graham Stringer

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**Memorandum submitted by the Association of Chief Police Officers**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) were active members of the Government Advisory Group on Motorcycling and therefore contributed to both the development and the implementation of the Government’s Motorcycle Strategy. We welcome the Government’s commitment to motorcycling as set out in the strategy and consider it a worthwhile agenda for partners to work together to make motorcycling safer and become “mainstreamed” into the UK transport infrastructure.

*The overall theme of this strategy is to facilitate motorcycling as a choice of travel within a safe and sustainable transport framework.*

The primary role of the Police Service given this theme is work towards making motorcycling safer through education, enforcement and supporting more engineering initiatives.

I am grateful to have recently been invited to sit on the newly resurrected National Motorcycle Council. It is of note that the strategy makes it clear in its introduction that it deals with on road motorcycling only. And my thoughts have therefore been confined to that arena.

It can be seen that none of the agreed action points contained in the strategy cite the Police Service as the organisation with the key responsibility. However, despite this we have continued to support those action points that are most relevant to us.

Rather than now go through each action point my intention is to provide feedback and information on those action points that are most relevant to the Police Service.

**THE ACTION POINTS**

Action (iii): we will press for and give support to a campaign, led by the motorcycle industry, retailers and rider user groups, to encourage riders to keep their motorbikes road legal for noise.

It is fact that all motorcycles sold in the UK for road use comply with noise limits as set out in European Directives. However noise remains a nuisance and remains a source of complaints to the police. The Government’s strategy rightly sets out to tackle this problem.

Specific mention of the need to take enforcement action in relation to noisy exhausts has been made in the police Motorcycle Enforcement Strategy that I published in 2006.

I have witnessed a real change in stance by rider’s rights organisations, and some motorcycle targeted magazines in that they are now discouraging motorcyclist from fitting noisy after market exhausts.

However, the after market exhaust manufacturers continue to thrive and offer a vast range of unlawful exhausts, the only real difference seems to be that their ads now tend to make it clear that the exhausts are intended for the race track and are not intended for road use. This however seems more of a cynical attempt at a get out clause for the manufacturers than a genuine attempt to dissuade purchase for road use.

In my opinion this is an area that requires further work as in addition to the obvious noise nuisance issue noisy exhausts are having a hugely negative affect on the image of motorcycling as a whole.

Action (v): we are supporting the development of engineering guidelines by the Institute of Highway Incorporated Engineers (IHIE), and will work with the Institute to raise awareness of good practice amongst local highway authorities and the Highways Agency; and we will keep under review the case for developing further guidance to supplement the IHIE document in the light of emerging experience and research.

This is an excellent piece of work which if universally adopted has potential to make a real difference to motorcycle safety. However, when my colleagues and I attend meetings with partner organisations it becomes obvious that not all Highways and Local Authorities have either ready access to or have taken on board this document. I would suggest that the DfT should consider ways in which Local Authorities can be held to account more effectively for their adoption of the IHIE guidelines.

Action (xxvi): we agree that further pre-test training and the Direct Access Scheme should be reviewed, and we would extend the scope of that exercise with a view to delivering a better CBT.
Action (xxvii): once conclusions have been reached on European Commission proposals for a further Directive on driving licences, and Member States latitude of action on licensing is known, the DSA will undertake a full public consultation on a range of options for improving pre-test training.

These two actions are very much linked and there can be no doubt that there is a need to review the Direct Access Scheme as there appears to be a growing number of causalities that have passed their test via the DAS route. I deliberately use the word “appears” as it is very difficult with current data capture processes to accurately determine how those that are involved in collisions passed their test.

However, there does need to be a sense of context in that currently some 80% of those that pass their motorcycle test do so via the DAS route. It therefore follows almost as default position that an increasing proportion of those that are involved in collisions will have entered motorcycling via this route.

Action (xxix): the DSA is working with the Motorcycle Industry Association to develop national standards for post-test training for full motorcycle licence holders but especially newly qualified riders, those upgrading their motorcycles, and those returning to motorcycling after a break.

It is very encouraging to see that the DSA are about to launch their voluntary post test trainers register. The police BikeSafe initiative has its mission statement “Bridging the Gap”. This sums up our desire to direct those that come to us for BikeSafe assessment towards properly qualified post test trainers. Until the launch of the register this has proven difficult for the Police Service as we had no way of knowing the quality of the trainers that were out there and we could not therefore refer our candidates.

The post test trainers register will enable us to work much more closely with the training industry and actually provide our customer base with a list of recommended training organisations for the first time.

Whilst there is no specific action point the strategy at the same time as it deals with post test training makes specific mention of the police led BikeSafe initiative.

This initiative has moved on considerably in the last 12–18 months. We now have a national structure in place and close working relations with many government departments, most notably the Driving Standards Agency. We are also key partners in the DfT’s “Think!” campaign. 35 police forces now offer BikeSafe assessments and the scheme is now being adopted in Ireland and is under consideration in other European countries.

We are about to release a high quality DVD based trainers package that will enable BikeSafe to be delivered to a consistent quality across the UK. The majority of the funding for this project was helpfully provided by the DfT.

However, despite its success and getting specific mention in the strategy, BikeSafe continues to suffer from a lack of sustainable central funding. The national co-ordination function is currently funded by Humberside Police Authority utilising staff in Cheshire Police. Whilst this is a pragmatic response it does not seem to be the most appropriate use of resources levied for policing in Humberside. We are left with the perception that we are caught in a gap between two Government Departments. The DfT stance seems to be that the Police Service is a Home Office responsibility so it cannot fund BikeSafe and the Home Office view seems to be that road safety is a DfT responsibility so that it cannot fund BikeSafe either.

A further difficulty is that we are advised by the DfT that to be considered for departmental funding we must evidence the efficacy of BikeSafe in contributing to casualty reduction but the department is unwilling to commit research resources to enable us to do this. Again, something of a “Catch 22” scenario. These may be issues that the committee may wish to consider further.

Action (xxxiv): we are seeking powers in the Road Safety Bill for the courts to be able to offer riders the opportunity to attend a Driver Improvement Course, funded by the offender, in conjunction with a reduction in the normal disqualification or penalty points.

We are working hard to develop and implement a fit for purpose Rider Improvement course. We have two models already being piloted, one in Lancashire and one in Devon and Cornwall. The major difference between the two being that one includes a practical module whilst the other does not. Both schemes will be further trialled and evaluated with the ambition of being able to embark on a full national roll out within 12 months. We have had tentative indication from the DfT that it will support evaluation of the schemes and confirmation of this would be most helpful.

Action (xxxv): we will undertake research to develop guidelines for best practice on Speed Awareness courses.

Speed Awareness courses have now been rolled out across the UK and are available to motorcyclists as well as all other road users. The factors behind why people speed spreads across all vehicle user types and the courses are therefore generic enough to remove the need for bespoke motorcycle focused speed awareness courses.

Alongside the Motorcycling Strategy, the Select Committee wishes to enquire into the following area—“what action the Government might take to reduce the risk posed by mini-motos, go-peds and other motorised two-wheelers which are not legal for road use.”

There can be no doubt that the last few years have seen a massive explosion in the amount of mini moto type motorcycles that have been sold in the UK.
It is a problem for the police in that we are receiving an increasing amount of complaints. It is a problem that we are alive to and one we are acting upon. In enforcement terms the law is fairly straightforward. Unless the mini moto, or any other motorcycle is taxed, insured, MoT’d (if applicable) and has been registered with DVLA and carries a number plate, it cannot be ridden legally outside of the owners garden gate, or front door unless the rider has the specific permission of a landowner. Very few of these machines are lawfully on the road and we therefore have powers to deal with the riders.

However, the real problem is one of supply and it would be better to focus attention towards those that supply these machines, often of poor quality and without social conscience.

One of the issues is that it seems that the majority of the problem machines are supplied by dealers that operate outside the established motorcycle industry network making it difficult to influence their activities.

There is a case here for a multi agency approach to the problem with initiatives including national level advertising campaigns and Trading Standards involvement running in parallel with police enforcement.

We are not convinced that an off road licensing or registration scheme would in the short term be effective in reducing the problem as it seems unlikely that making something that is already unlawful more unlawful would really assist.

However, there may well be long term benefits in that a properly designed registration system would force the dealers to formalise the process of selling these machines.

It is also worth considering increasing the provision of diversionary areas where these machines could be ridden lawfully. This would be a pragmatic solution, in much the same way that the provision of skateboard parks helped to address the problems that were being experienced with on road skateboarding many years ago.

Finally, the perennial issue of police resources to undertake effective enforcement is a concern for ACPO. Enforcement of unlawful off-road riding is a highly specialist activity and inevitably this kind of enforcement has to compete amongst a myriad of other priorities for police resources.

THE SECOND AND THIRD EUROPEAN DRIVING LICENCE DIRECTIVE

The Second Directive.

The 2nd Driving licence Directive which will be introduced next year introduces a much more demanding off road machine control module to the riding test.

In principle anything that will improve the quality of newly qualified riders is to be welcomed, however there are some concerns that training establishments, in order not to increase the duration and therefore cost of courses, may over focus on the off road module at the expense of road time. This will need to be watched carefully.

The Third Directive

The concept of progressive licensing is something that the police service broadly supports.

The overall concern about the Third Directive is that it seeks to impose additional barriers to gaining a motorcycle licence that are not based on the results of in-depth research, for example it could be that the directive will increase the minimum entry age for Direct Access from 21 to 23 despite there being no evidence that this age group are the ones most at risk if they come via the DAS route.

Any changes to the testing system must be based on a properly researched and evidenced basis and must be shown to be likely to have a positive affect on casualty reduction.

Having consideration to the Strategies’ intentions of encouraging motorcycling we must ensure that any changes to the test regime do not attempt to reduce casualties by simply making it so difficult for people to pass their motorcycle test that they will seek out alternative means of transport instead.

Overall, ACPO welcome the Government’s Strategy for Motorcycling and are pleased to be a partner in its delivery. We are in general terms satisfied with the progress the department has made and with some strengthening of practical support in the areas I have highlighted, are optimistic the primary objectives of the strategy can be met.

7 February 2007
Witnesses: Mr David Griffin, Deputy Chief Constable, Humberside Police, and Mr Phil Edwards, National BikeSafe Co-ordinator, Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), gave evidence.

Q106 Chairman: Gentlemen, thank you very much for coming, and we very appreciate your co-operation, but we felt, since we wanted to talk to you, you would forgive us if we started a bit early.

Mr Griffin: Of course, Chairman.

Chairman: We do have one bit of housekeeping to perform. Members having an interest to declare.

Mr Martlew: Member of the Transport and General Workers’ Union and GMB.

Clive Elford: Member of the Transport and General Workers’ Union.

Chairman: Member of ASLEF.

Mrs Ellman: Member of the Transport and General Workers’ Union.

Graham Stringer: Member of Amicus.

Q107 Chairman: I am going to ask you, firstly, to identify yourselves for the record. I think, possibly, the acoustics in here are better than in some of the other rooms, but, if you remember, we are going to need to ask you to project your voices slightly. Can I ask you, after you have identified yourselves, whether you wanted to make an opening statement? Let us start by asking you to identify yourselves for the record.

Mr Edwards: Good afternoon, my name is Phil Edwards. I work in Cheshire Police as a representative of National BikeSafe Co-ordination.

Mr Griffin: I am David Griffin. I am a Deputy Chief Constable in Humberside Police and I represent the Association of Chief Police Officers, Road Business Policing Area in relation to motorcycle safety.

Q108 Chairman: Thank you very much. Deputy Chief Constable, did you want to say something on behalf of ACPO, or may we proceed to questions?

Mr Griffin: You may proceed, Chairman, but can I check one thing. I do apologise, I was not aware of the requirement for the submission for 18 December. I did make a written submission yesterday. I just wanted to check that you and your colleagues have had sight of that.

Q109 Chairman: That is what we have got, Deputy Chief Constable, so please do not worry about it, and if you miss anything out, we give you full permission to come back and tell us all the rest as well.

Mr Griffin: Thank you.

Q110 Chairman: Do we know how many dangerous bikes and riders there are on the roads?

Mr Griffin: In terms of absolute numbers, no, it would be impossible to say. The only comment I would make is that it is a minority of motorcyclists. The difficulty always with motorcycling is, because of its very nature, a small number of motorcyclists give the whole motorcycling image a tarnished reputation—things like, for example, noisy exhausts, anti-social riding—because they have a significant presence, and, obviously, they can affect a community significantly. Similarly, I know one of the things you want to come on to is illegal off-road riding. Again, a small number of people create a tarnished reputation for motorcycling overall, but, I would emphasise, the majority of motorcyclists use it as a form of transport, either for commuting or for leisure, so I would say it is a small number, but I cannot give you an absolute number.

Q111 Chairman: So you could not really tell us whether there are more or fewer?

Mr Griffin: My professional judgment is that it is about the same. It does ebb and flow. For example, one of the phenomena you are looking at at the moment is the mini motos, the miniature motorcycles.

Q112 Chairman: We will come on to that in a minute. As far as you are concerned, do you have a subjective impression of whether there are more cases of dangerous riding or there are more prosecutions? Is there any indication to you that things are getting worse, given the fact that there are obviously more people riding motorbikes in cities where there are congestion charges at the moment?

Mr Griffin: Yes. What I would say is obviously the number of motorcycles on the road has increased, so, consequently, there are more reports, and it is very localised. In some of our towns and cities there is a specific local problem, but that does move from place to place. In the overall picture, I would say, it does ebb and flow. There were difficulties in the early 1980s, and we are probably back at around about that point in the sense of reports to the police.

Q113 Chairman: Your motorcycle enforcement strategy has two main priorities: to reduce accidents and deaths caused by motorcycling and to reduce anti-social motorcycling generally.

Mr Griffin: Yes.

Q114 Chairman: Do you decide on which of those is the real priority, or how do you make your judgments?

Mr Griffin: It is very much a balance, but I would say our primary priority is for safety. We do recognise that motorcycling can be dangerous for those doing it, for a small number, and obviously the toll, in the sense of casualties and deaths, is something we want to see reduced significantly; but we also recognise the wider community issue, which is around the tiny minority of motorcyclists who use them anti-socially, and from that that is a big issue; so I would say we have sought to achieve a balance. In relation to the strategy, what I sought to do was to achieve consistency around England and Wales. One of the things that the motorcycling community was quite concerned about was significant differences of police enforcement in different counties in the country: a motorcyclist might be stopped for something in one county and not in another and dealt with in a different way. What I sought to achieve by that was some consistency. I brought practitioners together, and the idea was to provide guidance, the essence being, dealing with the lower level issues (for example, the use of dark visors in daylight hours, number plates that are slightly smaller than they
should be) by way of advice, but focusing enforcement on the things that really matter—the very noisy exhausts, the anti-social riding, those sorts of things—so that actually police resources are targeted.

Q115 Chairman: When you say, “Enforcement should be proportionate to the risk to an individual’s property and the degree of seriousness of the offence”, what did you actually mean?

Mr Griffin: Obviously, the notion, in essence, intrinsically, is policing by consent, and we want to make sure that we embody the support of the vast majority of law-abiding motorcyclists. It was a concern that somebody wearing or using a tinted visor in one police force area might be stopped and potentially summonsed for that and in another would not be. Intrinsically, that is not a dangerous thing to do in daylight hours; at night-time it would be. It is actually to get that consistency and say, “This would be a hazard to you at night”, and deal with it verbally. So, it was to enlist the support of the wider motorcycling community but still draw a line in the sand and say what is acceptable and what is absolutely unacceptable. It is not about the police not enforcing—we would still stop and deal with somebody doing those sorts of things and provide advice—but for the more serious things use the full force of the law, summoning, if necessary, issuing fixed penalty tickets, that kind of thing.

Q116 Chairman: My colleagues want to come in, but I wanted to ask you how effective rider improvement schemes were in cutting motorcycle crime?

Mr Griffin: They are still very much at the nascent stage. We are piloting two schemes, one in Devon and Cornwall and one in Lancashire. They have yet to be evaluated.

Q117 Chairman: Where are they centred?

Mr Griffin: I could not tell you. One in Exeter, I believe, I think one around Preston, in Lancashire, and we have actually just pulled together a framework for evaluating the two. They are slightly different. One is just a classroom-based session, the other involves a practical riding session, because we are getting conflicting advice from behavioural psychologists about whether or not it is a good thing to train a motorcyclist to ride their machine more skilfully as a consequence of having, if you like, broken the law. What we plan to do is assess the two schemes, but we are looking for support from the Department for Transport to do that. They have indicated tentatively that they will help us with the evaluation of that, and some firm commitment to that effect would be very useful.

Q118 Chairman: What kind of timescale are we talking about? You have only just started, you say. Mr Griffin: We will be fully-fledged in April of this year. I think we are talking probably about a 12-month timescale. What I would say is that obviously we draw a parallel with driver improvement schemes. There seems to be significant research to suggest that it is an appropriate way of dealing with lower level offending behaviour. I have no reason to think that motorcycling will be any different.

Q119 Mrs Ellman: The ACPO Strategy defines “targeting” as “more than simply focusing on those whose behaviour poses the greatest risk”. How would you define that?

Mr Griffin: I think it is around targeting. It is that combination of those issues that would create the greatest risk to the individual. For example, someone pulls a wheelie on a motorcycle—intrinsically dangerous for them and for other road users—and also recognising that, for example, around an estate in an urban area just riding up and down noisily would be a major issue for that community. So the idea would be to focus targeting on those two issues, one might be in a rural area, one might be in an urban area, whereas a simple riding up and down a road a few times in a rural area would not particularly be an issue meriting targeting. So the notion is being selective based, on the balance of risk to the individual and the wider community concerned.

Q120 Mrs Ellman: How do you identify complaints that come from the local community?

Mr Griffin: Principally utilising the police intelligence systems. Members of the public do telephone us and make reports around motorcycling—that is one avenue—and that lets us identify patterns normally about those issues where we have got focused anti-social behaviour. The other is where we have targeted enforcement campaigns. We try to balance education with enforcement. We do realise that one of the patterns of fatalities and serious crashes is about high-speed riding and improper skills being used negotiating left-hand bends, that kind of thing, and the police forces target that specifically in the summer months on those roads. Normally, the faster rural roads are the ones that appear to pose the greatest risk for motorcyclists.

Q121 Chairman: Mr Edwards, is that your experience in Cheshire?

Mr Edwards: In Cheshire that is reflected. The majority of motorcyclists do crash through lack of skills. It is not normally an excess speed, exceeding the speed limit issue, it is inappropriate speed in the given circumstances, their skill level does not allow them to ride at the given speed for the circumstances.

Q122 Mrs Ellman: How successful are the campaigns on training and education? Do you need the support of other organisations and are there any problems getting it?

Mr Griffin: We are very pleased with the BikeSafe initiative, which is an initiative for police forces around the country to take members of the public, assess their riding and provide some tips for the future and very much to hand them on to further organisations for further training. We would like to build upon that, and it would be helpful to have the formal support of the Department for Transport to
do that. They have been really helpful. We have produced a national curriculum DVD, which we are launching this spring, but it has been a source of concern for me about trying to achieve national coordination. Phil Edwards is my national co-ordinator. He is funded by Humberside Police Authority, which seems to me something slightly iniquitous for the council tax payers of Humberside, and we have found ourselves balanced between two stools, the Department for Transport saying, “We believe it is a Home Office issue. This is about policing”, and the Home Office saying, “This is a road safety issue, therefore it is over to the Department for Transport”, and find myself in a catch-22 on occasions. You will see, I have sought a pragmatic solution. I think the important thing is that we get it up and running and it happens. As I say, we now have 5,000 people a year coming through BikeSafe assessments. What we are seeking to do is to capitalise on the Post Test Training Register, which, coincidentally, is being launched today at a venue nearby. The idea is that we assess people, provide an individual assessment of them and then refer them on to the accredited training providers, the notion being that we believe intrinsically that, if we can make our motorcyclists better trained, their chances of being in a crash are reduced. One of our frustrations is that we are told all the time the evidence base must be based on casualty reduction. I cannot prove, and I do not think a one-day assessment and coaching session can hope to do that. It is recognising there is a benefit, that we hope to do is change our targeting and say that the number of people who then go on to take accredited further training is our measure of success, and it would be helpful to have the endorsement of the Department for Transport to recognise that in itself as of value.

Q123 Mrs Ellman: What changes do you need locally or nationally to make your training and education more effective?

Mr Griffin: I think it is recognising that the benefits of something like BikeSafe cannot just be measured in terms of absolute casualty reduction figures. I do not think a one-day assessment and coaching session can hope to do that. It is recognising there is a benefit. What we hope to do is change our targeting and say that the number of people who then go on to take accredited further training is our measure of success, and it would be helpful to have the endorsement of the Department for Transport to recognise that in itself as of value.

Q124 Mrs Ellman: Are motorcyclists getting away with crimes because technology, such as speed cameras and automatic number plate recognition, is not being registered?

Mr Griffin: I would say, again, a small minority are, and that is recognised as a problem. For example, a number of fixed camera sites are forward facing. Obviously a motorcycle does not have a number plate on the front, so not all of them can be detected. That has been recognised. Of course, if we identify an area where we think a lot of motorcyclists are speeding and that is creating a hazard to them and the wider community, we then, for example, put a mobile camera enforcement team on it. Another issue is the use of very small number plates, which can be of concern. That is dealt with in my strategy. If the plates are legible, that is fine, the technology can read them. If they are very small, that can be an issue. Again, we are talking here about a small minority; this is not a major problem.

Q125 Chairman: Before you leave that, I am sorry to ask idiot questions, but I am not clear. Is there a specific size that the number plate has to be?

Mr Griffin: Yes, regulations stipulate a certain size, and that is based on being able to read it from a certain distance. Forgive me, I cannot remember my inspector’s traffic exam.

Mr Edwards: 20.5 metres.

Mr Griffin: I knew Phil would know.

Q126 Chairman: I see why you are funded by Humberside!

Mr Griffin: So, yes, there is a stipulated size to make them legible, but, you will probably realise yourselves as you go around, some are very small indeed, and you can see the obvious intent there is that it is not legible. Others have the margins slightly cut off or are slightly decorative.

Q127 Chairman: That is what I want to know about. Are you saying that they can consciously do that and get away with it?

Mr Griffin: That is the point: they cannot.

Q128 Chairman: Is there something in road traffic law that says the actual number plate must be of a certain size?

Mr Griffin: Yes.

Q129 Chairman: There is with motorcars, so why is it not with motorbikes?

Mr Griffin: It is exactly the same for motorcyclists. The characters on motorcyles can be slightly smaller, and that is merely a consequence of the size of the machine and the size of the number plate—it has to be proportionate to the size of the mudguard—but there is a minimum and, obviously, beneath that we can apply enforcement.

Q130 Mrs Ellman: How much of your work is concentrated on construction and use violations—things like exhausts, coloured headlamps and things of that nature?

Mr Griffin: That is recognised as one of the key issues in the sense of anti-social behaviour, and the Government Strategy talks about noisy exhausts. The industry, I think, has been quite helpful and has woken up to the notion that it must do something about this, and we have seen a more responsible attitude in the wider motorcycling press and amongst more reputable wholesalers and distributors, but the reality is, certainly with a small number of sports machines, we do know people are buying these after market exhausts, putting them on, and, by merely glancing at it, it is not possible to tell it is an after market exhaust, and that continues to be a problem. The solution, I think, is around the
Q131 Graham Stringer: I was very interested, in reading your written evidence, not only to understand what the definition of “more unlawful” was but the conclusion you come to about many bikes that there may be benefit in a registration system over the medium term. Would you care to expand on that?

Mr Griffin: It is a difficult one. There may be benefit. The benefit alluded to there is actually controlling the supply, but at its heart our overall opinion as ACPO is that we do not believe an off-road registration scheme will be viable in tackling this problem. I have been in the police service 20 years and I could take you to police stations in and around Hull, for example, with back-yards full of stripped down motorcycles that are not mini motos, they have had the registration plate removed, they have the engine number scraped off, the chassis number removed, and that has been a problem for many years. That is the reason, in essence, why we do not believe it will actually solve the problem, because the sorts of individuals who are going to ride them illegally, even with a registration scheme, would simply remove the identifying markings.

Q132 Graham Stringer: If you make it unlawful, or even more unlawful than it is at the present time, to drive a motorbike, any motorbike, without a registration number and if the consequence of that is that the bike gets crushed when the police find it without a number, would that not be helpful?

Mr Griffin: Intrinsically, yes, you could say that, but normally the circumstances in which the mini moto is being used would constitute something anti-social. We can use the provisions that are already in place in relation to that. The machine does need insurance: if it is outside of somebody’s cartilage it might need an MOT; so all those provision are there. We are in a position to be able to enforce already, and so additional legislation, I do not think, will help the problem.

Q133 Graham Stringer: Is not one of the problems you suffer generally throughout the country when you find somebody riding one of these small machines without the permission of the private land owner that you have to give them a warning and take the bike off them, or the police officer involved takes the bike off them, and their mate comes along and says, “You cannot touch that bike because it is mine, not my mate’s”, whereas a registration scheme for the vehicle and keeper would stop that as well, would it not?

Mr Griffin: I accept that, and that is right. I go back to the point that the vast majority of the unlawful riding in those cases, people strip down things that are not mini motos and just remove the identifying markings, so we would have the same problem.

Q134 Graham Stringer: Again, if you happened to be the registered owner and keeper, it would enable you to deal with that. You are making concessions on each one of these, I think. Thirdly, if you had to have a registration plate on all motorised two-wheelers, three-wheelers, four-wheelers—One of your problems is that, for health and safety reasons, a lot of police forces will not chase kids who are driving these bikes: it is dangerous to the youths, it is dangerous to the police officer, but if you could identify it and if other people could identify that bike which was being driven unlawfully or as a nuisance, again, you could deal with it, could you not?

Mr Griffin: Per se that is true, but I would argue again that, in the circumstances in which that machine is being ridden, almost invariably the person would remove the registration plate, so you would not have the ability to do that.

Q135 Graham Stringer: Then you can use the legislation, can you not?

Mr Griffin: Yes, you would, but actually those powers exist already.

Q136 Graham Stringer: What I am trying to get at is that the ACPO line is the powers exist—in 2002 the Police Reform Act and the 1988 Road Traffic Act—and yet 40% of complaints about anti-social behaviour are related to mini motos. So, if the law is adequate, why are there so many complaints?

Mr Griffin: It is hard. Again, I said in my submission, we have to spread our police resources where we can, and I do not think it can purely be regarded as a policing problem; it has to be dealt with in partnership. We do have targeted enforcement campaigns, and where we have them they have success at that particular location for a period of time. What I cannot do, and what I would say my chief officer colleagues cannot do, is have significant police resources dedicated to this problem 24 hours a day. What we have to do is establish where it is a particular issue, we will do some targeted enforcement and then move on, and that would continue to be the case even if a registration scheme were in place.
Q137 Graham Stringer: You are being fair in saying that when you target an area the problem goes away for a short period and then it reappears. Do you not think a registration scheme would explain to parents and potential riders that they cannot do this; it would have a self-enforcing role on some of the nuisance?

Mr Griffin: It would, but, equally, I think one of the things that is an issue is that some parents still believe these things are toys and I think, quite innocently, in some senses think they are buying their child a toy. There are other ways in which they can be educated in that respect.

Q138 Graham Stringer: But if they had to register it, it would show that it was not a toy, would it not?

Mr Griffin: Yes, it would. My candid view is that, as with the phenomena of skate boarding, in terms of the problem that arises, I sense it is on the ebb now, it is starting to decline, and it is a phase that will pass to an extent. In my own force area in Humberside we have had quite a positive scheme in Hull of using diversionary tactics in association with the local authority, a provided facility, and the incidents of nuisance that you have referred to have fallen significantly by allowing people to lawfully ride the machines, bring them along, have the basic safety checks done, and that is now extending through the East Riding. I would suggest, in the sense of a long-term solution to this problem, much as was the case with skate board parks and BMX parks, that is probably the more appropriate approach to solve the problem once and for all.

Q139 Graham Stringer: A final question. I do not want to pursue it too much. I find it a very difficult argument to accept that there is a similarity between the skate board, which is really a big roller skate, is it not, and a small motorbike, which is a motorbike. The fundamental question is: if you have got a skateboard, why should you not have to register it? To put the question the other way round: why should we be permissive and allow these bikes to be used without both registering the bike and the keeper?

Mr Griffin: I accept that, but I suppose my response would be: what is intrinsically the problem we are trying to solve? I suspect from your post bags it is around the notion of anti-social behaviour, these machines being used irresponsibly in some places, and I honestly believe the most profitable way of actually stopping that being the case is a combination of responsible importing, working with the industry—and it does tend to be on the margins of the mainstream motorcycle industry—making parents aware of their responsibilities and some form of diversionary activities: because actually it can be turned into something positive. The experience in Hull, a very difficult area in some respects, is that the scheme has reduced the anti-social behaviour in some of the most deprived parts of the city significantly and local people look forward their children being able to participate in the scheme. You have to remember also, from the industry’s perspective we would like to promote motorcycling positively, and this could be a promising start to potentially starting motorcycling.

Q140 Mr Martlew: Going up from the small bikes to the bigger ones, I have a problem in my constituency and, tragically, two young men were very badly injured, but is it not a problem of perception to the extent that the public see the police doing nothing about it? You will see two lads obviously not 17, no crash helmets on, driving along the pavement, no silencer on. They are obviously breaking the law.

Mr Griffin: Yes.

Q141 Mr Martlew: There is a difficulty. People phone the police up and the police do not respond, or they respond late, and they do not catch them. I do not think the public think if you go chasing them they might crash, which is a very serious issue, but it is an anti-social problem that we have got in many parts of the country. How are you going to tackle that? How do you stop that happening without endangering your police or the youngsters?

Mr Griffin: That is one of the difficulties. A conventional police response in sending a police patrol is, generally speaking, ineffective and of too high a risk to that kind of situation, but not always, and we have to deploy very specialist patrols. For example, Phil was telling me on the way in that you have to use advanced motorcyclists, special machines, et cetera, to be able to stop them safely and deal with it. That is why I make the point about trying to deal with it more in a partnership framework and deal with the problem long-term. That is not to say the police should not do their part, clearly we should, and we do. We do use specially trained officers to do it, but they require a very high degree of training to do so safely. I think where we miss a trick is that members of the public feel let down in the sense that they do not know what is going to happen, and what, of course, we do is make a record of that and establish when we have got a pattern of offending and then we will deploy those special resources. Generally speaking, they are not available there and then to deal with that particular issue; it has to be pre-planned.

Q142 Mr Martlew: These bikes are ridden for an hour or a so at a time. They are actually stored somewhere?

Mr Griffin: Yes.

Q143 Mr Martlew: Surely that is the time to pick it up. You need the intelligence. You perhaps need the community to tell you.

Mr Griffin: Yes.

Q144 Mr Martlew: That does not seem to happen. Mr Griffin: Obviously, I cannot comment about the individual cases you refer to. In my own force, we would endeavour to send a police patrol to see the person and establish what is going on, because they can sometimes deal with it—the people have got off the machine, they can stop, talk with them and deal with it. When they hare off into the distance across
parkland or down the footpaths, that is when there is a difficulty, and, quite clearly, police officers are often not in a position safely to deal with that; so it is that difficulty. Just because that is a possibility, I do not think should mean the police should not respond at all. They need to assess it and look at each individual case on its merits.

Q145 Mr Martlew: Finally on this, I think it has been mentioned with regard to the mini motos, the situation about providing a facility for these barely young men to practise what they would call a sport.

Mr Griffin: Yes.

Q146 Mr Martlew: Is that, in your opinion, an advantage? The public would see that you are actually giving in to them, but you think that would be an advantage, do you?

Mr Griffin: I think if it is managed in a controlled way, you can manage where it is, it can be properly supervised, the machines can be safe, we can verify they are not stolen. In my experience, not in Humberside but in other parts of the country where this has been tried, generally speaking, it has been successful. We see a direct correlation when, as a scheme starts, we see a tail-off in the calls to the police about what are called nuisance motorcyclists riding off road in particular.

Q147 Mr Martlew: There is positive evidence of that?

Mr Griffin: There is positive evidence to suggest that is the case.

Q148 Clive Efford: I did not hear your answer to Mr Stringer about advice to police about pursuit. Is there a general advice or is that at a local level?

Mr Griffin: There is general advice. Phil, can you deal more generally with that?

Mr Edwards: Certainly liveried motorcycles are not generally regarded, certainly within Cheshire, as pursuit vehicles. They can monitor pursuits in the early stages and be an early ground commander, but they are certainly not regarded as a pursuit vehicle, for obvious reasons—they are a very vulnerable patrol officer if you like. With regard to off-road usage, I can give you personal experience of off-road motorcycling issues; I am an off-road trained motorcyclist; I am an off-road instructor. There are huge training implications for the police to resource an off-road capability 24/7, as Mr Griffin has alluded to. An officer has to be on a full advanced motorcycle training path for liveried bikes before they can be considered for off-road training. There is then a week’s training at off-road level and a yearly refresher just so they can use off-road motorcycles safely in urban and suburban environments. They have to patrol in pairs for health and safety reasons, so this is why they cannot be deployed as an immediate response to these sorts of calls. It has to be intelligence led, we have to find a pattern of offending before we can put together an operational plan to deal with these repeat offenders, and that would incorporate resources such as the air-support unit, the off-road trained officers and potentially liveried vehicles as well. My experience is that very few times do offenders make off from off-road police motorcycles because they know the high level of training that is involved, they know the machines that we use are competent and capable to be used in that environment. Very often the types of bikes that the offenders are using are stolen motorcycles that have had their number plates removed, their identification removed; their tyres, the suspension are unsuitable for that environment. Mini motos cannot be used very effectively on fields and public areas other than roads and car parks. So, my experience is that very few try to elude the police once the off-road bikes turn up; they just stay and are dealt with. I think we have one in Cheshire in the years that we have been doing off-road operations, but it is not a quick fix that we will just call the off-road bikes, because invariably they only work set shifts in accordance with intelligence-led police initiatives.

Q149 Clive Efford: If young people are using bikes in a dangerous manner, am I right in assuming that the advice would be not to pursue, even if you had a suitable bike, because of the danger?

Mr Edwards: Certainly within Cheshire that would be a dynamic risk assessment on the day. It would depend entirely on the environment and the time of day, et cetera. If it was an estate where they were riding at speed down back alleys, we would then have to consider the risk to the public. It would be a case of trying to identify the offender, either visually or through intelligence means, and targeting them in another way.

Q150 Clive Efford: There is no general advice given out by ACPO, is it at local level then?

Mr Edwards: There are national guidelines in relation to pursuit generally, and, of course, in relation to two-wheelers intrinsically there is a high risk in two-wheeled pursuit. That is contained in national guidelines, but there is obviously some local interpretation of it. The general one is a very cautious notion, because obviously a two-wheeled machine potentially is unstable and if you get into a pursuit situation the risks are very high indeed.

Q151 Clive Efford: Do you have any idea how much the whole scheme cost?

Mr Griffin: I am afraid I do not, offhand. Clearly that is information we can get for you, if it would help.

Chairman: You might give us a little précis of exactly what it comprises as well, because you have talked about it but you have not made it clear exactly what it is.

Q152 Clive Efford: I have got several problems in different parts of my constituency alone. I was wondering how realistically we could reproduce the whole scheme in every community.

Mr Edwards: Sir, there has been some guidance produced very recently by the Autocycle Union, who deal with these sorts of off-road type issues. They have got a guidance document which, I believe,
is designed to allow local authorities to have some guidance about how they can set up and manage these schemes. For your information, I have had some personal contact with a community social worker from Elsmere Port who runs these types of schemes for the underprivileged and offenders within the Elsmere Port area. His take on the subject is, if we can give these offending types some ownership of the scheme that they enjoy coming to and that they feel they are getting benefit out of, then their offending outside of that scheme does diminish because they feel that their position within the scheme will be jeopardised if they are caught offending outside, and that is the sort of ethos that is engendered. If you want to stay within the scheme that you are enjoying, that you are getting benefit out of, if we find you riding an off-road bike elsewhere, or whatever, then you will be removed from the scheme—and it has social benefits.

Q153 Clive Efford: I have got a similar scheme in my constituency, but it is on one particular estate. There would be a great deal of difficulty in reproducing it on every estate.

Mr Griffin: Oh, yes, and we have to be realistic.

Q154 Clive Efford: Is it a solution, is the question?

Mr Griffin: I think it is certainly part of a solution. It would be unrealistic to suggest that this could be on every street corner, but just as we did in relation to BMX bikes and to skate boards, with the local community initiative and local authority support it is possible. We will obviously supply you with information around the whole scheme to try and assist.

Q155 Clive Efford: Can you take us through the section 59 notice? If a bike is being ridden on the road, a section 59 notice can be issued. Can the bike be taken away immediately and disposed of?

Mr Griffin: I defer to my legislative expert.

Mr Edwards: As far as I am aware, section 59 of the Police Reform Act 2002 requires the vehicle to be used contrary to section 3 of the Road Traffic Act, which is a driving or riding without due care and attention type of offence, or in respect of section 34 of the Road Traffic Act, which is in respect of its use on common land. The section 34 offence must be accompanied by the vehicle being used in a manner which creates alarm, distress or annoyance, or is likely to so cause. At that point the police officer can issue a warning notice to the rider of the motorcycle that, if they continue, or if within 12 months from that date the vehicle is stopped again being used in this manner, then it can be seized.

Q156 Clive Efford: If it is a bike that does not require a registration, how do you know it is the same bike the second time?

Mr Edwards: This is absolutely the problem, and, as Mr Griffin has alluded to previously, this problem is not new because mini-bikes are on the scene; this problem, even prior to section 59, has been an issue for many years. I have been in the Police Force 26 years and I can remember stolen motorcycles, Honda C90s, with all their identification marks taken off, being ridden anti-socially 20 years ago, so it is not a new problem.

Q157 Clive Efford: If it is a registered bike and it has had its chassis number and everything filed away, you would confiscate that bike because you would suspect a crime anyway, would you not?

Mr Edwards: We do have powers under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act to seize whatever we feel is evidence.

Q158 Clive Efford: So if we have a registration scheme that requires the chassis number and everything to be registered, if you stop that bike on common land and it is being ridden in a way that is causing a disturbance, it breaches section 59. If it has those numbers removed then, presumably, if it has breached the registration as well, that is two notices simultaneously and you can confiscate the bike immediately?

Mr Edwards: As far as I am aware the removal of the bike does not solve the core problem though, because these people generally will not own the motorcycle in any event—this is my personal experience—it will be almost a pool vehicle that is being used by a number of people from a given area. No-one will admit to owning it. So, you can take it off them, you can deal with them for whatever offences are apparent at the time, but to crush a £60 mini moto that they do not own in any event has very little deterrent effect.

Mr Griffin: In reality, in that kind of scenario, we would almost certainly seize the machine because clearly we would need to verify whether or not it is stolen; so the practical reality is that we would still seize it.

Q159 Mr Scott: In my own area shops have opened up which are purely selling mini motos. Invariably they are quite close to areas that are experiencing the highest number of problems. Do you not think that if there were some way of licensing these shops and stopping them being sold, as you said yourself, as toys, this would go some way? You also mentioned areas—such as we have skate board parks, et cetera—possibly for mini motos, but that is not going to really stop the kids who are just riding round estates causing problem and, in many cases, endangering their own lives on a regular basis.

Mr Griffin: I wholeheartedly concur with you in that sense. There clearly must be a responsible way in which these machines are sold and distributed. In my conversations with the industry this is regarded very much as outside the mainstream industry without the consequent code of conduct, et cetera. In terms of solutions legislatively to deal with that, I am not sure, but from a police perspective certainly we need to see prime responsibility being at the point of sale.

Q160 Chairman: What is the response of the industry when you say these sorts of things? We have taken evidence that people are importing these bicycles from China for as little as £50?
Mr Griffin: Indeed.

Q161 Chairman: That is going to aggravate the situation. In fact we took evidence last week that people are actually giving them away as a promotion.
Mr Griffin: Indeed.

Q162 Chairman: What is the response of the industry?
Mr Griffin: The industry regard it is being very much outside their mainstream remit. Certainly responsible manufacturers and importers do not do this kind of business. It is a concern for them, because actually you are not, in a sense, talking about the mainstream industry, you are talking about a peripheral part of it. People have set up very quickly, et cetera. How long it will endure I do not know. I suspect it will be a non-lasting phenomenon, but it is a difficulty for them because they do not actually speak on behalf of the importers.

Q163 Chairman: A non-elastic phenomenon. Is that an ACPO phrase?
Mr Griffin: Non-lasting phenomenon.

Q164 Chairman: I am sorry, I thought it was some new police term? I think that is very helpful, gentleman. I do not know that you have convinced us that registration would not be something to discuss seriously, but it has been very helpful. If you would just give us a précis of any extra information you have got, that would be extremely helpful. Thank you very much indeed.

Memorandum submitted by The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents

RoSPA welcomes the Transport Committee’s Inquiry and thanks the Committee for the opportunity to submit evidence. RoSPA’s evidence is restricted to motorcyclist safety issues.

Motorcycling is an increasingly popular form of transport. However, motorcyclists are also one of the most vulnerable road users. Despite forming only 1% of road traffic, motorcyclists account for 20% of road deaths and serious injuries.

In 2005, 569 motorcyclists were killed on the road, 5,939 were seriously injured and just over 18,000 slightly injured. Motorcyclist casualties had been rising since the late 1990s, because motorcycling has increased, but 2004 and 2005 saw welcome reductions in the numbers killed and injured. The rate of motorcyclist killed or seriously injured casualties per billion kilometres travelled in 2005 had fallen by 28% from its 1994–98 level. Nevertheless, motorcyclist casualty rates remain much higher than other road users.

The vast majority (93%) of motorcyclist casualties are riders, with passengers forming just 7%. Motorcyclist casualties are predominately male. The two highest risk groups are riders aged 16 to 19 years on mopeds and small engine motorcycles, and riders aged 20 to 49 years (particularly those aged 30 to 39 years) on larger machines. The main change in motorcyclist fatalities since 1994–98 has been a large increase in deaths among 30 to 49 year old riders.

Almost three quarters (72%) of motorcyclist casualties occur on built-up roads (roads with a speed limit of up to 40 mph), even though such roads carry less than half of motorcycle traffic. However, 59% of motorcyclist deaths occur on non built-up roads. The reverse is true for moped users: 64% of moped deaths occur on built-up roads and 36% on non-built-up roads. The fatality rate for motorcyclists is much higher on rural roads than on urban roads.

Motorcyclist casualties are highly seasonal. Fatalities and overall casualties peak during the Spring and Summer months, reflecting increased riding during this period. The vast majority occur in fine weather and on dry roads.

There are a number of common types of crashes involving motorcyclists, and education and publicity measures should focus on these types of crashes, and target riding on rural as well as urban roads.

BENDS

Tends to be the fault of the rider, often because s/he approaches the bend too fast and/or mis-judges the curve. They occur more often on leisure rides.

JUNCTIONS

Tends to be the fault of a driver who fails to see a rider who was in clear view (and was often seen by other road users).

OVERTAKING

Usually involves poor overtaking by a rider, but also includes “filtering” through stationary or slow moving traffic.
LOOSING CONTROL

Usually due to rider error, poor road surfaces and avoiding other road users. They are more common on rural roads, and often linked to excessive speed, alcohol, other impairment or careless/reckless behaviour.

TRAINING

One of the key approaches to improving motorcyclist safety is to ensure that riders receive appropriate training when they start (or re-start) to use a motorcycle, and further training as they progress in their riding careers, especially when they move from smaller to larger motorcycles.

The motorcycle training industry in Britain is fragmented, with many small training organisations, a range of different qualifications and many different types of courses. Motorcyclists receive relatively little formal training, and many graduate from smaller to larger machines without taking any further training.

Good practice and guidelines for standardising the core elements of pre- and post-test motorcycle training are needed.

Learners need to be encouraged to take an adequate level of training between CBT and the motorcycle test.

STATUTORY REGISTER OF MOTORCYCLIST INSTRUCTORS

A weakness is the lack of a statutory register to ensure that motorcyclist instructors are trained, tested and monitored to minimum, national standards (similar to the one for car driving instructors). Training competencies and professional qualifications for motorcyclist trainers need to be developed. A voluntary registration scheme to be set up by the DSA is welcome, and subject to an evaluation of its effectiveness, should, in RoSPA's view, become a compulsory register.

POST-TEST TRAINING

National standards for post-test training are needed for all motorcyclists, particularly newly qualified riders, riders returning to motorcycling after a long break and riders who are changing to larger, more powerful machines.

The Pass Plus scheme (which provides extra supervised lessons after the car driving test) should be extended to novice motorcyclists.

Motorcyclists should be encouraged to continue to develop their riding skills and abilities. To this end, Bikesafe schemes, post-test rider development training and advanced motorcyclist training should all be promoted widely.

Rider Improvement Schemes for motorcyclists are being developed and evaluated. RoSPA supports the powers in the Road Safety Act 2006 to provide training courses (for drivers and motorcyclists) for more serious offences. Speed Awareness courses, being offered by some Police forces to drivers who exceed the speed limit by small amounts, should be available to motorcyclists as well as drivers.

THE ROLE OF EMPLOYERS

Where employees use motorcycles to carry out their normal duties (eg, riding to meetings, patrols, fast food deliveries, despatch riding, etc) health and safety and road traffic law require that employers assess and manage the resulting risks within their overall health and safety framework. There are also powerful ethical and business reasons for organisations to take action to help their employees to stay safe when they are riding motorcycles or scooters for commuting, domestic or leisure purposes. The costs to the business of an employee being injured while riding are likely to be the same irrespective of whether the accident happened during working time or outside working hours.

FATIGUE

A tired motorcyclist is more likely to crash. Motorcyclists may have an increased susceptibility to fatigue because of noise, vibration and exposure to weather conditions. It is more difficult for motorcyclists to find a safe place to stop and sleep and so they may be more tempted to keep going on long journeys. The Highways Agency’s consultation on “Policy for Service Areas and Other Roadside Facilities” should consider the needs of motorcyclists, for example, the provision of safe places to lie down and rest, quiet areas with recliners, secure storage lockers.
INAPPROPRIATE SPEED

Most motorcycle accidents occur at relatively low speeds, although fatal and serious injuries are more likely to be suffered at higher speeds. Built-up roads with speed limits of 40 mph or less have the highest casualty rate for motorcyclists. However, only one third of motorcyclist deaths occur on these roads—60% of deaths occur on non-built up roads with speed limits over 40 mph. Speed management should be directed to both high and low speed motorcycle riding.

A Feasibility Study into the development of intelligent speed adaptation devices (that would restrict the motorcycle’s maximum speed to the prevailing speed limit) for motorcycles is needed.

HELMETS

Motorcycle helmets reduce the risk of receiving head and brain injuries in an accident. However, they can be improved. Research is underway to improve the standards for helmets and visors, and to develop ones that can provide protection in a wider range of impact speeds. Improvements in motorcycle helmets will save even more motorcyclists’ lives. Any future attempts to remove or reduce the UK VAT zero rating on motorcycle helmets should be rejected.

THE MOTORCYCLE

Motorcycles encompass a wide variety of vehicles, from small low-powered mopeds and scooters to large, high powered motorcycles capable of reaching speeds of 200 mph and more. As with cars, RoSPA does not believe that there is any justification for producing such powerful vehicles that can so easily reach speeds of more than twice the maximum speed limit.

BRAKES

Braking, especially in an emergency, is one of the most difficult tasks of riding a motorcycle. Errors in braking may easily lead to skidding, capsizing or the vehicle becoming unstable. Incorrect use of motorcycle brakes is considered to be a factor in many motorcycle accidents. ABS brakes for motorcycles are now being fitted to a wide range of machines—this should be encouraged. Other advances in motorcycle brakes are being developed, including Combined Braking Systems (CBS) that operate both brakes and distribute the braking force to the front and rear wheels to improve stability when braking. It is important to ensure that riders understand how advanced braking systems work and receive training in their use.

DAYTIME RUNNING LIGHTS

Research suggests that motorcycles using specifically designed daytime running lights are more easily seen by other road users in daylight. RoSPA opposes EC’s proposals for all vehicles to use daytime running lights because we think motorcyclists will lose the relative conspicuity they currently enjoy in the UK.

MOTORCYCLE ASSESSMENT PROGRAMME

The EURONCAP programme that crash test cars and rates them on the results has led to significant improvements in car design, and raised the public’s awareness of the importance of considering safety issues when choosing a new car. A similar programme for motorcycles may also lead to consumer-led and competition-driven improvements in motorcycle design.

ROAD DESIGN

The Institute of Highway Incorporated Engineers (IHIE) Guidelines for Motorcycling was a significant and welcome development in ensuring that the needs of motorcyclists are considered when designing, constructing, changing and maintaining the road environment. They should be widely adopted and implemented. Features that are unnoticed by a car driver can be dangerous for a motorcycle rider. For example, steel manhole covers positioned on the line round a bend, white paint on the road where a rider needs to change direction and loose grit on the road surface can all prove dangerous if not lethal to motorcycle riders. Therefore, it is important for engineers to consult with motorcyclists at the design, implementation and safety audit stages to ensure that roads are easy for motorcyclists to read and have no sudden surprises.
**ROAD SURFACE**

Motorcyclists are more susceptible to difficulties and hazards created by the design, construction, maintenance and surface condition of roads. Raised road markings can also cause problems for motorcyclists, either by affecting their stability or by retaining water on the surface, which results in a loss of adhesion between the tyres and the road surface. It is essential that the needs and vulnerability of two-wheeler are considered carefully by highway designers, engineers and that appropriate road maintenance is maintained.

**TRAFFIC CALMING**

Traffic calming is a proven, effective highway engineering measure to reduce speed-related accidents, and benefits all road users. Traffic calming features need to be effective in reducing motorcyclists’ speed while at the same time not inadvertently causing additional hazards to two wheelers. They also need to be well maintained and visible under all lighting and weather conditions. It is essential that traffic calming design guides provide suitable advice and options for achieving this balance.

**CRASH BARRIERS**

Crash barriers are a concern for motorcyclists. Exposed parts of support posts concentrate impact forces on a motorcyclist’s body, and the edges of horizontal beams or wire rope can cause laceration injuries. Crash barriers should be designed and tested with both two- and four-wheel vehicles.

**BENDS AND NIGHT-TIME CRASHES**

Accidents on bends on non-built-up roads, and night time accidents are a particular problem for motorcyclists. Design solutions to reduce these risks should be considered, especially at sites, routes and areas where accident data indicates that there is a motorcycle accident problem.

**MINI MOTORBIKES**

Mini motorbikes and powered scooters, often known as “mini motos” or “go ped”, can be bought for under £100. Many are capable of travelling in excess of 40 mph and some can reach 60 mph. Many are marketed as toys, but in reality are motor vehicles, although not legally allowed to be used on the road.

There are no national figures for injuries caused as a result of mini motorbike use, but as far as RoSPA is aware, there have been at least seven fatalities involving mini motorbikes since September 2004. Six occurred on the road; five involved children under 15 years of age.

While RoSPA supports Police initiatives to seize and crush illegally ridden machines, we also believe that several issues need to be addressed:

- Lack of awareness among parents and others who purchase these machines.
- Irresponsible selling by retailers.
- Lack of suitable safe places for the machines to be used.
- Lack of training and advice on their use.

Parents buying mini-motos often do not seem to be aware that they may be encouraging their children to break the law and putting them at risk of severe injury. Education and publicity would be helpful.

Some retailers also seem to be ready to sell these machines to anyone, without asking who will use them, where and how. This is an education issue, but also an enforcement issue for Trading Standards.

We are concerned that the lack of suitable recognised places to ride and irresponsible selling leads to parents allowing children to ride on pavements and roads, public parks or on open and unused land; which is illegal and dangerous to both riders and other users. We are also concerned about riders using these machines without protective equipment—especially a helmet.

RoSPA believe that many potential incidents can be avoided if mini motorbikes are used in a managed environment, with appropriate safety equipment and training such as that promoted by the Auto Cycle Union (ACU).

**THIRD DRIVING LICENCE DIRECTIVE: PROPOSED CHANGES TO MOTORCYCLE LICENSING**

The Third Driving Licence Directive will introduce major changes to motorcyclist licensing, possibly raising the age for direct access to larger machines from 21 to 24 years, setting lower age limits for smaller machines and a requirement to pass a test or take training when moving from smaller to larger motorcycles. In principle, RoSPA supports measures that encourage riders to take training and to graduate their
experience as they move to large machines. However, we do not support measures designed to discourage motorcycling. The practical implications for the UK’s motorcycle training and testing industry need to be considered.

RoSPA believes that the UK’s minimum age limits (16 years for riding a moped and 17 years for motorcycles) must be retained. It is also absolutely essential that the UK’s requirement that moped riders must pass CBT, a theory test and a practical test be retained. The idea of allowing young people to ride a two-wheel vehicle that is capable of reaching speeds of 45 km/h without practical training and testing is ludicrous. The UK should refuse to recognise the validity of a driving licence for mopeds issued by another Member State where the rider is under 16 years of age, or a motorcycle licence if a rider is younger than 17 years.

Drivers

Most motorcycle accidents involve a collision with another vehicle, usually with a car. Although, there is much that motorcyclists can do to avoid such collisions, the behaviour of drivers is equally crucial. There are many accidents in which the motorcyclist is using the road responsibly and safely, but is put at risk because a driver fails to do the same. Drivers need to be aware of the characteristics, needs and vulnerability of motorcyclists.

Motorcycle accidents at junctions in urban areas are usually the fault of drivers who fail to see a rider who is in clear view, and in some cases even wearing high visibility garments or using daytime running lights.

Government road safety publicity campaigns rightly target drivers with key messages to raise their awareness that they need to look out for motorcyclists, especially at junctions, and should continue to do so. It is essential that drivers are aware that motorcyclists may be present on any road, at any time.

Further research into the behavioural aspects of drivers in regard to motorcyclists is underway and the lessons learnt should help to identify further strategies to improve the attitudes, skills and behaviour of drivers towards motorcyclists.

Conclusion

Motorcycling is an important and popular form of transport and continues to undergo a renaissance. Yet motorcyclists remain a minority and face a much higher risk of death and injury. They account for about 1% of road traffic but some 20% of fatal and serious casualties. Key approaches to improve the safety of motorcyclists are:

— More effective motorcyclist training.
— More awareness and better behaviour by drivers.
— A safer road environment for motorcyclists.

18 December 2006

Memorandum submitted by Sustrans

Introduction

1. Sustrans is the charity behind practical and innovative solutions to the UK’s transport challenges. Our work includes Low Carbon Travel, Safe Routes to School, Active Travel for Health, the National Cycle Network, and changing travel behaviour through individualised travel marketing (our TravelSmart programme).

2. Our aim is to change the UK’s transport system and culture, so that:
— transport emissions that cause climate change are significantly reduced;
— people can choose more often to travel in ways that benefit their health;
— everyone has local access to the services they need to improve their quality of life; and
— local streets and public spaces become places for people to enjoy.

3. Our work in particular promotes walking and cycling, with a special emphasis on mobility for young people. We believe this to be integral to wider efforts within the Transport sector to reduce the UK’s CO₂ emissions by at least 60% by 2050.

Motorcycling

4. Motorcycling does not fit well with most of these aims, which in general accord with Government policy. The noise, speed and acceleration of powered two-wheelers, especially above 49cc, does not make them particularly suitable for most streets and residential neighbourhoods.
5. Motorcycles have a number of particular disadvantages, notably:
   — exposure to weather;
   — lack of carrying capacity for the old and the young; and
   — inability to carry luggage or heavy shopping.

6. The safety aspects of motorcycling are a noticeable disadvantage. The 2006 edition of “Transport Statistics Great Britain” shows (table 1.7) that the 1995-2004 average fatality rate per billion passenger kilometres was 113. The corresponding figure for cars was 2.8. Clearly most PTW travellers are simply better off in a car when safety is considered.

7. The same publication also shows (table 3.6) that although PTWs perform reasonably well for carbon dioxide in urban traffic, their emissions of carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons—especially for 2-stroke machines—are significantly worse than for cars.

8. In essence, to plan for a carbon-constrained future the UK needs a fundamental shift away from private motorised traffic towards walking, cycling and public transport. The Government’s Motorcycling Strategy was devised before Climate Change and Energy Security became major policy issues. Now that they are, we need to consider again whether—in light of its several disadvantages—motorcycling is a mode that should be given further encouragement.

**USE OF BUS LANES BY MOTORCYCLES**

9. The DfT is currently consulting on a draft Traffic Advisory leaflet concerning the above. The gist of it is that the current position against normally allowing this be changed to a wider position of allowing local authorities to decide.

10. Sustrans will oppose this position for the several reasons given above.

11. We also believe as a general principle, that having different provision around the country is wrong, as it is likely to be confusing to all classes of road user.

12. The draft text of the leaflet is commendable for highlighting some of the possible problems. In particular it states that:

   “Pedestrians may expect only clearly visible, or slow, vehicles to be using a bus lane. The introduction of highly mobile motorcycles, with a small front profile, possible overtaking a bus, could introduce new conflicts.”

We draw the attention of this draft to the Committee and ask them to consider the problems raised therein.

**ILLEGAL MOTOR-CYCLING AND MINI-MOTOS**

13. One of the reasons for the success of the National Cycle Network is in its nature of being mostly free of motorised traffic. In parts of the country we continue to have problems of illegal motor-cycle use of our paths, which causes great distress and annoyance to those on foot or cycling. To combat this we are sometimes forced to erect entrance barriers, which in turn make access by cycle or wheelchairs very difficult.

14. These problems have recently been exacerbated by the use of mini-motos, and we ask the Committee to consider ways in which the import and use of such machines might be discouraged.

**CONCLUSION**

15. Much remains to be done to improve the safety record of powered two-wheelers. At the same time the greater use of this mode remains highly problematical. The spread of road-pricing and the continued exemption of PTWs from this charging may be a source of further problems in the future. We ask the Committee to look once more at the broader issues concerning this form of private motorised travel.

18 December 2006

Memorandum submitted by Mr Stephen Plowden

1. This submission is much less thorough than I would like it to be. The time allowed for a reply is limited and I am very busy. I do not believe that members of the Committee have read any of my recent submissions to their inquiries, so there is a high probability that the effort in preparing this one will also be wasted. However, I have taken an interest in motorcycling ever since Mayer Hillman and I devoted a chapter to it in our report Danger on the Road, the Needless Scourge, published by Policy Studies Institute in 1984, and I would reproach myself if I did not make some attempt to get a disastrous policy changed.
THE GOVERNMENT’S STRATEGY

2. The Government’s principal aim for motorcycling, as stated in the Ministerial Foreword to the document The Government’s Motorcycling Strategy published by the DfT in February 2005, is “to ‘mainstream’ motorcycling . . . to make a positive difference for motorcycling, and make sure that motorcycling takes its proper place in the transport mainstream as a safe, affordable means of transport”. With motorcycles of the present type such mainstreaming cannot be achieved, and it is hard to see why any Government should want to try.

3. Motorcycles are incompatible both with other motor vehicles and with bicycles. They account for only just over 1% of vehicle mileage and for about 0.7% of personal travel. In 2005, 20% of all killed or seriously injured road users were motorcycle riders or passengers. Motorcycles are also very dangerous to other road users: in 2005, motorcycles killed or seriously injured 3.7 times as many pedestrians as cars did, per mile ridden or driven, and twice as many cyclists. These figures suggest that motorcycles must also be very intimidating, and so must be playing an important part in deterring would-be pedestrians and cyclists, whereas a major aim of policy should be (and ostensibly is) to encourage these cheap, widely available, non-threatening, non-polluting and healthy modes. Motorcycles are noisy and polluting. It is far from clear that all current motorcycle travel is desired by the motorcyclists themselves: the fluctuations in motorcycling that have taken place over the years suggest that the inadequacies of the alternatives may partly account for its recent growth. Mr Jamieson came close to making this point in the Ministerial Foreword to The Government’s Motorcycling Strategy, although without mentioning the poor state of most bus services, which is perhaps the most important factor, but both the Foreword and, more explicitly, the Introduction (paragraphs 1.3 and 1.5) give the impression that the decision to travel by motorcycle is a free, unconstrained choice with nothing forced or unwanted about it.

OUTLINE OF A SENSIBLE STRATEGY

4. One objective should be to get rid of forced or unwanted motorcycling by improving walking, cycling and public transport. This involves reallocating road space to these modes, limiting the use of cars in other ways, lowering and enforcing speed limits, possibly some subsidies. These are all things which should be done anyway, independently of the problem of motorcycles, and there is no need to elaborate them here.

5. The danger and nuisance of motorcycling start with the machines. Vehicle design, for motorcycles as for cars, should be based on the principle, implemented through construction and use regulations, that no vehicle should consume more non-renewable resources, in its construction, use or ultimate disposal, or cause more danger, pollution, noise or other nuisance than is required for the performance of its transport function. Clearly motorcycle design is not now based on this principle. A few years ago I went through a motorcycling magazine and found forty models with a top speed of twice, or more than twice (sometimes much more), the national speed limit. No one needs that speed, or the power, acceleration (acceleration may be more important as a cause of danger than speed, at least in towns) and weight of many machines now in use. In fact, it is hard to see why anyone except the police, military and emergency services, needs a powerful, heavy machine at all. However, it may be that some other people do, and it will also take time to get suitable construction and use regulations passed and to phase out the existing machines. To the extent that some fast, powerful and heavy machines are still allowed, there should be a strict system of graduated driver licensing. This would mean that to be eligible to take the test to ride a motorcycle of a certain grade, riders would have to have held a licence for the machine of the grade one below with a clean record for a specified amount of time.

6. Responsibility for vehicle regulation has now passed to the EU, which means that progress on motorcycle regulation is likely to be slow, but, as I understand it, responsibility for driver licensing still largely rests with member states. If so, Britain could introduce a strict system of graduated driver licensing quite soon. I have been told that Britain has been the obstacle to progress in Brussels in making construction and use regulations tougher, because of the fear that doing so might damage the interests of British motorcycle manufacturers. I have not attempted to check this point, but the Committee might like to do so.

7. Any motorcycle, even a light and relatively low-powered one, designed for use on motorways would be capable of exceeding the speed limit in towns or on other low-speed roads. The development of variable speed limiters, which can be set at or below the speed limit of the road on which the vehicle is being driven at any particular time, is therefore of great importance. Speed limiters can either be externally activated or operated by the driver. I suggest that the Committee ask the DfT what research is taking place on speed limiters for motorcycles, both for new motorcycles and retrofits for machines already in use. If this topic is not now being pursued urgently, I hope the Committee will recommend that it should be.

8. Even light motorcycles, of limited power and fitted with speed limiters, may be a threat to cyclists and pedestrians. Local authorities should consider banning motorcycles altogether from town centres and other streets much used by these vulnerable people. People who want to travel on two wheels but need or want some power to supplement their muscles could use electric or electrically assisted bicycles. They have a low top speed and are entirely compatible with ordinary bicycles, so could be allowed to share cycle lanes and other such facilities. The increased demand would help boost the case for providing these facilities, so cyclists would also gain.
9. Most motorcycle crashes are the responsibility of the motorcyclists themselves, but some are caused by other drivers crashing into motorcycles whose riders are behaving perfectly properly. Lower and properly enforced speed limits would reduce the number and severity of these crashes. It would also help if motorcycles were made more conspicuous, both by always having some lights on and by riders always wearing bright and/or reflective clothing. Given what is at stake, it seems reasonable to make both these things compulsory.

10. Of course, many people take to motorcycling for reasons which have little to do with, or at least go far beyond, their convenience as a mode of transport. Motorcycles also provide excitement and an outlet for aggression. Although the public highway is not the right place to do so, some way must be found to satisfy these human impulses, and modern urban life provides few opportunities. This subject needs to be looked at in depth, both for motorcyclists and for car drivers.

OTHER COMMENTS ON THE GOVERNMENT’S MOTORCYCLING STRATEGY

11. The Government’s Motorcycling Strategy is a deeply unsatisfactory and at times disingenuous document. It reads as if it had been produced by a dodgy PR firm, not by a Department of State. It needs a paragraph by paragraph critique, which I do not have time to give it, but here are a few comments.

12. Virtually nothing is said about the very serious threat that motorcycles pose to other road users. The only passing mentions of this are in the context of training in paragraphs 6.19, 6.21 and 6.26. This is a truly astonishing omission.

13. Even when the only people hurt in a motorcycle crash are motorcycle riders and passengers, heavy costs can be imposed on others. The police and NHS are obvious examples. To be involved in a crash even when one is not hurt and is in no way to blame, or even to witness a crash, can be a traumatic experience. Vehicles and other property not belonging to the motorcyclists may be damaged. The document says nothing about any of this.

14. The suggestion in paragraph 5.7 that better brakes would improve safety flies in the face of experience with ABS in cars. The discussion of training fails to present any evidence that it works or to mention the evidence that it doesn’t. A very thorough study done for the Department of Transport at the University of Salford in the 1970s showed that in almost every comparison motorcyclists who had been through the RAC/ACU training scheme officially approved at the time had higher crash rates than those who had not. The findings were viewed as incredible, and the report was therefore ignored, in spite of the obvious explanation that, since crashes are rarely due to a lack of skill but to wrong attitudes, the successful completion of a course of training might well give rise to over-confidence.

15. Paragraph 3.7 says “Increasingly stringent standards have reduced noise levels from new motorcycles and modern machines emit much lower levels of noise than earlier models. Despite these achievements there remains a localised nuisance problem caused by some riders failing to maintain their motorcycles properly or illegally using machines fitted with after market ‘Not For Road Use’ exhaust systems or silencers. A relatively small number of such illegal machines can create a perception of motorcycles in general being very noisy.” It is not pointed out that the noise level permitted for the largest motorcycles is the same as that for the largest lorries. The explanation of the fact, if it really is a fact, that the noise from motorcycles is localised, is that there are very few of them in the traffic stream. The noise from motorcycles, evident to anyone who walks down a street, is not due only to poor maintenance or illegal tampering. Acceleration and revving, which both occur frequently, are quite sufficient.

16. If the authors of this document really believe that motorcycle noise is due to the failure of riders to “keep their machines to road legal specification” (paragraph 3.9), this makes their suggestion that the remedy lies in a campaign led by the motorcycle industry, retailers and rider user groups, rather than by the Government, to win the hearts and minds of riders even more extraordinary. Is it really suggested that law enforcement, a basic responsibility of any Government, should be delegated to this unlikely band?

17. Although the document does not recognise the noise potential built into the design of large motorcycles, it does acknowledge, rather coyly in paragraph 3.2, that for many emissions motorcycles are worse than cars, and that (para 3.4) “larger motorcycles can emit more CO₂ than some cars kilometre by kilometre”. But neither these facts nor the acknowledged dangers of high performance motorcycles lead the authors to draw the obvious conclusion that the only place for these machines is a race track or scramble pit, not the public highway. They say in paragraph 5.29 “The sports bike phenomenon is relatively new. It has taken off in recent years with riders choosing these high performance motorbikes for exciting leisure riding. We do not believe it is for Government to prescribe the style of machine riders should purchase. However, it is important that riders make an informed choice, and, in particular, understand the degree of training and skill required for a driver to be fully in control of the more powerful machinery available”. It may not be the role of Government to prescribe the machines that riders should buy, but it is certainly its role to define the machines which riders should not be allowed to buy for use on the public highway.

18. The emphasis that the authors place on training is exaggerated, but given that they do place it, it is astonishing to read in paragraph 6.30: “In the longer term, we need to know more about the training industry to establish best practice and the opportunities for trainers to gain professional qualifications to establish their credentials as trainers”.

Conclusion

19. The official approach to motorcycling is much the same as it was when Dr Hillman and I wrote *Danger on the Road, the Needless Scourge*, and indeed as it was long before that, except that what appears to be the recent takeover by motorcycling interests seems to have injected some extra enthusiasm. It is disquieting to think of the thousands of avoidable deaths and the hundreds of thousands of avoidable casualties that have occurred in crashes involving motorcycles since that report was published. If the policy continues, so will the slaughter. Private citizens, armed only with reason and evidence, can do nothing to stop it, but the Committee can.

13 December 2006

Supplementary memorandum submitted by Mr Stephen Plowden

1. Instead of the Government’s strategy to facilitate and “mainstream” motorcycling, I think it would make better sense to limit motorcycling and promote alternatives. But even under the Government’s strategy, there would still an overwhelmingly strong case for reducing the power, speed and weight of motorcycles.

2. In my written submission, I suggested that vehicle construction and use regulations should be based on the principle that no vehicle should consume more non-renewable resources, in its construction, use or ultimate disposal, or cause more danger, pollution, noise or other nuisance than is required for the performance of its transport function. If this principle were applied to motorcycles, it would seem to follow that all motorcycles, except those used by the police etc, should be built in accordance with specifications similar to those now governing learner motorcycles. These machines commonly have a top speed of about 65mph. If there are some tasks for which more powerful machines are needed, a system of graduated rider licensing is required to ensure that only mature and responsible riders would be allowed to ride them.

3. Previous experience suggests that an important reason for the reluctance to limit power and speed is that it is thought that to do so would be an infringement of individual liberty—if motorcyclists want to accept the risks, that is up to them. There are several reasons why this argument does not work.

   — Even when motorcyclists are the only people hurt in crashes, they are not the only people affected. The costs imposed on the NHS may be very heavy. To be involved in a crash, even when one is not hurt and bears no responsibility for it, or even to witness a crash, can be a traumatic experience. The motorcyclists’ friends and family will also be affected. There may be damage to other vehicles and property.

   — Motorcycles are very dangerous to other road users. I mentioned in my written submission that in 2005 motorcycles killed or seriously injured 3.7 times as many pedestrians as cars did, per mile ridden or driven, and twice as many cyclists. Intimidation is also a very important though neglected issue. Since my original submission, I have sent the Committee some evidence that some women who would like to cycle in London are deterred by the fear of sharing the road with motorcycles, and that this fear can make cycling a less pleasant experience for the women who are not deterred.

   — The noise, fuel consumption and emissions of motorcycles are also a serious nuisance.

   — There are probably many motorcyclists who do not appreciate how risky motorcycling is.

4. In paragraph 8 of my written submission I suggested that the only powered two-wheeled vehicles allowed in streets or areas of especial importance to pedestrians should be electric or electrically assisted bicycles of a kind fully compatible with pedal cycles. I think a similar confusion about freedom is the reason why this idea has not been taken up. When I was a co-opted member of Camden Council’s scrutiny panel on road safety,

   I tried to suggest that this rule should apply in central London, but the chairman ruled out a discussion of it on philosophical grounds. Ken Livingstone wants to improve conditions for walking and cycling in London and has even talked about making London the walking capital of Europe, but at the same time he wants to encourage motorcycling even in the central area, where the quality of the walking environment should be of paramount importance. Not only did he exempt motorcycles from the congestion charge, he also wants the boroughs to provide parking spaces for them and is backing experiments to allow motorcyclists to use bus lanes. I suspect that part of the reason why he favours such clearly contradictory policies is again a mistaken libertarian belief.

5. Another reason may be the belief that motorcycling should be encouraged because motorcycles cause less congestion than cars. That is often though not always true, but the important point is that in congested urban areas the comparison with cars has little relevance. If motorcycles had to pay the congestion charge, few riders would switch to driving a car. Some might become car passengers, but I think that public transport and cycling are more likely options.

6. Improved public transport and electric bicycles are alternatives to motorcycling that are both highly desirable for other reasons as well. The local car would be another. In my submission to the Committee’s inquiry on the future of the car in 2003–04, I outlined a proposal for a new, legally distinct type of car with
its own fiscal and driver-licensing regime designed for local travel. It would be a low-powered car with a low top speed built to be as environmentally friendly as possible. Among the many uses of local cars would be as substitutes for motorcycles, especially perhaps for young people in country areas. For local cars to have this effect it should be possible to acquire a driving licence for them as easily or more easily than for motorcycles. I was disappointed that the Committee paid no attention to the idea of the local car, and I hope you will take this opportunity to pursue it.

7. There are, of course, many tragic crashes where the blame for the death of a motorcyclist lies entirely with the other party. The above measures would help to reduce these crashes too. If riders went only one or two mph slower on a low-powered motorcycle than they would on a high-powered one, that might give them more opportunity to take evasive action when someone else did something foolish. But it is more important to reduce the speed of drivers of vehicles of all types, and the incidence of driving after drinking or after taking drugs or when tired. I hope the Committee will also consider the suggestion in my written submission of obliging motorcyclists to wear conspicuous clothing.

8. Finally, I would like to draw the attention of the Committee to the discussion of education in the book *Traffic Safety* by the leading American expert Leonard Evans. He cites (page 197) research from all over the world which shows that once basic skills have been acquired, there is no evidence that further driver training (this passage in the book is not specifically about motorcycles) does any good, and he in effect criticises the British Government for continuing to place so much importance on driver education. He also points out (page 233, see also page 206) that “Additional knowledge and skill do not generally lower crash risk because they are likely to be used for such purposes as driving faster”. However, he points out (page 198) that the fact that existing methods of education have not worked should not stop attempts to find methods that would.

6 February 2007

*Witnesses: Mr Kevin Clinton, Road Safety Adviser, Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents; Mr Don Mathew, Policy Advisor, Sustrans, and Mr Stephen Plowden, Transport Planner and Author, gave evidence.*

Q165 Chairman: Gentlemen, good afternoon. May I ask you, first of all, to identify yourselves for the record?

Mr Clinton: I am Kevin Clinton. I am the Road Safety Adviser at the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents.


Mr Mathew: Don Mathew, Police Adviser to Sustrans.

Q166 Chairman: Thank you. Did anybody want to make a statement before we move to questioning?

Mr Mathew: Could I say, Chairman, Sustrans is short for Sustainable Transport. We are a practical, environmental charity that does projects to aid cyclists and pedestrians. We have put all our work within the context of a carbon constrained future, and it is that that has caused us to stand back a little and think about what the Motorcycling Strategy is for. I know you have just had a session on illegal use with the police, but since I put in my written submission our field staff have deluged me with points to raise on this, but perhaps I can do that very briefly.

Q167 Chairman: I think we will ask the three of you: do we need a National Motorcycling Strategy. What do you think, Mr Clinton?

Mr Clinton: Yes, I think it is a very useful document. It is very comprehensive, and I think it draws a lot of focus to, and co-ordination on, all of the different issues for motorcycling. It is clearly a form of transport that carries quite a high level of risk and it is important that we try to reduce that.

Mr Plowden: Obviously, I do not agree with the Strategy, but even people who take a more favourable view of it than I do, I think some of them at least, would be inclined to say that the power of motorcycles should be reduced, and also that there are some streets or areas, like city centres where motorcyclists are not appropriate. The argument that to do anything effective about that would be inimical to liberty I believe is completely mistaken; other people have liberties which are threatened by motorcycles. I would like to say, I think an important part of the Strategy should really be to improve alternatives. Public transport is an obvious alternative that should be improved. I have also mentioned electrically assisted bicycles and new forms of car and, lastly, on the question of the efficacy of road safety, the evidence is that after basic skills have been acquired further training does not do any good, and I can lend the Committee this book, which gives all the references, if you would like to have it.

Q168 Chairman: Would you like to read us its title so we can get it in the record?

Mr Plowden: It is called *Traffic Safety*, it is by Leonard Evans, who is the leading American expert, and it is published by Science Serving Society, which is his own organisation. You will get it much cheaper if you order it from the States than if you order it through the British publishers.

Q169 Chairman: I think we will not have too many advertisements, if you do not mind! You did say that people were effectively forced into using motorcycles because public transport is so bad. What did you mean by that?
Mr Plowden: I do not think I put it quite as strongly as that, but there is some evidence of a correlation between poor public transport and the propensity to have motorcycles. Do you remember the experiment about 30 years ago in Yorkshire about very cheap public transport? I think Nicholas Ridley put a stop to it. In that case it was found that people did not buy as many motorcycles as elsewhere.

Q170 Graham Stringer: That does not apply in London. It is one of the best public transport systems in the world, an amazing bus system, and yet I see more motorbikes, mopeds, scooters in London than in any other city in the UK?

Mr Plowden: Indeed. I think the exemption from the congestion charge is largely to do with that.

Q171 Graham Stringer: Do you have evidence of that? I agree with you that the congestion charge has increased that tendency, but there were a lot of two-wheeled motorised vehicles about before the congestion charge.

Mr Plowden: I think it is fairly clear it did increase it, and there were ads in the papers before the congestion charge came in saying, “Buy a motorbike and beat the congestion charge”, but I do not have statistical evidence. I imagine TfL do.

Q172 Graham Stringer: It is on the increase. What I am saying is that even before the congestion charge, London, which has an excellent public transport system, had a lot of motorised two-wheelers, and so that is evidence against the original point you were making. It is not a change.

Mr Plowden: I did not put it very strongly in the first place. I think there is some evidence of this correlation.

Q173 Mrs Ellman: Sustrans has said that motorcycles are not suitable for residential areas. Do you think motorcycles can be banned from residential areas? Have there been any attempts to do that?

Mr Mathew: I think a lot of this debate is to do with banning regulation, or not to ban, et cetera. If you look briefly at the experience of Holland, powered two-wheelers, particularly mopeds, went into considerable decline for quite a while and there has been a noticeable improvement, not just in overall road safety records, but in the attempt at improving residential areas. It is not just the famous woonerf but the wider residential areas. As we move much more towards 20 miles an hour in this country as the standard norm, one has to say that most motorcycles do not really fit in with that ambience, which is what I was trying to say. In fact, the amount of high powered machines is becoming, in a sense, quite out of sync with what we are trying to achieve with sustainable communities. Can they be banned? Probably not, but I defer to the expertise of some of the people in the room on this one.

Q174 Mrs Ellman: Have there been any local attempts to ban them?

Mr Mathew: On residential streets?

Q175 Mrs Ellman: Yes.

Mr Mathew: I think not, and I would be very doubtful under what legal process that could be done at the moment, but it is certainly a thought for one of our future campaigns.

Q176 Chairman: Do you have any views on that, gentlemen?

Mr Clinton: If by “residential street” you mean normal roads which cars also use, I do not see any reason why one would want to ban motorcyclists if cars are allowed. If you are talking about home zone type roads where the aim is to try and get all motorised traffic out so that people can use them as living space, then, yes, but I think the principle would apply to cars as much as to motorcycles.

Mr Mathew: I do not know under what legislation car-free developments and the famous BedZed experiment is taking place, which is a car-free development and the parking is outside. We might have to check under what housing regulations that has been achieved.

Mr Mathew: I think there are situations where it would make good sense to ban motorcycles. They are much more dangerous to pedestrians than cars are. I quoted the figure of 3.7 in my evidence. There are 3.7 as many pedestrians killed or seriously injured by motorcyclists per mile driven than by cars. In London the figure is rather higher. It is 5.2 based on the years 1999 and 2000. So in areas where you are trying to encourage walking and where pedestrians should be king, I think it makes very good sense to ban motorcycles, but there, as I tried to say, the substitute would be a vehicle which had a little bit of power but was entirely compatible with a pushbike.

Q177 Mr Martlew: On the general usage of motorbikes, I can understand the concern of high-powered motorbikes, because it is very often fairly affluent middle-aged men who have not grown up, but the reality is that a lot of people who use motorbikes do so because they are cheap and they cannot afford the alternative of a car, and, while we have a very good transport in London, it is so cheap compared to the public transport system. So really are you saying we should punish people because they cannot afford a motorcar or they cannot afford to use expensive public transport?

Mr Plowden: Not at all. What I was suggesting was that I do not quite see why anybody needs a motorcycle more powerful than the learner machines, which have a top speed, commonly, of 60 or 65 miles an hour.

Q178 Chairman: You would find it very difficult, Mr Plowden, to differentiate in that way. You can imagine the screams of constraints on trade and discrimination. I agree with you, but then I do not know why people need motorcycles at all, so my view is not exactly unbiased.
Yes, I have a lot of sympathy with Mr Clinton: excessivespeedside of it? motorcycles only at the power of 125cc. Yes, but I would not go as far as having all realreductioninriskfrom that. I think atoplimit, to getitthroughbecausetheycouldnotshowany horsepowerlimitonmotorcycles, they were notable some 10 years ago, proposed a 100 brake motorcycles and cars, although when the EC, I think approached is not to try and prevent people from transport which people ought to be free to use. Our motorcycling as a perfectly legitimate form of and RoSPA from that somewhat. We regard motorcycling as a perfectly legitimate form of transport which people ought to be free to use. Our approach is not to try and prevent people from motorcycling but to try and find ways of helping people do it more safely.

Q180 Mrs Ellman: If you wanted some kind of regulation to advanced machines being made, would that be on safety grounds?

Mr Plowden: Safety and pollution. I notice that it is mentioned even in the Government Strategy that some motorcycles emit more CO2 than cars do. It is absurd, they are only carrying one person, and I think for other gaseous emissions I am right in saying they are actually worse than cars.

Mr Matthew: They are considerably worse. I took the precaution of bringing Transport Statistics Great Britain 2006 and with things like hydrocarbons, even modern motorcycles are extremely polluting, and there has been in the news over the last few days the issue of particulates and the health of young children. For particulates motorcycles are worse than cars. It was this sort of nagging worry that made me pose the question you started with, Chairman: what is The Motorcycling Strategy for? The DfT bought some claims about environmental benefits that even three or four years ago were perhaps slightly dodgy and now look even less well-founded.

Q181 Mrs Ellman: Does that mean that there is a general view here that there should be a legal restriction on manufacturing?

Mr Clinton: I think I would have to distance myself and RoSPA from that somewhat. We regard motorcycling as a perfectly legitimate form of transport which people ought to be free to use. Our approach is not to try and prevent people from motorcycling but to try and find ways of helping people do it more safely.

Mr Plowden: In London I am not sure that anybody does really, particularly if these power-assisted bicycles were around, or more of them, but in the country I think they certainly do. I think lots of young people would be very much handicapped if they could not get to night-school or to their employment, but I do not see why they need anything more than low-powered machines.

Mr Plowden: Yes, I think it should be a matter of the construction and use regulations. I have applied the same principles to cars incidentally, the principle that no vehicle should be more dangerous, or consume more fuel, or cause more pollution than it has to for it to do its job.

Q179 Mrs Ellman: Do you think there should be some legal restriction?

Mr Plowden: Yes, I think it should be a matter of the construction and use regulations. I have applied the same principles to cars incidentally, the principle that no vehicle should be more dangerous, or consume more fuel, or cause more pollution than it has to for it to do its job.

Q182 Clive Efford: Surely you have a view on the excessive speed side of it?

Mr Clinton: Yes, I have a lot of sympathy with having a top limit on the speed and power of motorcycles and cars, although when the EC, I think some 10 years ago, proposed a 100 brake horsepower limit on motorcycles, they were not able to get it through because they could not show any real reduction in risk from that. I think a top limit, yes, but I would not go as far as having all motorcycles only at the power of 125cc.

Q183 Mrs Ellman: Mr Plowden, you have said that the Government is standing in the way of European regulation?

Mr Plowden: No, I suggested the Committee might like to follow up that suggestion. It was made to me some years ago. The idea of restricting power was raised in the Commission, and the British spoke against it. It is hearsay, I cannot vouch for it at all, but I do suggest you might like to pursue the suggestion.

Q184 Mrs Ellman: Is a restriction something you would like to see happen?

Mr Plowden: Yes, I would. As I say, I think all Vehicle Construction and Use Registrations should be based on the principle I have just said, that they should not be more dangerous, consume more fuel or emit more pollution, or noise if it comes to that, than they have to for the performance of their job.

Mr Plowden: Some years ago. The idea of restricting power was raised in the Commission, and the British spoke against it. It is hearsay, I cannot vouch for it at all, but I do suggest you might like to pursue the suggestion.

Q185 Chairman: Is there any evidence about the monitoring of particulates, Mr Mathews?

Mr Mathew: As I say, I am quoting from Transport Statistics Great Britain 2006, table 3.6, and this does show improvements for petrol cars, diesel cars and motorcycles. Clearly there are certain cut-off points, and they differ at varying years, but looking at even the better motorcycles at the bottom of this column on page 54, they still compare quite badly with cars, and, to repeat myself, at the time the Motorcycling Strategy was adopted, I am rather surprised some of these figures did not worry the DfT more.

Q186 Graham Stringer: This is sort of a serious question. From where you are starting, Mr Mathew, you are saying there is really no future for motobikes, because if you produced a hydrogen motorbike, I believe one was demonstrated recently (I think that is the scariest thing I have ever seen—an absolutely silent motorbike), it would be knocking people all over. You are saying that they are heavily polluting and are putting out lots of particulates. You really do not think there is much use for them, do you?

Mr Mathew: I think that there is an incredible future for clean vehicle technology in this country, and, indeed, there has to be. This is the first time this Committee has, presumably, met since the latest IPCC Report about climate change. You have had the Stern Report. Friends of mine who have knowledge of fossil fuel dependency go around groaning daily at our dependency on fossil fuel. Our transport system is 99% dependent at the moment on fossil fuel, and the vision of Sustrans and the other NGOs with whom we work very closely, as I said at the beginning, is of a carbon constrained future where even the DfT says we have to get our CO2 emissions down 60% by 2050. We go along with the very interesting report on reducing carbon emissions from the Environmental Audit Committee that came out three or four months ago, and we go along with the lines of the VIBAT research for the DfT that said you need to reduce carbon emissions by 60% by 2030. We think that we need to look at everything: how we move around, how sustainable...
Transport Committee: Evidence

7 February 2007  Mr Kevin Clinton, Mr Don Mathew and Mr Stephen Plowden

Mr Mathew: silent, would be a pretty scary vehicle?

Q187 Graham Stringer: This inquiry is about motorbikes. Do you agree with me that a hydrogen-fuelled motorbike, if it is more or less completely silent, would be a pretty scary vehicle?

Mr Mathew: It might well be a scary vehicle; so might be the cost of moving towards a hydrogen fuelled infrastructure as well. What scares you: the fact that it is entirely quiet?

Q188 Graham Stringer: Yes. We have heard that motorbikes are responsible per mile for more accidents than cars, and that is partly because they are smaller, they are less visible. If you also make them silent—I think Mr Plowden wanted to comment on that.

Mr Mathew: Before he does, can I very quickly say, and it is probably linked to what he was going to say, this motorcycle ought to have Intelligent Speed Adaptation, some sort of speed limiter to it, and, again, that does not seem to be in the current motorcycle debate. Over to you, Stephen.

Mr Plowden: I entirely agree that a quiet motorcycle would be even more dangerous than the motorcycles that we have got at the moment, so that seems to be another argument for making them much less powerful and for fitting them with speed limiters. I am not sure what the position is on the technical feasibility of speed limiters for motorcycles, they are certainly feasible for cars. Research goes on very, very slowly. May I make another comment on the speed?

Q189 Chairman: Yes, please.

Mr Plowden: I think your last witnesses said that the motorcyclists who broke the law are a small minority. Of course, with cars, as with motorcycles, most people do speed. We have the Annual Speed Surveys which show us very clearly that the Government’s Strategy on paragraph 6.13 is slightly misleading about this. They say, on speed, generally motorcyclists’ propensity to speed is not so very different to car drivers. If you look at the distribution of speeds it is quite clear that what you have got with motorcyclists is, in fact, two distributions combined. What you have got is more people driving at very low speeds than cars do and more people driving at very higher speeds than cars do, and, clearly, they combine in one distribution the small machines, the mopeds and low-powered machines, with the fast ones, but, in any case, speeding (which is a crime) is very common indeed.

Q190 Mr Martlew: On the hydrogen motorcycle, I suspect what will happen is that they will invent an artificial noise so you will hear it. I do not know if anyone can remember when we went up to North Sea Gas. North Sea gas has no smell whatsoever; so they had to put the smell into it. I am sure that would satisfy Mr Stringer. The point being made about the pollution by motorcycles, I am not sure I accept it because I pull up at the garage in my car and I fill up 60 litres, or whatever; a motorcyclist comes alongside and is lucky to get 10 in and he probably does maybe 80, 90, 100 miles to a gallon, so how can it be more polluting than a motorcar?

Mr Mathew: Partly because of propensity to speed, I suspect.

Q191 Mr Martlew: It does not use as much fuel?

Mr Mathew: Under some circumstances, but we have been talking about the growing share of the market with the more powerful models, have we not, and I think that is where the greater polluting effect comes.

Q192 Mr Martlew: If I have got a standard motorbike and a standard car, the car uses a lot more fuel than the motorbike. Am I correct?

Mr Mathew: Certainly not a lot more. If you compare it with a moped, yes, but, again, if we are talking about a modern improved car with a three-way catalyst, I am not absolutely certain.

Mr Plowden: May I quote The Government’s Strategy on this. Paragraph 3.4 says: “However, larger motorcycles can emit more CO₂ than some cars kilometre by kilometre because they offer far poorer fuel economy.” That is CO₂. I think with other gases there is not such a close relationship between fuel consumption and emissions anyway, so it could well be the case, and Don tells us it is the case, that they are more polluting than cars.

Mr Mathew: I also have a strong suspicion, partly linked to some of the anti-social element we have been speaking about, that they may be far less well maintained, and there is quite a market in second, third and fourth-hand motorbikes that probably are not maintained at all.

Chairman: That is very interesting.

Q193 Clive Efford: Mr Clinton, you said in your evidence that you think better advice should be given to parents about mini motos or small motorbikes. Exactly what do you recommend that parents should be told about them?

Mr Clinton: I think they should be asked questions: why are they buying the mini moto? Where do they expect their youngster to be using it? If there are no safe places of the type that the two ACPO gentlemen were talking about, what is the point of buying a mini moto for a youngster who is going to use it in a dangerous and illegal fashion? It is that sort of thinking and awareness. I think the discussion in the earlier session about people regarding these as toys, rather than vehicles, is absolutely crucial. If parents are regarding mini motos as a toy and are buying them under that impression, then they are not going to be thinking about the safety issues. I think one of the advantages of a registration scheme is to put down this marker that these are vehicles and not toys.
Q194 Clive Efford: Do you find it extraordinary that a parent would not consider one of these very small mini motos, only a few inches high, to be extremely dangerous?

Mr Clinton: I am surprised that parents buy these and allow children to use them, but I think this really is an issue of what they understand these vehicles to be, and I do not think they are understanding them to be vehicles.

Q195 Clive Efford: How should these vehicles be regulated to improve safety?

Mr Clinton: I think there are a number of approaches. I am attracted to the idea of a registration scheme, although I take on board the comments from the police about whether it would actually affect the behaviour of people who use them illegally anyway, but having them marked as vehicles because they have to be licensed and registered I think makes a lot of sense. I think perhaps an area that also needs to be looked at is the people and the companies who are selling these. I think in your earlier session you had an example of a company giving these away as a prize, or something. Where is their duty of care? What is that company thinking about when they are doing that? Are they giving any thought whatsoever to how that is going to be used and the risks involved? So, I think maybe there is a role for Trading Standards in here as well as the police.

Q196 Clive Efford: Do you think that the laws regarding these types of vehicles are being adequately enforced?

Mr Clinton: I think within the resources of the police their approach of high-profile, targeted campaigns makes a lot of sense and is realistic, rather than expecting it to be a constant enforcement.

Q197 Clive Efford: Mr Mathew, you said you are concerned about mini motos using cycle paths. Is there any evidence that this is having a negative concern about minimotos using cycle paths. Is this having a negative impact on people using these cycle paths and what would you like to see done about it?

Mr Mathew: It is difficult to say mini motos in particular. Sustrans has a considerable problem. First of all, we have led the way in creating the 10,000 mile National Cycle Network. A third of that is off-road and I would have thought on about a half to a third of that we do have a mini moto and motorcycle problem. Very briefly, in order to keep motorcyclists out, we often erect barrier gates and, of course, we then find that people in wheelchairs cannot get through them, and there are disability discrimination issues, and we often find ourselves in quite a lose-lose situation with that. The one thing I wanted to say while the police were speaking was, again, according to the evidence from our field staff and the 2,000 Rangers on our Network, who are volunteers who just look after its well-being, there is absolutely nothing that tackles this like a bobby on a bike. The mere physical presence of an officer cycling down a route, or a community warden, I am told, reduces incidents by about 90%. The other thing I wanted to say is that high-profile and targeted campaigns working in partnership with all sections of the community do seem to work. If I may very briefly read from this evidence I was sent about Kent, who had had a campaign last summer just on mini motos, they received 264 complaints and the police seized and crushed 104 mini motos, issued 123 warnings, made 20 arrests, spoke to 12 parents and recovered 17 stolen vehicles. That does suggest that high-profile targeted campaigns certainly do work.

Clive Efford: In my experience the police officer has 100% impact on reducing the incidence of crimes or anti-social behaviour with motorbikes, but only while they are there?

Chairman: Not always while they are there. Having seen much of the City of London Police this week having enormous rows with all sorts of cyclists who have gone over red lights, I am not convinced of the efficacy.

Q198 Clive Efford: I was just going to ask Mr Plowden whether he has any views on mini motos?

Mr Plowden: It is a brand new problem. I do not think I had heard of them before you issued your notice.

Q199 Chairman: You will be writing reams about them?

Mr Plowden: I hope not.

Q200 Graham Stringer: Do RoSPA keep statistics nationally on mini-bikes and accidents?

Mr Plowden: What we do is collect press reports. It is not formal statistics in the way that you would get from the police recording them, but our press office collects press reports and from that we are aware of seven deaths.

Q201 Chairman: Is that in a year?

Mr Clinton: No, that is in mid 2004, or maybe September 2004. So it is not a formal statistic, but we do collect the press reports and we are aware of these seven deaths, and five of those, I think, were under 15 years of age.

Q202 Chairman: Could you give us a short note on that so that, given the caveats that you have just made, we could look at what you have picked up, because that is very helpful.

Mr Mathew: Can I make one brief point. When I spoke about the National Cycle Network, we have discovered, to our pleasant surprise, half of its users are pedestrians, mostly families with children, and it is an enormous sustainable transport facility. The relevance is that there is nothing like a couple of mini motos or a couple of illegal motorbikes to cause widespread fear and inconvenience to hundreds, if not thousands, of people and to devalue the facility that we are providing that they enjoy so much.

Chairman: Gentlemen, it is very helpful. It is been encouraging and interesting. You will not expect us
to be persuaded of every single thing you have said, but thank you very much for coming. We are very grateful to you. We will adjourn the Committee temporarily. I hope that members of the public will forgive us; we have a series of three votes. The Minister is due at five o’clock when I shall reconvene the Committee.

The Committee suspended from 4.27 pm to 5.02 pm for a division in the House.

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**Supplementary memorandum submitted by The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents**

**SUMMARY OF MINI MOTO DEATHS AND INJURIES**

These details are taken from press and media reports.

*August 2004 Blackpool*: An 8-year-old boy was seriously injured when he crashed his mini moto into a wall.

*September 2004 Nottinghamshire*: A 6-year-old boy was killed on his mini moto after crashing into a park pavilion. The boy lost control of the bike after turning round to see if a dog was still chasing him. The bike, bought by the father, had been modified to prevent it exceeding 20 mph. The father had bought the bike three years earlier and stored it until he thought his son was ready. The father claimed the boy was an experienced rider. The boy was wearing helmet, gloves and goggles.

*February 2005 Belfast*: A 4-year-old boy was killed in a collision with a car. The child was sitting on the handlebars while his father drove the mini moto. The child was not wearing a safety helmet at the time.

*April 2005 County Fermanagh*: A 12-year-old boy was killed when his mini moto, which he was riding on the road, collided with a four-wheel driver vehicle. A seven year old, who was riding as a passenger on the bike, escaped injury.

*May 2005 Cheshire*: A 13-year-old boy was killed when he crashed his mini moto into a car. The boy was attending a family party and had been driving around the local roads on the bike. The crash happened late Sunday afternoon. The boy was treated at the scene but later died of his injuries. The driver of the car was uninjured.

*October 2005 Hereford*: A 15-year-old boy was killed and his passenger seriously injured when their mini moto collided with a car. Both vehicles were travelling east along the same road. The boy was pronounced dead at the scene. The 13-year-old passenger was taken to hospital in a serious condition. The driver of the car suffered severe shock and was later admitted to hospital.

*May 2006 Halifax*: Two men, aged 21 and 27, were both killed when their mini moto hit the pavement and crashed into a tree. Neither of the men were wearing helmets; they both died of serious head injuries. The bike was unregistered. The owner had had the bike for several months and had already had one near miss when riding off road in local woods.

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1 Daily Mail. Tuesday, 20 December, 2005.
4 BBC News Website. Thursday 14 April, 2005.
5 thisis-cheshire.co.uk Thursday 2 June 2005.
6 Birmingham Post. 18 October 2005.
7 Ichuddersfield.co.uk 30 May, 2006.
June 2006 Lancashire:

A 2-year-old boy was seriously injured after being involved in a crash on a mini moto. The boy was on the bike in a field when he inadvertently revved the throttle. The machine sped across the field and crashed into a steel storage shed. The boy sustained serious head injuries but stabilised in hospital.

July 2006 Essex:

An 11-year-old boy received serious burns, and died, after crashing his mini moto while riding on the road. The bike collided with a car. A friend, aged 12 who was a passenger on the bike, was also admitted to intensive care with serious burns. The second boy stabilised and was later moved from intensive care.

February 2007

Supplementary memorandum submitted by Sustrans

BRIEF NOTES ON THE GOVERNMENT’S MOTORCYCLING STRATEGY 2005

CHAPTER 1

The Strategic Context

1.3 It is true that “some people are using motorbikes to beat congestion” it does not follow that increased motorcycle use has any effect on reducing overall congestion. The proposition that more motorcycles means less congestion is false and should not be used as a basis for government policy.

Congestion happens where there is excess demand for road space. If a car journey was replaced by a motorcycle journey then the excess demand would fill the space with another car. Any policy tending to increase the number of motorcycles in congested areas will not reduce the number of motor cars in that area. All the impacts of the motorcycle journey, air pollution, CO₂ noise, risk to the rider and danger to other road users, are in addition to the existing impacts of motor cars. The net effect is disbenefit to everyone except the motorcyclist.

It should also be noted that motorcycles carry on average 1.02 people compared to 1.3–1.4 for cars therefore all comparative data needs to be deflated by 30% to consider impact per passenger/kilometre.

It is wrong to assume that every motorcycle replaces a car journey. A survey for a committee of Avon County Council investigating motorcycles in bus lane trials found only 56% of the new users changed from other motor vehicles or other routes. The rest transferred from bus, rail, bicycle or were new journeys.

A major study for the Victorian Government in Australia identified commuter rail services as the closest competitor to motorcycle commuting. Motorcycle commuting journeys tend to be significantly longer than car commuting journeys. (Motorcycle Transport: Powered Two Wheelers in Victoria, (2002) Oxford Systematics for VicRoads)

CHAPTER 3

Emissions

3.2 It is true that new motorcycles are getting cleaner however recent years have seen very large imports of second hand motor scooters from Western Europe, many of them poorly performing two-stroke models. The majority of these come from Italy where several of the largest cities have banned old and dirty motor scooters. These vehicles are now on UK roads.

3.4 The argument based on emissions from different sized motorcycle engines is misleading. Motorcycles with engine size 400cc or larger make up 57% of the UK fleet (see table 8.5 on page 40). There may be fewer than that in the “commuter” fleet but they are the ones which travel much further distances—with fuel consumption per passenger mile barely better than many cars.

Noise

3.7 Under the current enforcement regime it is not possible to determine at the road side whether the silencer fitted to the motorcycle is the correct model or if the engine has been modified to “racing” standard. In effect it is no longer possible to police the small percentage of extremely noisy motorcycles.

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8 Birmingham Post, 2 June, 2005.
9 BBC News Website, Tuesday 1 August 2006.
Congestion

3.10 See comments above (1.3) It is notable that none of the results of the 2004 study “Motorcycles and Congestion” referred to in note 9 are commented on. This study cost the DT and Transport for London nearly £200,000. It was researched by world leading experts in transport modelling and motorcycle transport. They modelled reduced congestion, without controlling for induced traffic, arising from road user charging and increased motorcycle ownership. Their model suggested increased congestion from allowing motorcycles into bus lanes.

Chapter 4

Parking

4.7 Better supply of motorcycle parking will increase motorcycle usage but will do nothing to reduce other motor traffic.

Travel Plans

4.13 and 4.14 This is curious, they found no evidence that motorcycles help reduce car journeys but determine to revise their advice in favour of more motorcycles.

Motorcycles in Bus Lanes

4.17 Since publication of the strategy the study into the trials of motorcycles in bus lanes on Transport for London roads has been published. It found significant increases in casualties during the times of operation of the bus lanes for motorcycle riders, car occupants and bus occupants. The bus casualties presumably arise from falls due to sharp braking or to collisions with motorcycles when boarding or leaving the bus.

This is the only scientifically valid data arising from any of the trials around the country. It only looked at incidents on the bus lane routes, it failed to consider any extra casualties that might have arisen elsewhere due to the increase in motorcycle use. The Cambridge modelling study suggested an 18% increase in the number of motorcycles on urban A roads as a result of allowing them to use bus lanes.

Advanced Stop Lines

4.19 It will not be possible to provide any research results on this topic unless police forces consistently enforce the law against the majority of motorcyclists who ignore the stop line. There is no compliance with this law therefore no “base case” data.

Chapter 6

The Human Factor.

This chapter is inadequate as it totally fails to address the issue of casualties to other road users arising from motorcycle collisions. See evidence from Stephen Plowden.

Casualty trends

6.5 Fig 4 and Fig 5 are hugely misleading. Fig 4 has a casualty scale 4.5 times longer than the Fig 5. The casualty rate amongst (four year range) 16–19 year olds in urban areas is very distressing. This group is also most likely to be responsible for casualties to other road users.

19 February 2007

Supplementary memorandum submitted by Mr Stephen Plowden

In my oral evidence on 7 February, I said that it was hard to see why anyone needed a motorcycle more powerful and faster than a 125cc learner machine. (I should have excepted the military, the police and possibly other emergency services, as I did in my original submission.) My attention has since been drawn to the following passage in the ECMT/OECD document Speed Management, published by OECD in 2006.

The British experiment [on limiting the power of the motorcycles that learners are allowed to ride] was not successful: the total number of injury accidents involving novices did not go down, but simply shifted from larger motor cycles to the type of machines learners were allowed to ride.
The source of this finding is not given, and the statement is consistent with the possibility that limiting the power of learner machines did some good in reducing the severity, though not the number, of crashes and casualties. However, what this experience seems to show is that the present learner machine is not in fact suitable for learners. The most likely reason is that its permitted top speed of 65mph is too fast and its acceleration too rapid.

My suggestion, therefore, is that no one, whatever their age, or their experience with driving cars, should be eligible to apply for a licence to ride a motorcycle who had not held a full moped licence for a certain time with a clean record. The time would be longer for someone who was not already a car driver than for someone who already had a full car driving licence (say two years and one year). This would, incidentally, ensure that no one under the age of 18 would be allowed to ride a motorcycle, a reform which seemed to have been agreed in 1980 but was never implemented. The definition of a clean record requires further thought. Any conviction for a driving offence would clearly mean that the person had lost his clean record. It would seem sensible that any involvement in an injury crash would also lead to its loss, unless it had been established that the other person was entirely to blame.

Anyone who met this condition would then be eligible to apply for a provisional licence for a low-powered motorcycle similar to the present learner machine, although the question of whether the acceleration of the present learner machine is too high needs to be examined.

If people other than the police etc are to be allowed to ride motorcycles more powerful than these on the public highway (and it is hard to see any reason for this, other than political expediency), then anyone wishing to apply for a licence for a more powerful motorcycle would have to have held a full licence for a low-powered one with a clean record for a given time. Very high standards of behaviour would be required of riders of powerful motorcycles, and any lapse from these standards, such as a conviction for speeding, would automatically lead to the loss of that driving licence, though not necessarily to the loss of the licence for a low-powered motorcycle or moped.

Another useful reform would be to allow people to drive a low-powered car with a top speed no more than that of a moped at the age of 16. This could lead to some people young people skipping the motorcycle stage altogether. There is a precedent in France, where the rules for eligibility to ride a moped and to drive a voiturette (a car with the same engine power as a moped) are the same. The specifications of the voiturette do not seem to be optimal, however. This point was discussed in my submission in October 2003 to the Committee’s inquiry on the future of the car, where I argued the case for a new, legally distinct category of local car with its own licensing and fiscal regime.

23 February 2007

Memorandum submitted by Department for Transport

INTRODUCTION

In February 2005, the Department for Transport (DfT) published the Government’s Motorcycling Strategy. This was developed with the full involvement of motorcycling groups representing the views of industry and users through the Advisory Group on Motorcycling, which was established in 1999 and produced its final report in 2004.

The theme for the Strategy is to facilitate motorcycling as a choice of travel within a safe and sustainable transport framework. The strategy sets out a framework for action over the next few years. Many of these actions are for central Government to implement; some are for local Government while others are for stakeholders, such as manufacturers, retailers and user groups to pursue.

The Government’s Motorcycling Strategy is being taken forward by the National Motorcycle Council (NMC), which includes representatives of motorcycle user groups, manufacturing, retailing and training industries as well as local government and Department for Transport officials. Four NMC sub-groups have been set up to oversee the implementation of the Strategy’s actions. These are:

— Road Safety and Publicity.
— Technical, Engineering and Environmental Issues.
— Training, Testing and Licensing.
— Traffic Management, Planning and Transport Policy.

The four sub-groups are taking the strategy actions forward and meet regularly, to discuss progress. The full NMC plenary group meets twice a year. Progress with the 44 actions is described below.
Action (i)—Issue and keep up to date a compendium of motorcycle statistics.

The latest annual compendium of motorcycle statistics was published by the Department on 18 May 2006. We intend to publish the next edition in Autumn 2007, as this will enable it to include more up to date casualty and traffic data for 2006.

Action (ii)—Manufacturers to promote the benefits of the environmentally better performing bikes, as well as continuing to improve emissions performance.

Manufacturers have made significant improvements to the environmental performance of motorcycles over the last 10 years. The latest European emission limits come into force for new motorcycles in January 2007, providing for an average reduction of more than 40% in the emission of pollutants. Negotiations in Brussels continue to address the challenges of improved environmental performance, including the durability of emission control devices and control of evaporative emissions.

In addition, the motorcycle industry continues regularly to promote the environmental benefits of small and medium sized powered two wheeler use as an alternative to the private car in congested urban traffic and the financial benefits achieved by exemption, for all two-wheeled vehicles, from the London congestion charge. Small engine capacity motorcycles and scooters are now among the UK’s best selling models.

Action (iii)—A campaign led by the motorcycle industry, retailers and rider user groups to encourage riders to keep their machines road legal for noise.

Motorcycles sold in the European Union are required to conform to international regulations on maximum noise emission and are quite adequate to avoid public nuisance from unmodified motorcycles. Public irritation with motorcycle noise, almost exclusively, comes from motorcycles which have been fitted, after the point of sale, with aftermarket systems designed for off road use. The use of these systems on the public road contravenes existing legislation.

Industry and riders’ groups including the British Motorcycle Federation (BMF) and Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) are concerned at the negative image of motorcycling that is generated by the irresponsible and illegal use of competition systems on public roads. Demand for competition exhaust systems has fallen substantially in the past five years. However, it is considered that efforts to change the attitudes of recalcitrant riders, and fair roadside enforcement measures by the police, will further reduce the scale of this problem. In order to achieve this, the Motorcycle Industry Association (MCI) is planning a media campaign in the early Spring of 2007 to discourage the use of illegal exhaust systems. BMF and MAG have indicated their full support.

Action (iv)—Highways Agency will be including motorcycles as a mode of transport to be addressed in its Safety Action Plan. Ensure that the particular needs of motorcyclists are taken into account, where appropriate, in the design, management and maintenance of the motorway and trunk road network.

Motorcyclists have now been included as an integral part of the Safety Action Plan and included as a specific reference in the Safety Operational Folder for Area teams to heighten awareness of issues specific to motorcyclists when designing and maintaining our roads. As part of the Driver Information Programmes a specific programme “Great Roads Great Rides” has been developed and over 200,000 copies of this DVD have been circulated to riders and key road safety groups for dissemination. The Highways Agency is actively supporting the motorcycle safety campaigns “Shiny Side Up Partnership” and “Handle It Or Lose It” to raise awareness of appropriate riding and need for additional rider assessment and training.

Action (v)—Publicise the Institute of Highway Incorporated Engineers (IHIE) guidelines on the provision for motorcyclists on the highway, with local highway authorities and Highways Agency; and keep under review need for further guidance in the light of experience and research.

The IHIE guidelines, which were published in April 2005, will be publicised in the forthcoming Traffic Advisory Leaflet on Motorcycles in Bus Lanes (proposed date for publication: February 2007). The IHIE and the DfT are examining possibilities of hosting the guidelines on IHIE and DfT websites, which will allow wider dissemination of the information. The document currently costs £45. The Manual for Streets is also in preparation and promotes the guidance under its section on Motorcycle Parking. We will continue to review the need for further guidance.

Action (vi)—Revise the Code of Practice on Maintenance Management to take account of motorcyclists.

“Well-maintained Highways”—the revised code of practice for highways maintenance management, was published in July 2005 (The Stationery Office (TSO) £25, or available from www.ukroadsliaisongroup.org). The code of practice has a number of references to the needs of motorcyclists, and also makes cross-reference to the IHIE guidance mentioned in Action v.
Action (vii)—Ensure that motorcycles continue to receive appropriate attention in future reviews of planning guidance documents.

The Government’s planning policies already ask local authorities to promote sustainable transport choices and to ensure that they have appropriate policies in place which ensure that development proposals are designed for the use by disabled people, and that they promote the potential for walking, cycling and motorcycles. As is appropriate, it is for local authorities to decide on the details of the approach they wish to take and how their policies will apply to different modes of travel and locations in their area.

Action (viii)—Recommend that local authorities give proper consideration to appropriate provision for motorcyclists in their Local Transport Plans.

The DfT guidance about second local transport plans issued in December 2004 emphasised four key policy areas for local transport planning—including improving road safety and tackling congestion. The Department provided feedback to local authorities about their provisional plans in December 2005, to help them develop the final versions. Many transport plans include policies and interventions related to motorcycling to help deliver the policy priorities.

Action (ix)—Review the general guidance on Travel Plans and Government guidance to Departments.

The Department completed a review of travel planning on the Government Estate in September 2005. The findings contributed to the development by Defra of new sustainable operations targets for Government Departments, announced in June 2006. These included a requirement to reduce carbon emissions from road vehicles used for Government administrative operations by 15% between 2005–06 and 2010–11. The DfT is finalising its own travel plan, which will include specific reference to powered two wheelers.

Action (x)—Review Local Transport Note 1/97 “Keeping Buses Moving” during 2005 and include consideration of the position on motorcycles as part of that review in the light of the results of research.

A Draft Traffic Advisory Leaflet (TAL) on Motorcycles in Bus Lanes is in preparation. The aim of the guidance is to remove the presumption against allowing motorcycles access to bus lanes in Local Transport Note 1/97, based on the evidence provided so far. As part of the process, internal consultation and consultation with the National Motorcycle Council—Traffic Management, Planning and Transport Policy sub-group has completed. The TAL was issued for peer review on 29 November 2006, with planned publication by February 2007.

Action (xi)—Carry out further trials into the effects of allowing motorcycles into advanced stop lines before making any decisions.

The Department will carry out further trials to assess the effects of allowing motorcycles into advanced stop lines before making any decisions. There is scope for doing this work jointly with Transport for London and other local highway authorities, who have also expressed interest in this area. This project will start during 2007–08 and will take two years.

Action (xii)—Work with stakeholders to consider the MAIDS project and any other relevant research.

A preliminary Department review of the literature on the Motorcycle Accident In-Depth Study (MAIDS) project was completed in Spring 2005. This identified 26 Major Findings but also identified a lack of conclusions or proposals to address these findings. Stakeholders have also considered the MAIDS project including the Motorcycle Action Group (MAG), who supplied a critique of the final report highlighting concerns over the methodology used. MAIDS data and information from stakeholders will be considered along with other relevant research and collectively, these important pieces of evidence will assist future research into motorcycle accidents.

The Department will continue to review motorcycle accident data and is currently funding the Transport Research Laboratory’s (TRL) participation in a European Sixth Framework project “Powered Two Wheeler Integrated Safety” (PISa). This project will take account of motorcycle accident data from a number of sources, including “On The Spot”, a UK accident research programme.

Action (xiii)—Consider the potential for improved rider safety that an assessment programme could deliver for motorcycles.

The “EuroNCAP” car safety rating scheme has demonstrated the ability of consumer led programmes to make significant differences to car safety. The department believes that a similar approach for motorcycles could deliver benefits to motorcyclists. We are currently taking forward our preliminary ideas and developing a feasibility study to assess the practicality of a “EuroNCAP” style initiative for motorcycle safety.
The feasibility study will be undertaken during 2007 and will consider issues such as, foundation braking and advanced braking systems (including anti-lock or combined systems), conspicuity, stability and handling, lighting, emissions, rear vision (mirrors) and ergonomics.

**Action (xiv)—Support motorcycle manufacturers’ and retailers’ initiatives to improve rider knowledge of braking systems. Investigate potential road safety problems caused by poor quality replacement brake linings.**

Motorcycle braking systems continue to improve with most major Japanese and European manufacturers offering advanced electronic systems, including anti-lock braking and combined braking systems, on many high specification machines. Discussions within the expert group have identified a lack of useful consumer information on braking systems and a need to assess user knowledge.

We are currently addressing this knowledge gap by gathering information via an online survey, which will also identify riders’ experience of replacement brake linings. The survey is available online at: http://www.dft.gov.uk/roadsafety/motorcyclesurvey and will be available until December 2006. To date we have received over 500 responses and are on course to have results available and disseminated for Spring 2007.

**Action (xv)—Review current practice of purchasing tyres and engage with the tyre and motorcycle retailers to reach conclusions. Investigate whether risk justifies an additional tyre requirement for the MOT.**

Motorcycle tyres offered for sale or supply in the UK must comply with international regulations on construction and marking. National Motorcycle Council members highlighted a concern that non-compliant tyres are being purchased at boot fairs or via the internet and that this could lead to road safety problems. No evidence was produced to support this claim, so the Department is investigating the extent of the problem.

Tyre purchasers’ current practices are included in the Department’s Motorcycle Survey, identified in Action xiv. Results from the survey (available in Spring 2007), will help to quantify the scale of this issue and whether there is sufficient justification for an additional MOT requirement on tyre marking.

**Action (xvi)—Gather evidence to ensure that motorcyclist safety is not undermined should wider application of daytime lamps be proposed. Assemble evidence to quantify the problem of the visibility of direction indicator tell-tale lamps.**

We commissioned a review of EC research into daytime running lights (DRL), including the effects on motorcycle conspicuity. The report was published on the 14 November 2006 and is available to download at: http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_control/documents/contentservertemplate/dft_index.host?n=17378&i=3

The report suggests that it is possible to develop DRL for wider use that do not reduce motorcycle conspicuity. However, the technical details of the implementation must be considered very carefully to ensure there is no adverse effect. We have used the results of this report to inform our response to the European Commission’s consultation on proposals to introduce DRL across Europe. We await the Commission’s further consideration of this issue.

The visibility of direction indicator tell-tale lamps was identified as a low priority action and lacked objective evidence to support concerns. The National Motorcycle Council sub-group will take this action forward at a future opportunity.

**Action (xvii)—Support collaboration by user groups, trainers and retailers to promote correct helmet fitting. Motorcycle retailers to raise awareness with riders on the importance of the right clothing to reduce injury and improve conspicuity.**

We recognise that improving head protection for motorcyclists is a key issue and we believe that a consumer information programme may be an effective way of influencing the performance of safety helmets. We are in the advanced stages of developing such a scheme and provided it is viable, expect to seek the views of industry experts and other key stakeholders including the motorcycle and road safety lobbys through a consultation process, during 2007. Any such scheme will also address the importance of correct helmet fitting.

**Action (xviii)—Investigate with user representatives the issue that some machines are fitted with mirrors that give them poor rear vision.**

Motorcycles offered for sale in Europe must comply with minimum European requirements for rear vision. National Motorcycle Council members highlighted a concern that some machines, whilst complying with the relevant legislation, still provided poor rear vision.
Whilst much of the evidence was anecdotal, the Department is investigating the extent of the problem. Motorcyclists' experience with rear vision is included in the Department’s Motorcycle Survey, identified in Action xiv. Results from the survey (available in Spring 2007), will help to quantify the scale of this issue and whether there is sufficient justification to propose additional requirements.

**Action (xix)**—Carry out research to help quantify the potential accident risk from increasing width of windscreen “A” pillars on newer cars.

Research already undertaken established that while the A-pillar may have had an influence on an accident, other issues such as junction layout, street furniture and driver behaviour may also play a part. We are continuing to collect evidence on this issue through our “On The Spot” (OTS) accident research programme.

The Department is also conducting an extensive review of relevant literature and on-going research in the UK and overseas to identify and critically assess key factors influencing the interactions between drivers and motorcyclists, and the relationship to the risks of accident involvement. A wide range of factors are being explored, including: A-pillar obscuration, conspicuity, blindspot and “Looked but failed to see” accidents.

**Action (xx)**—Work with interested organisations to develop a clear understanding on the road safety risk of diesel spillage and develop solutions.

The Department is working with the Kill Spills organisation responsible for an annual award scheme recognising companies that seek to minimise diesel spills. The Department is also working closely with its agencies (in particular VOSA) to review existing roadworthiness measures for fuel and oil leakage.

Representatives from the United Kingdom Petroleum Industry Association (UKPIA) have been invited to attend the next NMC Technical, Engineering and Environmental sub-group meeting in March 2007, to consider the role of fuel retailers in reducing diesel spills. We expect to include information on the risks to road safety of diesel spills in the revised Highway Code which is due to be published in spring 2007.

**Action (xxi)**—A greater emphasis on the merits of other motorcycle models as alternatives to sports bikes, providing a wider picture of motorcycling possibilities in the UK.

The Motorcycle Industry Association (MCIA) is taking forward this action. Discussion is on-going with motorcycle media. The proportion of all motorcycle sales that is sport bikes is declining. According to figures produced by the Motorcycle Industry Association, they accounted for 46% of the market in 1997 (42,749 new registrations out of a total 93,289), falling steadily to 26% in 2006 (34,907 new registrations out of a total of 133,077). Over the same period, the share of the market accounted for by scooters has risen from 22% in 1998 (20,585 new registrations) to 30% in 2006 (40,173 new registrations). The total number of new registrations peaked in 2000 at 170,072, of which 34% (57,238) were sports bikes and 42% (70,603) were scooters. Further information is available on the MCIA website www.mcia.co.uk.

**Action (xxii)**—Measure motorcyclist casualty rate as a secondary indicator to the number of casualties.

Motorcyclist casualty rates are regularly published in our annual report Road Casualties Great Britain. The latest edition including 2005 figures was published on 28 September 2006.

**Action (xxiii)**—Consider undertaking research into the effects of fatigue in motorcyclist accidents and driver skills, knowledge and attitudes in relation to motorcycle safety.

The rider fatigue research project is due to report in Spring 2007. We are currently carrying out research on car driver skills and attitudes in relation to motorcycle safety. The first phase of this research, involving a review of relevant literature and research, and a survey of drivers, will be completed in February 2007. The final report is expected in summer 2008.

**Action (xxiv)**—Continue to give a greater focus to the requirement for drivers to recognise the need to look out for motorcyclists.

DSA official publications already contain advice for other road users to recognise the need to look out for motorcyclists. This advice is reviewed and updated as new editions of the publications become available.

Each theory test contains questions about vulnerable road users, including motorcyclists. The film clips used in each Hazard Perception Test contain a variety of different developing hazards, including scenarios using either cycles or motorcyles. Each test contains at least one clip involving a 2-wheeled vehicle.
In January 2006, the Department launched a new advertising campaign reminding car drivers to “take longer to look for bikes”. Many motorcycle accidents are collisions with cars at junctions and driver inattention is a contributory factor in many of those cases. The TV advert shows how easily such accidents can occur and is supported by a radio advert and a poster campaign. Again, we worked with motorcycling groups as we developed this campaign.

Action (xxv)—We have commissioned in-depth research that will investigate current motorcycle training courses to identify good practice and look at subsequent accident rates following different training regimes.

This research should be completed by December 2007 and a report should be ready for publication by May 2008.

Action (xxvi)—Review pre-test training and the Direct Access Scheme. Extend the exercise with a view to delivering a better CBT.

DSA is conducting a research project into the national standards for delivery of Compulsory Basic Training (CBT) and the Direct Access Scheme (DAS). The research objectives, tools and methodology are agreed and the results of the project should be available in October 2007.

As much pre-test training is delivered outside the normal working week the Agency initially relied on volunteers to conduct this research. This limited the amount of work that could be achieved in the time available. However, a recent re-structuring of the workforce involved has resulted in a dedicated team dealing with CBT and DAS. This should ensure delivery of the research results by October 2007.

Action (xxvii)—Undertake a public consultation on a range of options for improving pre-test training after the EC’s proposals for driving licences have been promulgated in a Directive.

The Directive was adopted in December 2006. We are considering options for public consultation, which we expect to take place within the next 18 months. Meanwhile, we are already having informal discussions with motorcycling stakeholders on options for delivery of the Directive, which will inform the way we take this forward. The Directive allows four years from adoption to put in place implementation and a further two years before it takes effect, which will be by January 2013.

Action (xxviii)—Work in partnership with motorcycling interests to develop a range of interactive training aids such as CD-ROMs or DVDs.

Requirements of the training aids have been defined. DSA is working with the motorcycle industry to produce a new informative DVD, Ultimate biking skills aimed at riders throughout every stage of their riding career. It is planned for release in October 2007.

Action (xxix)—The DSA is working with the MCI to develop national standards for training, and for post-test training for licence holders, especially newly qualified riders, those upgrading their bikes, and those returning to motorcycling after a break.

DSA has announced the results of the public consultation about a voluntary quality assurance scheme for motorcycle trainers who deliver developmental training to qualified motorcyclists. The scheme will be introduced in February 2007.

Action (xxx)—Undertake research to establish training best practice with a view to opportunities for trainers to gain professional qualifications to establish their credentials as trainers. DSA is working with MCI and training industry to develop competences for trainers.

Action complete. The competency sets for all driving and riding instructors have been defined. Work on defining competency sets for all driving and riding instructors was completed in Summer 2005. Trainers were kept informed about the progress of that work through regular updates in DSA’s “Despatch” magazine, which is made freely available to the driver training industry. The reports of the results of the work have been published on DSA’s website.

Action (xxxi)—There will be a DSA consultation before a trainer registration scheme is implemented. Compulsory registration of trainers provided for in the Road Safety Bill.

The Road Safety Act 2006 received Royal Assent in November 2006. Powers in the Act enable the Secretary of State to introduce a compulsory registration scheme for trainers. DSA plans to consult on a mandatory quality assurance scheme for motorcycling instructors in 2008–09. DSA is launching a voluntary post-test trainers register in 2007.
Action (xxxii)—Ensure that the insurance industry is kept abreast of training developments so that insurance discounts can be considered by the industry.

DSA has kept the insurance industry up to date with the development of the voluntary quality assurance scheme for motorcycle trainers. It would be premature to open discussions with the insurance industry about discounts until the voluntary scheme is up and running. However, during the coming year the Agency will pursue these discussions with the insurance industry in the light of the scheme’s take-up and performance.

Action (xxxiii)—Once DSA has developed post-test training, present the arrangements to the Pass Plus Board to be considered as the basis for extending the scheme to motorcycles.

Once DSA has established the voluntary quality assurance scheme for motorcycle trainers the Agency will be in a position to make informed recommendations to the Pass Plus Board about extending Pass Plus to motorcyclists. This is planned for Summer 2007.

The voluntary quality assurance scheme was introduced later than originally planned due to DSA’s competing work priorities. For example the need to re-commence work on the Road Safety Bill following the loss of the original Bill due to the 2005 general election.

Action (xxxiv)—Powers being sought in the Road Safety Bill for the Courts to be able to offer riders a Driver Improvement Course, in conjunction with a reduction in the normal disqualification or penalty points.

The Road Safety Act 2006 received Royal Assent on 8 November 2006.

During 2007, the Department will be consulting stakeholders on the implementation of the provisions in the Act. We will need to identify suitable course providers and approve their courses. It will also be necessary to issue guidance and training to Magistrates’ courts in England and Wales and to Sheriffs’ courts in Scotland, on the management of the scheme. Before going live we would want to ensure that courses were available throughout Great Britain.

It is not envisaged that there would be separate courses for motorcyclists though such an option is not ruled out. The focus of course is likely to be on general safety issues and attitudes and will not necessarily include an element of on road re-training.

Action (xxxv)—Undertake research to develop guidelines for best practice on Speed Awareness courses.

Research reviewing the literature on successful interventions for speeding and other risky behaviours began in October 2005. The final report was published in March 2006. This recommended what speed awareness courses are most likely to be effective and what is the best way to evaluate the effectiveness of the courses once they operate. At present, ACPO has a holding policy on new speed awareness courses and the National Driver Offender Steering group (NDORS) led by ACPO is formulating full guidance on these courses based on the research findings.

Action (xxxvi)—In reviewing the Highway Code, consider greater attention to motorcyclists in the drivers section about vulnerable road users requiring extra care.

Public consultation on proposed revisions to The Highway Code, including strengthened advice to drivers about road users requiring extra care—such as motorcyclists, was held between 15 February and 12 May 2006. The consultation responses have been considered and the new edition of the Code will be published in Spring 2007.

Action (xxxvii)—The proponents of a road safety GCSE in Great Britain to present their case to the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA).

The Motorcycle Industry Association (MCIA) is taking forward this action. In June 2006 MCIA issued “Links—connecting Citizenship and Road User Education”, a teaching resource for Key Stage 4 (14 to 16 year olds) which provides lesson plans on road safety themes that can be used for teaching the Citizenship curriculum. MCIA is also considering the scope of a BTEC qualification, rather than GCSE.

Action (xxxviii)—Review of DfT involvement in sports sponsorship and its effectiveness at communicating road safety messages to key target audiences.

The review of sports sponsorship was completed in January 2005. The Department has sponsored the British Superbikes Championship in 2004, 2005 and 2006. In 2006 we expanded our activities under the name “The Academy”, working with former champion John Reynolds and a range of manufacturers of vehicles and accessories to convey safety messages to this key audience. We are carrying out an external audit
of sponsorship and review of BSB activity, which is due in March 2007. We expect to continue BSB sponsorship in future and are currently negotiating with the event organisers the arrangements for the 2007 season.

*Action (xxxix)*—DfT advertising to continue to develop, focusing on the most dangerous situations and behaviours.

A new TV, radio and poster campaign “Take longer to look for Bikes”, aimed at urban car drivers and motorcyclists, was launched in January 2006 and continues to be aired. The In Depth Study of Motorcycle Accidents (Road Safety Research Report No 54, November 2004) identified car drivers not seeing motorcyclists at junctions as a major cause of motorcycle casualties. We are now working on additional communications to target urban motorcyclists specifically, to be launched February/March 2007. We are also involved in an on-going partnership with Emap media in conjunction with BSB sponsorship.

*Action (xl)*—For 2005 DfT to publish a calendar showing both national and local initiatives conducted by local government and non-government stakeholders throughout the year.

We expect to have an initial version of the calendar by February 2007, and the RAC Foundation will take the lead on producing updates on a roughly quarterly basis with the support of DfT.

The publication of a calendar was deferred, so that we could pull together a much more comprehensive version. We are now working with the RAC Foundation who have agreed to take the lead on putting this together, with input from the DfT.

*Action (xli)*—Engage with the press to discuss how they can work with us so that irresponsible riding which endangers the riders themselves and other road users is not encouraged.

The Department continues to engage both proactively and reactively, on a weekly basis, with motorcycling media. Stephen Ladyman has given interviews to Motorcycle News on a number of occasions. DfT organised a media day to look at the motorcycle fitted with Independent Speed Adaptation (ISA), and for the media day at the ITS world congress.

*Action (xlii)*—Support local enforcement strategies against a significant minority of motorcyclists who routinely fail to comply with road traffic law, as an integral part of police programmes on motorcycling.

We are currently looking at rider risk aversion courses to fit in the police driver offender retraining portfolio alongside driver improvement and speed awareness. This is being considered by the Department to make sure the very best course is designed and implemented.

*Action (xliii)*—Consider what can be done to align the requirements for motorcycles with those for cars with reference to European requirements for anti-theft devices; and potential benefits of a security-rating scheme similar to that currently available for cars.

Initially it was thought that the latest car technology (electronics) could be transferred to motorcycles, however, motorcycles additionally require a device to prevent them from being lifted away. Various options were discussed and the practical problems were outlined. For example, the carrying of heavy chains, U bolts in the ground, and the cost to the consumer. Given the noticeably different problems applicable specifically to motorcycles, we will continue to work with stakeholders within the National Motorcycle Council, the Home Office, Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and the insurance industry to find solutions.

*Action (xliv)*—Professor Greenaway made 20 recommendations to reduce the incidence of uninsured driving. DfT has accepted all the recommendations and is working with the Home Office, Police and Insurance Industry to take these forward.

The Road Safety Act 2006 includes provisions to set up a scheme of continuous enforcement of motor insurance and to introduce a new offence of being the registered keeper of a vehicle for which no insurance is in force. The Act also includes powers to clamp and impound vehicles contravening this new offence. We are working with DVLA to devise a scheme of Continuous Insurance Enforcement. Regulations will have to be made to implement the scheme. We expect that these will be introduced during 2007 and the scheme is expected to commence by the end of 2007–08. The Motor Insurance Compliance Action Board (MICAB) has been set up with the Home Office, Police and insurance industry representation to oversee implementation of the recommendations in the Greenaway Report. The power to seize uninsured vehicles is included in Serious Organised Crime & Police Act 2005.
Member States reached a common position in Council on the proposed third European Union (EU) Directive on driving licences on 18 September 2006. The UK abstained from the vote because of our disappointment that more appropriate measures could not be reached for young motorcyclists. All other Member States supported the proposals. The remainder of the provisions in the common position text are acceptable to the UK. It had its second reading in the European Parliament (EP) on 13–14 December 2006, was adopted on 19 December and published in the Official Journal on 30 December.

There is no compelling evidence that the proposed three stages of access to progressively larger motorcycles would have significant road safety benefits. Already around 88% of motorcycle tests in Great Britain are taken by people over 21 through the Direct Access route and 70% are over the proposed new Direct Access minimum age of 24. Most younger motorcyclists injured in road accidents are riding the smaller motorcycles. Most casualties on the largest motorcycles are older than 24. We sought less complexity and less rigidity in the proposals, with a view to being able to stick closer to our existing UK practice. This is already more stringent than in some other Member States, including Compulsory Basic Training for all moped and motorcycle riders before they are allowed on the road even with a provisional licence.

We expect the new Directive to be adopted by the EU institutions early in 2007 and we should then have until early 2011 to transcribe the new measures into UK law and until 2013 to bring them into UK practice. We are already in touch with motorcyclists and industry representatives with a view to future formal consultation on how best to implement the new EU requirements in the context of the Government’s Motorcycling Strategy.

“Mini-motos”, “Go-peds” and other small powered vehicles such as quad bikes, have become popular eg as gifts for children and even as “fun” vehicles for adults. Used responsibly, they can give a great deal of enjoyment. However there is considerable concern about misuse of such vehicles, which can be dangerous and can cause noise and other nuisances.

The Minister of State for Transport met a representative of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) in 2006 to discuss such concerns. It was concluded that sufficient powers to counter illegal road use of these vehicles are already available to the police under existing legislation and that new legislation is therefore not necessary.

In addition the Department has co-operated with the Home Office and also the Auto Cycle Union on the issue of press notices (in December 2005 and December 2006) and website advice (summer 2005) to the public and others on mini-moto and related issues. We also liaise with other Departments such as Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Department of Culture, Media and Sport and the Department of Trade and Industry, all of whom have an interest in these vehicles eg regarding off-road use, sport/leisure use, safety of construction. An information note for MPs on the subject has been provided and placed in the Libraries of the House.
Annex

MOTORCYCLES RIDER AND PASSENGER CASUALTIES IN GREAT BRITAIN

1. Casualty Rates Per Billion Passenger Kilometres

Fatality rates per billion passenger kilometres by mode, 1990 - 2005: index 1990=100

Serious rates per billion passenger kilometres by mode, 1990 - 2005: index 1990=100
### Fatal and Serious Casualty Rates per Billion Passenger KMs: GB 1990–2005

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2. **Casualty Rates Per 100 Million Vehicle Kilometres**

**Fatality rates per 100 million vehicle kilometres by mode: 1990 - 2005 - index 1990 = 100**

![Fatality rates graph](image)

**KSI rates per 100 million vehicle kilometres by mode: 1990 - 2005 - index 1990=100**

![KSI rates graph](image)
### CASUALTY RATES PER 100 MILLION VEHICLE KILOMETRES: GB 1990–2005

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1990% = 100

**Fatalities by Mode: 94 -98 baseline average, 1994 - 2005**

![Fatalities by Mode Chart]

**KSI by mode: 94-98 baseline average, 1994 -2005**

![KSI by Mode Chart]
### CASUALTIES BY MODE: GB 1994–2005

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<td>158</td>
<td>3,312</td>
<td>906</td>
<td>10,481</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>547</td>
<td>6,908</td>
<td>1,687</td>
<td>20,368</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>3,176</td>
<td>870</td>
<td>9,825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>605</td>
<td>7,374</td>
<td>1,665</td>
<td>19,719</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>2,770</td>
<td>857</td>
<td>9,498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>583</td>
<td>7,305</td>
<td>1,749</td>
<td>19,424</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>2,678</td>
<td>826</td>
<td>9,064</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>609</td>
<td>7,500</td>
<td>1,747</td>
<td>18,728</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>2,450</td>
<td>775</td>
<td>8,631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>693</td>
<td>7,652</td>
<td>1,769</td>
<td>17,291</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>2,411</td>
<td>774</td>
<td>7,933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>585</td>
<td>6,648</td>
<td>1,671</td>
<td>16,144</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>2,308</td>
<td>671</td>
<td>7,478</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>569</td>
<td>6,508</td>
<td>1,675</td>
<td>14,617</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>2,360</td>
<td>671</td>
<td>7,129</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. **Motorcycle User Casualties in Urban and Rural Areas by Size of Motorcycle and Age: GB 2005**

![Motorcyclists Killed: Urban](chart)

![Motorcyclists Killed: Rural](chart)
Motorcycle KSIs: Urban

Motorcycle KSIs: Rural

Age of Rider

Motorcycle 50cc and under
Motorcycle 51-125cc
Motorcycle 126-500cc
Motorcycle over 500cc
## MOTORCYCLE USER FATALITIES IN URBAN AND RURAL AREAS BY SIZE OF MOTORCYCLE AND AGE GB 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of casualty</th>
<th>Motorcycle 50cc and under</th>
<th>Motorcycle 51–125cc</th>
<th>Motorcycle 126–500cc</th>
<th>Motorcycle over 500cc</th>
<th>Motorcycle 50cc and under</th>
<th>Motorcycle 51–125cc</th>
<th>Motorcycle 126–500cc</th>
<th>Motorcycle over 500cc</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16–19</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20–24</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25–29</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30–34</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35–39</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40–44</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45–49</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50–54</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55–59</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60–64</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65–69</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## MOTORCYCLE KSIs IN URBAN AND RURAL AREAS BY SIZE OF MOTORCYCLE AND AGE GB 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of casualty</th>
<th>Motorcycle 50cc and under</th>
<th>Motorcycle 51–125cc</th>
<th>Motorcycle 126–500cc</th>
<th>Motorcycle over 500cc</th>
<th>Motorcycle 50cc and under</th>
<th>Motorcycle 51–125cc</th>
<th>Motorcycle 126–500cc</th>
<th>Motorcycle over 500cc</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16–19</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20–24</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25–29</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>219</td>
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<tr>
<td>30–34</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35–39</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40–44</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45–49</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50–54</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55–59</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60–64</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>46</td>
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<tr>
<td>65–69</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. **Casualties By Road User Type and Month: GB 2005**

**Fatalities 2005 - by month**

![Graph showing fatalities by month and road user type for GB 2005](image)

**Serious injuries 2005 - by month**

![Graph showing serious injuries by month and road user type for GB 2005](image)

**FATALITIES BY ROAD USER TYPE AND MONTH: GB 2005**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Motorcycle</th>
<th>Pedestrian</th>
<th>Car Occupant</th>
<th>Pedal Cycle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### SERIOUS INJURIES BY ROAD USER TYPE AND MONTH: GB 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Motorcycle</th>
<th>Pedestrian</th>
<th>Car Occupant</th>
<th>Pedal Cycle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>567</td>
<td>1,059</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>499</td>
<td>996</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>1,002</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>482</td>
<td>538</td>
<td>953</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>638</td>
<td>553</td>
<td>1,009</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>636</td>
<td>533</td>
<td>1,018</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>680</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>1,085</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug</td>
<td>641</td>
<td>461</td>
<td>1,108</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept</td>
<td>578</td>
<td>486</td>
<td>1,009</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct</td>
<td>558</td>
<td>556</td>
<td>1,202</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov</td>
<td>403</td>
<td>655</td>
<td>1,246</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>1,255</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS TO ROAD ACCIDENTS: GB 2005

#### Table 3

CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS: VEHICLES<sup>1</sup> BY VEHICLE TYPE: GB 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pedal cycles</th>
<th>Motor cycles</th>
<th>Cars</th>
<th>Buses or coaches</th>
<th>Light goods vehicles</th>
<th>Heavy goods vehicles</th>
<th>All Vehicles&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Failed to look properly</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failed to judge other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>persons path/speed</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Careless, reckless or in a hurry</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor turn/manoeuvre</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of control</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going too fast for conditions</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slippery road</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Following too close</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudden braking</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impaired by alcohol</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner/Inexperienced</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>driver</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exceeding speed limit</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disobeyed Give Way or</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop sign</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junction overshoot</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passing too close to cyclist etc</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle blind spot</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyclist entering road from pavement</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyclist wearing dark clothing at night</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicles with no contributory factor</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Number of vehicles

|                           | 10,709       | 20,921       | 210,798      | 6,078        | 12,122       | 9,992       | 272,996      |

---

<sup>1</sup> Includes only vehicles in road accidents where a police officer attended the scene and in which a contributory factor was reported. Columns may not add up to 100% as accidents can have more than one contributory factor.

<sup>2</sup> Includes only the ten most frequent contributory factors for each vehicle type.

<sup>3</sup> Includes other vehicles types and cases where the vehicle type was not reported. Table ranked by the percentages in this column.

<sup>4</sup> 0 indicates zero or negligible values—most are between 0.1%–0.5%.

18 January 2007
Witnesses: Dr Stephen Ladyman, a Member of the House, Minister of State for Transport and Mr Andrew Colski, Head of Vulnerable Road Users Branch, Department for Transport, gave evidence.

Q203 Chairman: Good afternoon, Minister, I am delighted to see you; would you be kind enough to identify yourself and your colleague?

Dr Ladyman: I am Stephen Ladyman, Minister of State for Transport and my colleague is Andrew Colski, who deals with these matters on behalf of the Department.

Q204 Chairman: You are both most warmly welcomed this afternoon. Did you have something you wanted to say to us first?

Dr Ladyman: No, we can just answer your questions on this occasion.

Q205 Chairman: That would be an improvement; we are going to break habits of a lifetime. Our previous witness, Mr Plowden, described the Motorcycling Strategy as something that might have been produced by “a dodgy PR firm, not by a Department of State”. Is that fair?

Dr Ladyman: No, that is cobblers—if that is sufficient of an answer for you.

Q206 Chairman: I do not know whether “cobblers” is a Parliamentary word. Why particularly is it?

Dr Ladyman: Because it was devised with the motorcycling industry, with representatives of motorcyclists themselves; it is, I believe, a comprehensive document. It sets out to make motorcyclists themselves; it is, I believe, a motorcycling industry, with representatives of the industry, and that is what the programme sets out to do. I think it does it very well by identifying what their real concerns are and setting about constructively to address them.

Q207 Chairman: You did tell us last time that 27 of the 44 actions in the strategy were going to be completed by February 2007 and then a further eight by 2010; are they going to make a real difference to motorcyclists and if so in what way?

Dr Ladyman: They are going to make a real difference to motorcyclists. It is early days yet but there is no question that the level of motorcycling fatalities has not got down in the way that fatalities in other sectors have gone down, although in the last year or so there are some signs—and as a scientist until there has been a trend over several years I am not going to say the trend is downwards—or reductions in the number of fatalities; we are also seeing a good reduction in the level of serious injuries amongst motorcyclists. The first stage of the Motorcycling Strategy has been completed in that we do now have genuine buy-in from the industry and from motorcyclists themselves. Whether in the long term it makes a real difference to motorcyclists we have yet to see, we will not know for several years, but there is good buy-in to the strategy and it is having an impact.

Q208 Chairman: There is some slight fall; they are not dramatic changes in the way of casualties by selected road user type, but there is some fall.

Dr Ladyman: Yes.

Q209 Chairman: Is there anything that you should have included that you did not include and that you now wish you had?

Dr Ladyman: I cannot think of anything.

Q210 Chairman: Mr Colski, do you want to save your Minister who is looking lost?

Dr Ladyman: I think it is perfect so why would I want to add anything to it, but Mr Colski might have some ideas.

Q211 Chairman: Mr Colski, do you have this divine belief that everything the Department does is perfect, which is sustaining the Minister?

Mr Colski: Yes, of course. What I would like to say in response to whether the actions are appropriate, we have the structure through the National Motorcycle Council and working with industry colleagues to consider how we are implementing all of the actions. Part of that process includes not just the actions as listed in 2005 but what it is appropriate for us to consider now. One example is the whole area of diesel spillage, which is a concern for motorcyclists, and that is something that is being looked at in more detail than was anticipated in the strategy because people have become more aware of it.

Q212 Chairman: From what point of view; from having a go at the road freight industry? What do you mean by that?

Mr Colski: In part, yes, working with the freight industry and petrol retailers in terms of getting the message across to the users of diesel vehicles that they need to be careful not to spill because it does create problems for other road users, in particular motorcyclists.

Dr Ladyman: Actually, there is a good example of that from the recent Council that was held where it was brought to my attention that a number of diesel users are driving away from forecourts without even filler caps on, as a contributor to diesel on the roads. That is something we can do something about, and one of the things that I have asked my officials to investigate in respect of that, as a result of that feedback at Council, was that maybe we can do something with the diesel retailers that would prevent people from overfilling their tanks—some technology on the pumps that would stop it. The pump cuts out when the pump is full, but usually you can pull the nozzle out a bit and carry on filling if you are inclined to do it. If there was a longer period before the nozzle was reactivated you would not be able to do that and so I have asked people to investigate whether that would be a technical improvement that might help.
Q213 Chairman: Just as a matter of interest, are you really talking about people who are just forgetful and forget to put the cap back on, or are you talking about a conscious attempt to drive away in the hope of a full tank?

Dr Ladyman: There are two things. There are people who want to see their tank full to the very brim because they are trying to maximise the distance they can travel before they have to stop again, and do not realise that as a consequence of that they can cause spills, and there are people who are genuinely forgetful. There are some people out on the road there, let us face it, who just do not care; they may be filling their tank at somebody else’s expense and the fact that they have not got a cap on their tank is neither here nor there to them.

Q214 Chairman: This Committee is persuaded that there are some people on our roads who are not exactly good citizens. Are there any specific actions that will not be completed by this month, February 2007?

Dr Ladyman: I will let Mr Colski give you chapter and verse.

Mr Colski: We explain in our memorandum where we are on each of the actions in turn; not all of them will be completed exactly by February 2007, some of them well before, some of them, inevitably, things change and they have been delayed a bit. Most of them will be completed, if not by February 2007 then soon afterwards.

Q215 Chairman: What concerns us are the areas where possibly things are not progressing as they really ought to. Is there something specific, is there a reason why certain of your actions are not progressing in the way that you think they should?

Mr Colski: I cannot remember all 44 in detail, but one thing that springs to mind is, for example, things on driver training that relate to the third EU Driving Licence Directive, which I know you are interested in, but of course we could not take those forward until the Directive was adopted, and that process in Europe took rather longer than was anticipated back in 2005.

Chairman: Yes, some time we must have an audit of how much of your time is taken up with the more brilliant ideas of the European Union. Mr Stringer?

Q216 Graham Stringer: Following these questions up if I may, you dismiss Mr Plowden’s comments as “cobbler’s”. He makes at least two rather important points which I would be interested in your response to. One is that the strategy does not make enough comment or analysis of the dangers that motorcycles are to other people, which is not surprising really if you draw the document up in consultation with the industry itself. Do you think that is a fair comment or is it cobbler’s?

Dr Ladyman: I called his comments “cobbler’s” because they struck me from the approach that the Chairman gave us that he was being deliberately provocative and generalising about the document. Had he identified a specific issue that he was concerned about I would have been more considered in my response to it; but is that particular issue cobbler’s? It was a strategy that was intended to mainstream motorcycling; if he is arguing we should not be mainstreaming motorcycling, if he is arguing that he could perform some analysis that suggests that motorcycling is a danger to other road users, therefore we should be working to eliminate motorcycling, that was an argument that was eliminated before we wrote the Motorcycling Strategy. The strategy is predicated on the idea that it is a good thing to mainstream motorcycling.

Q217 Chairman: What is “mainstreaming”? It is a new verb to me.

Dr Ladyman: What I mean by that is that it should be seen not as an anarchic activity that rebellious teenagers engage in and therefore we should be trying to discourage it.

Q218 Chairman: Or only inadequate males over 35.

Dr Ladyman: What it is intended to convey is that we see it as a legitimate form of road transport that we actively want to encourage and we want people to consider it as an alternative to the motor car as a contributor to tackling congestion and reducing carbon emissions.

Q219 Graham Stringer: Just on that, you say that motorcycling is going to continue and it is going to be an important part of transport, but can you answer the specific point that Mr Plowden makes about why you do not analyse and say what your response is to the fact that motorcycles do a considerable amount of damage to pedestrians, at about three and a half times the rate per kilometre that cars do.

Dr Ladyman: I am not aware of the figures that show that and I will certainly have a look at them, but one of the reasons that we need to take this activity is to identify those things which are a threat to motorcyclists or where motorcyclists are a threat to others and make sure that we are dealing with them, and if we need to keep pedestrians and motorcyclists separate in some way that we are not at the moment then we will look at it and that can be part of the Motorcycling Strategy, but to suggest that the whole strategy should not have been engaged in on the basis that motorcycles are a dangerous thing is not something——

Q220 Graham Stringer: I am asking very specifically whether that should not have been taken into account in the strategy.

Dr Ladyman: I was not around when the strategy was adopted so I do not know whether it was or not, but I can certainly investigate that and let you know whether it was.

Q221 Graham Stringer: Thank you. The other point Mr Plowden makes, which is rather surprising but again I would have thought it worth investigation, is that evidence from the University of Salford in the 1970s showed that after training sessions organised by the RAC and others the accident rate went up, and he says that the reason motorcyclists have
accidents is not to do with their skill level but to do with their attitude. Was that considered as part of the response?

Dr Ladyman: You mean did we take account of 1970s research when deciding on a strategy in the late 1990s? I suspect we probably did not take too much of a concern. What I do agree with—and the Committee will know I made this very clear to the Committee when we had an informal session about road safety and driver training—is that attitude amongst certain types of road users is the key to improving road safety, whether that is young drivers of motor cars or young men riding motorcycles. If they think they are immortal, if they think they are in complete control of their machine, whether it is a car or a motorcycle, then they will make mistakes and they will hurt people, and one of the key things we have to do in reviewing the way we train drivers and riders, one of the key things we have to do in our review of road safety strategy, is to make sure that we are fundamentally trying to address attitudes of drivers so to that extent I entirely agree, but I do not think that is something that is specific to motorcyclists, you could say exactly the same thing about young men driving cars.

Mr Colski: It is certainly something we are very much aware of as part of our work on motorcycling, the need to address attitudes and how skills are used as well as the mechanical skills themselves.

Q222 Graham Stringer: Did you take evidence from any academic or practical studies at all that looked at the impact of training on accidents?

Mr Colski: Yes.

Q223 Graham Stringer: Which studies did you use?

Mr Colski: We have our own research project underway at the moment on motorcycle training— it is one of the actions in the strategy—that is being conducted for us by TRL and is due to report later this year. That is something that is very much underway.

Q224 Chairman: You have actually asked TRL to undertake this research on your behalf?

Mr Colski: Into good practice in motorcycle training, yes.

Q225 Chairman: How long do you expect that experiment to continue?

Mr Colski: I believe it is due to report some time later this year. Again, the dates are in the memorandum itself.

Q226 Graham Stringer: This is not just about good practice in training motorcyclists, it is about assessing whether, when they are trained and their skill levels go up, they have more accidents than they did before.

Mr Colski: It does not go as far as to actually link it to their subsequent accident record; that would be a much longer term project.

Q227 Graham Stringer: I accept it would be longer term, but it is rather important, is it not, to know whether training works or not? There is an assumption that it works and I accept most people would say it is a prima facie case that training helps, but if there has been previous evidence, even 35 years old, Minister, that training has the reverse effect—

Dr Ladyman: I do not know where you are going with this line of questioning; are you suggesting that we should abandon training because it improves people’s confidence and they start causing accidents?

Q228 Graham Stringer: I am suggesting—as is Government policy as I understand—that the bases of policies that you pursue are related to the evidence and I am trying to find out what your evidence base was in coming to some of the conclusions you came to.

Dr Ladyman: As I say, I was not around when the Motorcycling Strategy was adopted but I can certainly get you a reading list of the things that were considered at the time. Would a 1970s piece of research have figured largely in my predecessor’s decision-making, I suspect not.

Q229 Mr Martlew: Just on the points that you have made, Minister, I can understand you having a strategy that says people will ride motorcycles so we have to make it safer for them and we must accommodate them.

Dr Ladyman: And safer for everybody else.

Q230 Mr Martlew: Yes, safer for everybody else, that is fine, but from what you have said today, what you are really saying is you want more people to ride motorcycles and with another hat on you are probably saying you want less people to drive motor cars. Is that your strategy?

Dr Ladyman: It is slightly more nuanced than that. I want people for whom motorcycles are a valid option—

Q231 Chairman: What is the nuance between fewer and less?

Dr Ladyman: I want people for whom riding motorcycles is an option to consider seriously whether using a motorcycle to go to work, to commute, is a way that they could contribute to reducing congestion on the roads and the efficiency of their travel. Whether that leads to more people using motorcycles or fewer people using motorcycles is probably not my key priority. Clearly, the reason why the motorcycling industry is involved in the Motorcycling Strategy is they are hoping that more people will make that choice and decide to use motorcycles.

Q232 Mr Martlew: But you would bear in mind that riding a motorcycle is probably three times more dangerous than driving a car, therefore you would not recommend it over driving a car.

Dr Ladyman: I rode a motorcycle myself for many years and I still occasionally get on a bike when it is necessary in my ministerial capacity, although I do not have a bike any more, and a properly-trained,
Clive E: One can understand the argument about road space and the speed of travel, so are we looking at regulations then to green-up motorcycles?

Dr Ladyman: I do not know the answer to that question actually because of course the European Union is currently reviewing its stance in respect of emissions from motor cars and fuel consumption and has published a document in the last day or so, but I have not had time to read it in detail yet so I do not know whether it includes motorcycles.

Clive E: If we are looking at them as an alternative, which I accept is a legitimate position to take, we would be wrong, would we not, to ignore the aspect of emissions from motorcycles if that is a strategy we are going to adopt.

Dr Ladyman: Of course we would be wrong to avoid it and in terms of reducing CO₂ emissions we have to look at every form of transport right across the board; even those which we consider to be very green forms of transport like the train can do better and whether it is more efficient than a car or less efficient than a car we have to look at that for every modality.

Clive E: So we would be looking to Europe to negotiate those sorts of things.

Dr Ladyman: Clearly European level action on things like this is more effective than UK unilateral action, but would I rule out UK unilateral action if we do not get sufficient progress at an international level then, no, I would not rule it out but you probably need to engage in discussions around the energy White Paper when it comes out to determine the Government’s policy on that.

Clive E: Can I just move on then? Do you think that the current offences for motorcyclists are adequate in terms of ensuring safety on our roads and that vehicles are not abused off road?

Dr Ladyman: Generally, once the Road Safety Act has been completely implemented the levels of offences in general are adequate. We could probably all decide that there are some areas where we would like them to be stiffer or to be changed, and that is a debate we will have over the coming years. One of the key things now is to get enforcement to a level where everybody is complying with the existing body of law.

Chairman: Mr Colski, you want to quote some things to us. Is it in relation to particulates and what we are talking about? We are talking about particulates here.

Mr Colski: Stephen Plowden mentioned table 3.6 of Transport Statistics for Great Britain. I have that here which does show the per kilometre emissions for motorcycles against cars for various forms of pollution. For particulates, yes, motorcycles are higher than cars, for nitrogen oxide and carbon dioxide cars are higher than motorcycles, so it does vary with individual pollutants.

Clive E: Is that per vehicle kilometre or is that per passenger kilometre?

Mr Colski: Per vehicle kilometre.

Clive E: We are talking about vehicles that invariably just carry one person; you seldom see people travelling to work and riding pillion on motorcycles.

Dr Ladyman: You seldom see people travelling to work in cars with more than one person in the car.

Q233 Mr Martlew: I am going to push you on this. Do you believe it would be better for people to give up their cars and ride motorcycles, is that what you are saying?

Dr Ladyman: I believe for some people it would be better to give up their motor car and ride motorcycles, yes.

Q234 Clive E: Why?

Dr Ladyman: They would get to work quicker, they would cut down on CO₂ emissions, they would take up less space on the road and they would save money because they are cheaper than cars.

Q235 Clive E: But are they? Have you taken evidence that demonstrates that motor bikes across the board are greener and more efficient than cars?

Dr Ladyman: We will have to dig you out the exact figures, but yes they are.

Clive E: We had evidence earlier on that demonstrated that that is not true, they are less efficient in some cases.

Q236 Chairman: Mr Colski, you want to quote something to us. Is it in relation to particulates and what we are talking about? We are talking about particulates here.

Mr Colski: Stephen Plowden mentioned table 3.6 of Transport Statistics for Great Britain. I have that here which does show the per kilometre emissions for motorcycles against cars for various forms of pollution. For particulates, yes, motorcycles are higher than cars, for nitrogen oxide and carbon dioxide cars are higher than motorcycles, so it does vary with individual pollutants.

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Mr Colski: Per vehicle kilometre.

Q238 Clive E: We are talking about vehicles that invariably just carry one person; you seldom see people travelling to work and riding pillion on motorcycles.

Dr Ladyman: You seldom see people travelling to work in cars with more than one person in the car.

Q239 Clive E: I do not think that is as prevalent as it is with a motorcycle. We cannot just make that assumption, can we, that they are greener?

Mr Colski: I suspect that somewhere in this there are also the figures for average vehicle occupancy as well. I have not got them immediately to hand but the figure for cars is one point something.

Q240 Chairman: Is there any estimate within those statistics of the relative dangers of particulates versus the ones that you were quoting?

Mr Colski: That is not in this publication.

Chairman: It is actually quite relevant. Mr Efford.
Q246 Clive Efford: Is it not the problem though that when you issue a section 59 notice the first one is a warning and then the bike is ridden off or whatever and then when they stop it the next time they cannot identify it?

Dr Ladyman: If that was the case how would the registration system help? What would make the body of people who have got mini motos out there at the moment register their mini motos? Are you talking about a retrospective registration system or just a registration system on new bikes? The reason that registration works on official vehicles, cars and motorbikes, is largely because they are sold through a proper dealer network that engages in the registration process and tells us when they are selling them. Mini motos by and large are not sold through the reputable dealership networks; in my constituency up until fairly recently they were sold by a couple of shops that usually sell second-hand washing machines and sell them as a sideline. I do not believe those would be registered at first sale even if we had a registration system in place. More importantly, the police are telling me they do not need and do not want a registration system and, whilst they are telling me that, why would I disagree with them.

Q247 Clive Efford: If we are talking about bikes that are just given away as a promotion rather than things people go out and buy, why do we not just stop that?

Dr Ladyman: You cannot stop people giving things away. I would hope that any reputable company would reconsider any future schemes to give away mini motos. What we are doing though, and what the DTI have been doing—and I think they have given you a submission to this evidence session—they are clamping down on those, on the import of those machines which are unsafe and which are poorly made. They are working very hard to try and discourage their import in the first place, and after a number of years where the levels of imports of these bikes soared, actually the latest year shows a reduction in sales for the first time. DTI are working very hard to try and discourage their use in this country, and I hope that turns out to be the case. There is only one of the mini motos which can get a certificate of conformity and which could be road legal, but even if it is road legal if you choose to use it on the road you would need a motorcycling licence, you would need a crash helmet, you would need insurance and all the other things. Do I think that a particular bike is actually being ridden by people who have gone through all of those stages? No, I do not and the police do not either, so wherever these things are seen and used on the road they can be stopped and they can be dealt with.

Q248 Clive Efford: You mentioned the DTI; is there any activity at European level to try and deal with the substandard vehicles that you have described?

Dr Ladyman: There is indeed and if we have not given it to you already I will arrange to have you sent information of other countries from around Europe who also try to tackle this problem with us and seem to be having some success.

Q249 Mrs Ellman: You said that the police have all the powers they need to deal with mini motos or other vehicles; do you think they are using those powers?

Dr Ladyman: I obviously cannot speak for every constabulary in the country but my instinct would be, given my postbag and the comments that are made to me by colleagues in the House, no, not all constabularies are using those powers. Some of them misunderstand the powers, some of them do not believe those would be registered at first sale even if we had a registration system in place. More importantly, the police are telling me they do not need and do not want a registration system and, whilst they are telling me that, why would I disagree with them.

Q250 Mrs Ellman: What can the Department do to encourage the use of these powers?

Dr Ladyman: I work very closely with my colleague in the Home Office who deals with police matters; we both of us talk to the Association of Chief Police Officers to encourage them to encourage their members to take appropriate action. At the end of the day chief constables, as we know, are independent of governments and they decide for themselves how resources are to be deployed in their constabulary, so although I can take the horse to water I cannot make it drink; however, Members of Parliament in their constituencies can put pressure on the local chief constable.

Q251 Mrs Ellman: Which would be the lead department, the Department for Transport or the Home Office?

Dr Ladyman: For policing matters the lead department is the Home Office.

Q252 Mrs Ellman: Do you think that the current offences for motorcyclists are adequate?

Dr Ladyman: Yes, broadly speaking. We would always have debates about whether they are or they are not and whether they need to be increased or decreased but I have not received many representations that they are completely out of line with other offences or that they are not a sufficient deterrent.

Q253 Mrs Ellman: Do you think that motorcyclists are getting away with crimes because technology like speed cameras and automatic number plate recognition is unable to register them?
Dr Ladyman: Of course, 20 years ago we took away the requirement for motorcycles to have a number plate on the front of the vehicle because those number plates on the front of the vehicle were a danger both to the motorcyclist and to other road users who were involved in accidents. We have no intention of reconsidering that, it is absolutely right that there is no number plate on the front of a motorcycle, but that does mean therefore that if an offence is detected by a front-facing camera it is not going to pick up a registration number; however, most speed camera now photograph you from the rear and automatic number plate recognition systems in police cars photograph you from the rear, so even if there was an argument that a few years ago motorcyclists were able to get away with things, it is becoming less and less relevant and I would encourage that process.

Q254 Mrs Ellman: What about evasion of Vehicle Excise Duty?
Dr Ladyman: Clearly we want to clamp down on that for everybody, that is why we have introduced the statutory off-road notification system and why we now have a process of continuous taxation, I am hoping that that does clamp down, not only on VED evasion amongst motorcyclists but VED evasion generally over the next year or two. Clearly, there is a role here for the police. At the end of the day, as your Committee has already commented in the past, the more roads policing that there is the more we will catch people and the more we will stop them evading their responsibilities. I am doing my best through ACPO to encourage chief constables to put more resources into enforcing these things across the board.

Q255 Mrs Ellman: Is there any dispute going on in the European Union about tougher standards for the construction and use of motorcycles where we are opposing that?
Dr Ladyman: Construction and use tougher standards—I am not aware of any debate that has been raised with me.

Q256 Mrs Ellman: There is nothing that you are aware of.
Dr Ladyman: No, there has certainly not been at ministerial level or at the Transport Council. The main things that I, in my nearly two years in this job, have discussed at European level, particularly at the Transport Council, have been the issues of the third European Driving Licence Directive and daytime running lights; those are the main things that have impacted on motorcyclists although there have been discussions about motorcycling safety at the Verona Road Safety Conference.

Q257 Mrs Ellman: What is the Government’s view on daylight running lights?
Dr Ladyman: We are strongly opposed to mandatory daytime running lights because we have a strong feeling that motorcyclists in the daytime are able to make their vehicles more conspicuous by keeping their light on. If everybody had their lights on it would be less easy for motorcyclists to stand out in the daytime. I have to say I was very pessimistic six months ago that we were winning that argument in Europe, and I actually told the House I was very pessimistic, I thought we were once again standing alone and that everybody else was in favour of daytime running lights. I have to say we have worked very hard as a Government over the last six months and the industry and motorcycling groups have helped by organising campaigns all around Europe to get over to my colleague ministers that the issues are not clear cut. We have provided further evidence to the Commission to make it clear to them that perhaps they have not looked at the evidence as thoroughly as they ought to have done, and there has now been an acceptance by the Commission that they have to look at this again and a number of my ministerial colleagues have now started to make noises which I am much happier about. I do not think we are out of the woods yet, I still think the odds are in the long term that there will be mandatory daytime running lights but I am a lot more optimistic than I was six months ago that we may succeed on this one.

Q258 Graham Stringer: You mentioned Vehicle Excise Duty evasion; do you have figures or estimates of the number of motorcyclists on the road without insurance?
Dr Ladyman: We do have those estimates. I do not know whether they are in our memorandum, but if they are not we can write to you.

Q259 Graham Stringer: Do you know off the top of your head—and you can write to us if you do not—whether it is a higher or lower percentage than the estimates of uninsured car drivers?
Dr Ladyman: A higher estimate.

Q260 Graham Stringer: A higher estimate; thank you. Going back to your previous answers on the cost of a registration scheme for off road bikes, I know you have told me in a written answer that you do not know what the costs are but can you speculate as to why it would cost a lot when the DVLA run a voluntary scheme?
Dr Ladyman: Clearly I have had the DVLA starting to do some figures because I am aware that when we get to the second reading of your Private Member’s Bill you are going to expect for me to be in a position to give you some idea of the costs.

Q261 Graham Stringer: I am preparing now.
Dr Ladyman: At this stage I am only able to give you a ballpark indication and I do not want to be held to this cost, but initially we think that it would probably cost something around about £10 million to set up and probably £2 to £3 million a year to run. It would probably take us at least 12 months and maybe two years to actually get it running; that is our initial feeling but I do not put it any stronger than that feeling at the moment.
Q262 Graham Stringer: That is really helpful, but do you not find that a bit surprising, the set-up costs, when they are already running a voluntary scheme?

Dr Ladyman: That is one of the reasons why I have said that these are ballpark estimates at this stage because I need to challenge all the assumptions that these figures have been based on and I have not had the opportunity to do that yet. I am simply trying to aid discussion by being helpful here.

Q263 Graham Stringer: It is genuinely helpful.

Dr Ladyman: By the time we get to your Bill I certainly hope to have been able to challenge those sorts of issues and give you chapter and verse.

Q264 Chairman: I just want to ask you one or two things. Did the Government in fact abstain when it came to the final vote on the third European Driving Licence Directive?

Dr Ladyman: We did, and the reason for that was we considered voting against but all the other aspects of the Directive were broadly positive or at least neutral. There were some major steps forward in terms of tightening up the licensing regime around Europe in the third Directive that would be a positive benefit for road safety. The only thing that we had serious issue with was the staged access to motorcycles for younger motorcyclists that we just did not think were evidence-based and, frankly, we thought that our existing regime in the UK which is much tighter than that in most European countries already, would serve its purpose in this country without us needing to change it. That was the reason why we abstained, but as you will know, Mrs Dunwoody, because you are experienced in European matters, although we abstained since the qualifying majority vote has to be a positive vote for something, abstaining is as near as damn it the same thing as voting against.

Q265 Chairman: The only difficulty is what is the Department going to do about the recommendations that have been carried?

Dr Ladyman: What we are going to do is we are going to work very closely with the motorcycle industry and the representatives of motorcyclists themselves to try and implement the new arrangements in as motorcycling-friendly a way as we can, maintain our existing safety standards but without doing it in a way which will put people off motorcycling. Will we be able to succeed entirely in that endeavour, given the Directive; no we will not, there will be changes, but we think we can go as far as we can to mitigate them by working with the industry and with motorcyclists themselves.

Q266 Chairman: Why is the Department so much against a register for motorcycling instructors?

Dr Ladyman: I have to say I am prepared to review this and I would be interested in the Committee’s views as to whether a register of instructors would be useful or not. Of course we have the steps that are in the Road Safety Act and I am prepared to keep an open mind. I would like to hear your views when you have considered the evidence.

Q267 Chairman: Good. What is your view about limiters? A lot of people feel that one way you can deal with more and more powerful bikes is to fit them with limiters and it would not be beyond the technical prowess of the industry; what is your view of that?

Dr Ladyman: I am not sure that I understand where they would be of benefit. When we are talking about younger motorcyclists anyway we have power restrictions on what they can ride. If you are talking about limiters for high-powered vehicles for adults—

Q268 Chairman: It is not comparable in one way but you are prepared to accept limiters on powerful coaches so that they do not go above a certain speed, and you know that speed actually is a real element in accidents. Why have you not been prepared to consider limiters on very, very powerful bikes which are getting bigger and more powerful by the day?

Dr Ladyman: The philosophical argument there would then have to apply also to motor cars. I am prepared to engage in a debate about that but not just for motorcycles; why would we limit the speed of motorcycles but allow people to buy an Aston Martin that can probably do nearly 200 miles an hour? What would be right for one sector would have to be applied to the other sector. What we have looked at—and to be frank with you it is probably a longer term issue about speed and there are no immediate plans—is whether intelligent speed adaptation would work on motorcycles and we have done some research on cars as well. We did that research, not because we have any intention of introducing ISA on cars or on motorbikes, we are not in a position to introduce it because we do not yet have a digital map of speed limits around the country that it could use to determine what the speed limit is in any particular area, but we did that research because there is a body of opinion starting to grow that ISA has a future in road transport and should the political debate ever move towards that we want to be in a position to be able to inform that debate with some evidence. We did some research, largely using motorcars, but we did fit a motorbike with ISA to see whether ISA can be operated safely on a motorbike, because you have to remember that on a motorbike of course when you are going around a bend what you do with power in order to remain stable is very different than what you do with a motor car when you are going around a bend. The last thing you would need when you are taking a bend at speed on a motorcycle is for the engine to cut out because it is detecting that you are going too fast. We needed to know, therefore, whether ISA is technically possible on a motorbike and we did some experiments and, broadly speaking, it probably is technically possible, but we have no plans for introducing it. As I say, we may face that debate at some point in the future.

Q269 Chairman: Is that evidence published anywhere?
Dr Ladyman: I believe so.
Mr Colski: I do not know if it has been published yet.

Q270 Chairman: Would you be kind enough to give us a note; if it is published tell us where it is. It looks like you might be getting a nod from the oracle.
Dr Ladyman: I am being told it should be ready for publication in the very near future. It has been well-publicised that we have done those experiments.

Q271 Chairman: It would be interesting for the Committee just to see, on the same basis, and if it has been published we would like to read it. Did you have a look at the results of the London Study about bus lanes?
Dr Ladyman: Motorcycles in bus lanes. I did, and I found the comments of some of the people who commented on them divergent from the evidence. The evidence showed no increase in accidents where motorcycles were in bus lanes, but the conclusions seemed to be that we still do not like them in bus lanes and I was less than convinced by that. As a scientist my view has always been that you should follow the evidence and anything else is prejudice.

Q272 Chairman: Is that evidence going to be published at some point so we can all see it because there must be safety implications, must there not?
Dr Ladyman: There may be safety implications and what we are going to do, on the basis of the evidence that we have, is that we are going to publish a new advisory leaflet about motorcycles in bus lanes; it is in draft form at the moment. What it is going to do is move away from the position that the assumption should be that motorcycles should not be in bus lanes, to take a position that says it is up to local authorities to look at local conditions and make a decision. Motorcycles are perfectly safe in bus lanes in certain places and they are entirely inappropriate in certain other places, and the people who design bus lanes should have an open mind to making that decision when they design the bus lanes.

Q273 Chairman: Before we leave the question of mini motos have you discussed with the Department of Trade whether or not they have raised with the trade commissioner the question of low quality imports from the Far East?
Dr Ladyman: They have been raising those issues and I can get the DTI to give you a note on that if they have not done so already.

Q274 Chairman: That would be extremely helpful, Minister. Can I say that as always you have been very open and very helpful, but can I just ask you one other thing? You will know as a Committee that we are very concerned about the whole question of training; is there any work going on between your department and the Department of Education on the extension of training schemes, any discussion with them about the inclusion in the existing curriculum?
Dr Ladyman: There is. You may have seen an interview that I did at Christmas in The Times where one of the ideas I did float was that we may need—

for exactly the reasons Mr Stringer identified about responsibility—to engage with young people much earlier in all issues to do with road safety, and maybe that is going to have to start at school. The Department for Education of course is always, rightly, concerned about things that suggest we are going to put even more in the curriculum and be even more prescriptive about what goes in the curriculum but we are having those discussions with them to see what is practical and what is not practical and I have had conversations with ministerial colleagues on that. We are a long way from making any decisions yet, but purely in terms of road safety if we did not have to consider the educational impact and the impact on the school calendar and things like that, it seems to me that there is a strong argument for getting kids thinking about these things as early as possible.

Q275 Chairman: Finally, Minister, most of us are quite impressed with the road safety campaigns the Department has been running because I think that they do have an impact and they are generally very impressive, but has there been any consideration of running a road safety campaign in relation to, for example, mini motos, because after all we are talking about education and if you get people who really do not know these are dangerous, is it not a subject that should be seriously considered by the Department for inclusion in the road safety campaigns?
Dr Ladyman: I am happy to consider it. It is not part of the Think! campaign and I will explain that in a minute, but we have as a department worked with the Home Office to run a campaign about mini motos and the fact that they are not safe. We did that prior to Christmas to get the message over do not buy your kids one, they are not safe and you cannot use them on the road. It was not a TV campaign or a paid campaign, we tried to use public relations techniques and press releases to get the message over. Should we include it in the Think! campaign? The issue I would have there—and I am happy to think about it if the Committee thinks it would be a good idea—is that the Think! campaign has to be carefully focused, we do not have tonnes and tonnes of money, we have a limited budget as all Government departments do and so we need to target it on very focused messages in order to make sure that we get our message over. The key messages we have been choosing in recent years are speed kills—it is 30 for a reason—and drink driving, trying to reach in particular young people who may have not heard the drink driving message. That has been very much where our key focus is and if we start piling more into that then we lose focus on those key messages.

Q276 Chairman: That is a very justifiable argument, Minister, and none of us wish to dilute what you are doing on the Think! campaign which is really very impressive. Finally, can I leave you with one other thought: would it be possible, having heard the exchanges on certainly the BBC at lunchtime with
people who openly declare “All we do is go around wrecking speed cameras”, it might be rather nice if the Department had some means of rapidly rebutting the suggestion that this is simply a question of dealing with the mechanics, and actually make it very clear to people who are so irresponsible that they can be contributing to road deaths in a particular blackspot and they should be aware of the impacts of what they are doing?

**Dr Ladyman:** I am happy to take that on board. We do try our best but of course there is nothing the media likes better than a negative story or somebody taking a provocative attitude like that and they sometimes do not come to us and give us the opportunity to rebut it. One of the big frustrations of my job is that I am often asked to rebut these things two days after the original story when it is no longer hot news any more.

**Q277 Chairman:** Minister, we do not really think your job is necessarily easy but on the other hand we do not altogether sympathise with you because we think that is why you are paid. We are grateful to you for coming and I hope you will continue to not only do what you are doing but keep us very closely informed and involved because this Committee does have a role to play.

**Dr Ladyman:** It certainly does.

**Chairman:** The Committee now stands adjourned and the Deputy Chairman may now leave.

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**Supplementary memorandum submitted by the Department for Transport**

*Casualty Statistics*

**Q219** Why do you not analyse and say what your response is to the fact that motorcycles do a considerable amount of damage to pedestrians, at about three and a half times the rate per kilometre that cars do?

The Government’s Motorcycling Strategy is our response to the work done on motorcycling and motorcycle safety by the Advisory Group on Motorcycling between 1999 and 2004. The AGM comprised a wide range of interests from the motorcycling industry and user groups, as well as the AA, RAC, ACPO and local government. It published its final report in August 2004. The work of the AGM was focused on casualties to motorcyclists rather than to pedestrians and the Government’s Motorcycle Strategy reflects this.

The number of pedestrians injured who were hit by motorcyclists is much smaller than both the number of pedestrians hit by cars and the number of motorcyclists injured. The table below shows the numbers killed or seriously injured in 2005. It also shows the rate of fatal or serious injuries per 100 million vehicle kilometres. While the rate of pedestrians hit by motorcycles is around 3.5 times the rate of pedestrians hit by cars, the number of pedestrians hit by cars is 20 times greater than the number of pedestrians hit by motorcycles. Motorcyclists themselves account for around 1% of traffic, but around 20% of all fatal and serious injuries and that has been our priority.

**KSI\(^1\) Casualties, by Road User Type: GB 2005**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Road User Type</th>
<th>Casualties</th>
<th>Rate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian hit by motorcycles</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>52.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian hit by car</td>
<td>5,721</td>
<td>14.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Motorcycles</td>
<td>6,508</td>
<td>119.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cars</td>
<td>14,617</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) Killed or seriously injured

*Motorcycling Strategy*

**Q228** What was your evidence based on when considering the Motorcycling Strategy?

The road safety research reports that were considered were:

5. The older motorcyclist. Road Safety Research Report N55. DfT.

Further information can be obtained from the “Advisory Group on Motorcycling: Final Report to Government”, which was published in August 2004 and is available on the DfT website.

**Vehicle Occupancy Statistics**

**Qs 238/239 Referred to average vehicle occupancy**

Occupancy rates for cars are published in the Statistical Bulletin “National Travel Survey: 2005” Tables 6.2 and 6.3 (Table 6.3 is shown below).

Available at http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/statistics/datatablespublications/personal/mainresults/

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VEHICLE OCCUPANCY FOR CARS, TAXIS AND MOTORCYCLES</th>
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<tr>
<td>Number/percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vehicle occupancy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average occupancy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cars (2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxi/minicabs (2005)^1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorcycles (2002–05)^3,4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Excludes taxi drivers and taxis travelling empty.
2 Rate for one passenger only.
3 Includes motorcycles, mopeds, scooters and motorcycles with sidecars.
4 Combined data for 2002–05 used due to small sample sizes.

**Emissions Standards**

**Qs 240/241 Motorcycle/Moped Emissions**

Regulations to limit exhaust air quality emissions from new motorcycles and mopeds were first introduced in 1999 (Stage 1). These limit values were then tightened in 2002–03 (Stage 2) and in 2006 further reductions (Stage 3) were introduced for motorcycles (but not mopeds). The European Commission is expected to publish proposals for new Stage 3 emission limits for mopeds, including particulate emissions limits, during the course of 2007. These proposals are also expected to introduce in-use-compliance requirements for motorcycles to ensure exhaust emissions do not deteriorate in excess of limit values over, possibly 30,000 km.

Q236 referred to Table 3.6 of *Transport Statistics Great Britain 2006 Edition*, That table presented the emissions performance of different vehicles relative to a pre-1993 non-catalyst car in urban conditions. The data on which the table was prepared indicates that “2001–” cars to have been to the “EURO 3” standard (superseded by EURO 4 for all new cars from 1 January 2006).

The table shows the levels of particulates from motorcycles lie between about equal to and four times as high as those of Euro 3 diesel cars. However these figures are based on Stage 1 compliant motorcycles, Stage 2 and 3 have reduced emissions limits by around 90% on hydrocarbons, 80% on carbon monoxide and 50% on oxides of nitrogen. There were, and currently still are, no limit values for particulates from motorcycles. However introduction of tighter limit values on other pollutants is also likely to have brought about reductions in particulate emissions.

However, bearing in mind that motorcycle “passenger km” are less than 1% of car passenger km, their overall impact on air quality is negligible. Even if motorcycle emissions had not been reduced by successive stages of emission limits, to have a measurable impact on air quality, motorcycle traffic would have to increase many times over.
Background notes

DTI statistics (http://www.dtistats.net/energystats/ecuk2_2.xls) show that motorcycle traffic represents 6 billion passenger km per year compared to 679 billion passenger km for cars and taxis. For this reason motorcycles make a negligible contribution to air quality emissions.

Nevertheless emissions from motorcycles are regulated (by EU Directive 97/24/EC) and standards have twice been tightened since the introduction of limit values. Although particulate emissions are not included in the emissions limits (in part due to the lack of an agreed measurement methodology) it is probable that the standards have significantly reduced particulate emissions due, for example, to hydrocarbon limits reducing the volatile component of particulate mass and manufacturers having to reduce combustion of lubricating oil in order to protect the integrity of exhaust catalysts which could easily be poisoned by components in lubricating oil.

Emissions testing conducted by Ricardo for the Department of Transport in 2001 indicated that emissions of particulate matter from Stage 1 emissions compliant motorcycles is at least 50% less than from EURO 4 diesel cars. This information suggests that the TSGB Table 3.6 is overly pessimistic.

Mini-Motos

Q248 Asked about activity at European level to address the issue of sub-standard mini-motos

European Member States’ Market surveillance of mini-motos

Early last year, in connection with the General Product Safety Directive, Member States were asked about mini-motos. Sixteen States responded, of which 14 had taken a variety of actions to check mini-motos and remove unsafe machines from the market:

— Belgium produced a guide outlining key safety requirements for mini-motos.
— Cyprus wrote to traders about compliance with the necessary requirements and warning of prosecution in case of failure to do so.
— The Czech Republic incorporated mini-motos into its national control mechanisms, in particular Customs.
— Denmark had confiscated a number of non-compliant bikes.
— Germany alerted Customs (and included mini quads in the alert).
— Estonia carried out a campaign to raise awareness amongst importers and the public, and traders’ information to consumers was checked.
— Greece sampled mini-motos for compliance with requirements.
— Spain issued guidance to competent authorities such as Customs.
— Finland took steps to remove dangerous mini-motos from the market, issued advice to consumers, undertook testing of three mini-moto models and one quad, and updated information issued to Customs.
— Norway issued information to the public in a number of press releases.
— Sweden issued a brochure to clarify the legal position of mini-motos and made efforts to impart this information to importers and distributors.
— Slovenia prepared guidelines on market surveillance of mini-motos for inspectors, held a seminar for Customs officials and issued warnings to parents.
— The Slovak Republic checked a number of mini-motos and found them non-compliant.
— UK trading standards departments removed a number of dangerous mini-motos from the market and police seized others. Some other vehicles such as quads were also found to be unsafe.

Poland and Lithuania reportedly had no problems with mini-motos.

European Commission letter and press notice

On 10 July 2006 the European Commission wrote to Member States about mini-motos, and issued a press notice on this subject.

Serious and fatal mini-moto accidents had been reported, major construction defects had been noted, and several instances of action taken against unsafe mini-motos had been notified through the Community Rapid Information System (RAPEX).
European legislation

The Commission explained, amongst other things, that mini-motos with combustion engines, and not intended for road use, would fall within the scope of the Machinery Directive (Directive 98/37/EC) and also of certain provisions of the General Product Safety Directive (Directive 2001/95/EC).

The letter also advised that mini-motos would not fall within the scope of the Toys Directive (Council Directive 88/378/EEC) because vehicles with combustion engines are excluded from the scope of that Directive.

Market surveillance

The Commission invited Member States to take measures to enforce the provision of the relevant Directives to ensure that unsafe mini-motos were not placed on the market. The letter advised that measures might include:

(1) providing guidance for authorities in charge of market surveillance for machinery, consumer protection, customs and road safety;
(2) giving advice to manufacturers, importers and distributors;
(3) making information available to the public;
(4) sampling and testing mini-motos; and
(5) ensuring the withdrawal from the market of unsafe products.

Member States were asked to notify action taken against unsafe mini-motos to RAPEX and to inform the Commission of the results of market surveillance and of the main defents observed by the end of 2006. The Commission proposed to draw together a summary of such information, which would be made available to Member States.

We have not yet seen responses from other Member States and the summary is not yet available. However it seems likely that many States (such as the 16 who responded to the earlier enquiry) will, like the UK have continued their mini-moto work.

DTI has replied to the Commission reporting that the measures available to trading standards departments in the UK (eg the Supply of Machinery (Safety) Regulations 1992) are sufficient to deal with the problem of unsafe mini-motos. (Similarly the Home Office and DfT agree that road traffic and other enforcement powers available to the police are adequate to address irresponsible use of mini-motos.)

Response to the European Commission letter

DTI's response of 9 January 2006 to the Commission on behalf of the UK outlined the UK position:

(1) Providing guidance for authorities in charge of market surveillance for machinery, consumer protection, customs and road safety

DTI had called a meeting of those concerned in mini-motor product safety issues in September 2006, attended by such bodies as HM Revenue and Customs and local authorities. The HMRC interest is largely bound up with excise duty issues and fraud—eg cheap copies labelled with names such as Honda. The meeting took stock of activity which had taken place until that date, and determined next steps, in particular using the Machinery Directive. (Previous action has tended to rely solely on the General Product Safety Directive).

(2) Advice to manufacturers, importers and distributors

The UK (which has no domestic manufacturers of mini-motos) has developed strong and useful links with China’s Department of Supervision on Inspection, because the majority of mini-motos imported into the UK originate in China.

In addition, DTI wrote in October 2006 to all known importers of motorcycles under 50cc. This outlined the relevant regulations, the risks attributable to the product, and the penalties for non-compliance. The letter was also circulated to local authority interests by LACORS (Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services). Responses indicated that some importers actively welcomed closer co-operation with local authority trading standards departments, while others had decided to stop importing mini-motos, or to restrict imports to spares.
(3) **Making information available to the public**

A considerable amount of information has been made available to the public, both on inherent safety aspects and on the safe and lawful use of the machines. Information has been made available by bodies such as the Home Office (including the Respect task force), police forces, local authorities, the Department for Transport, the Auto Cycle Union, Motor Cycle Industry Association (MCIA) and a range of safety campaign organisations. Mini-motos have also been raised in a number of debates, Parliamentary Questions and Early Day Motions in Parliament, all of which are published. In addition, notifications to RAPEX of action taken against unsafe mini-motos are available to be public.

The RAPEX reports for 2006 and early 2007 show 13 reports of UK action resulting in unsafe mini-moto models being withdrawn from the market, plus four such reports from Spain, two from Estonia, one from France, one from the Czech Republic and one from Finland. Further action may well be in hand as reports are generally made to RAPEX only once action has been completed.

(4) **Sampling and testing mini-motos**

Sampling work has been carried out by the DTI’s Vehicle Operator Services Agency; Central Trading Standards Authorities (an association of authorities covering much of the Midlands); the SCOTSS National Safety Group (an Association of Scottish Local Authority Trading Standards Authorities); and Tameside (Greater Manchester). Such activity is also reported elsewhere in the UK, eg Wales, Yorkshire, Kent and Sussex. Many mini-motos failed safety checks eg for sharp edges on fairings and lack of chain guards. Plans for further sampling are under consideration.

(5) **Ensuring the withdrawal from the market of unsafe products**

A number of mini-moto models have been removed from the UK market as a result of action by Trading Standards departments under product safety and consumer protection provisions. The DTI letter mentions that existing powers in the UK are sufficient for the purpose. In addition, police action under road traffic law and under legislation aimed at anti-social behaviour has resulted in the seizure and destruction of significant numbers of mini-motos. DTI, HO and ACPO agree that these enforcement powers are sufficient.

However, the letter also recommends that a useful European Commission initiative would be the development of an appropriate standard for mini-moto construction safety. Meanwhile enforcement action against unsafe mini-motos and those used illegally will continue. Such action does not affect the responsible use of properly constructed mini-motos, for example in controlled and supervised off-road competitions.

The letter concluded that the action being undertaken was likely to dampen the market for mini-motos in the UK (after some years of continual increases, the Motor Cycle Industry Association have noted a decrease in mini-moto imports for the first half of 2006). It also make suggestions for a way forward, such as the development of a pan-European standard for mini-motos.

**China**

In December 2006 a European Commission Product Safety factsheet was issued. This included a reference to the signature in 2006 of a memorandum of understanding between the EU and China to improve communication and cooperation in products safety. This is considered to be an important agreement since China has become one of the leading trade partners of the EU, but (as the factsheet notes) “nearly half of all dangerous products and 85% of dangerous toys detected under the RAPEX system originate from China”. The majority of unsafe mini-motos originate in China. DTI is in direct contact with Chinese authorities on the issue of construction standards for these machines.

**Number Plates**

**Q253 Related to motorcyclists getting away with crimes because technology like speed cameras and automatic number plate recognition is unable to register them**

The requirement for registration marks not to be displayed at the front of motorcycles came into effect on 31 July 1975. The actual working meant that front number plates on motorcycles were “optional”. Front number plates on motorcycles were “prohibited” for all motorcycles that were registered on or after 1 September 2001.

(The Road Vehicles (Registration and Licensing) Regulations 1971)

(The Road Vehicles (Registration and Licensing) (Amendment) Regulations 1975)

(The Road Vehicles (Display of Registration Marks) Regulations 2001)
Q258  Do you have figures or estimates of the number of motorcyclists on the road without insurance?

Our latest estimate (2005) for uninsured driving is based on a comparison of the vehicle register, maintained by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) and the Motor Insurance Database. It is that there are about 2.1 million vehicles (about 6.5% of the licensed GB vehicle fleet) being driven by uninsured drivers.

We do not currently have any figures or estimates specifically for the numbers of motorcyclists on the road without insurance. However, the latest estimate of VED evasion shows that motorcycles have much higher rates of VED evasion than cars. We suspect the same might apply to insurance evasion. We are undertaking further analysis of this data to determine how many vehicles are being used on the road uninsured, and this will have a breakdown of uninsured motorcycles. Once this further comparison work on the data is completed I will of course let the committee know the result as soon as it becomes available.

Q266  Why is the Department so much against a register for motorcycling instructors?

In response to concerns raised by representatives of the motorcycling industry we have, in partnership with the Motor Cycle Industry Association (MCIA) and the Motorcycle Rider Training Association (MRTA), developed a quality assurance scheme for post-test training. The voluntary scheme comprises two parts:

— setting standards for training packages offered to holders of full motorcycle licences; and
— quality assuring the standard of instruction delivered by trainers.

This culminated in the launch on 7 February of a Register of Post-test Motorcycle Trainers designed to underpin the quality assurance scheme.

The quality assurance scheme is designed to produce benefits for all participating trainers and riders by establishing a national standard against which all motorcycling training products can be measured.

I am pleased to report that in the first two weeks since the Register went live the Driving Standards Agency has had over 130 requests for starter packs and has received more than 30 applications to join the Register.

We also plan to make use of the powers now available under The Road Safety Act 2006. These would enable us to introduce mandatory registration for all types of riding and driving instructors in line with commitments given in the Road Safety Strategy. This is a large piece of work which will need careful planning to implement effectively.

We will be bringing forward proposals for how this power could be used. As part of that work we will consider how best to prioritise the regulation of the different sectors of the rider and driving training industry.

Before any decisions are taken we will seek views from representatives of the different training industries. Their input will be essential to the preparation of any scheme and we will also consult more widely as proposals are developed.

Q273  About DTI raising in Europe the issue of low-quality mini-moto imports from the Far East

DTI has been asked to get in touch with the Clerk to the Committee and has provided a copy of the 9 January letter to the European Commission, which includes a description of work undertaken thus far and recommendations for a way forward.

7 March 2007
Written evidence

APPENDIX 1

Memorandum submitted by London TravelWatch

MOTORCYCLING USE, ATTITUDES AND SAFETY

The use of mopeds and motorcycles has grown considerably since a consumer slump in the late 1970s and 1980s, and greater exposure to the sport, more exciting models, and increasing congestion levels have meant that possessing a motorcycle is now seen by some people as a sensible, if still risky, lifestyle and commuting choice.

This is in stark contrast to the 1960s and 1970s when the two wheeled counter-culture was in full swing, and the utility use of simple, unexciting small bikes for commuting was on the wane due to ever cheaper small cars becoming available.

Now, however, the high cost of car insurance for the young, it is fair to say motorbiking has undergone a renaissance.

To conclude, motorcycling today is seen by a section of society as fun, exciting and convenient, rather than rebellious, dangerous and anti-social. But there is still much to do to enhance the experience for both users and other road users, and ever rising levels of traffic not only will make the choice more attractive, but will continue to challenge the safe use of two wheeled vehicles—busy roads and harassed, frustrated drivers do not make safe bedfellows to motorcycles.

The comments below are consistent with our general aspirations for excellence in transport which are contained in our policy paper “Towards Transport Excellence”.


PARKING

There is a considerable shortage of allotted parking places for two wheeled vehicles in most inner city areas, with areas of London such as Soho, The City, Westminster and Islington very badly served. We would also like to point out that many rail stations do not have adequate facilities for parking motorcycles, and in the interests of transport integration would urge that rail companies should pay greater attention to the needs of motorcyclists. Please see our research publication “Getting to the Station” for more details.


Motorcycles play a key role in keeping down congestion and, although it is unlikely that substantially more people could be persuaded of its charms, we should acknowledge the key role it plays in keeping the roads free of yet more cars.

Hence, safe, secure, well lit and clearly signed parking areas for bikes should be a priority of local authorities if they are to be seen as serious in seeking to keep traffic to the lowest levels possible.

For the safety of the bikes, too, good parking, with studs for locking, can only enhance the travelling experience for motorcyclists, and those looking to become one. It would be helpful to be more imaginative in how parking for bikes is achieved, to make use of areas which are otherwise unused, whilst at the same time seeking to ensure that is not unnecessary cluttering of the highway environment, and it may useful to look to practice elsewhere in Europe for inspiration.

INFRASTRUCTURE ON THE ROAD

Motorcyclists suffer disproportionally from accidents where there is collision with road furniture compared to car users, and it would be a welcome, and cost beneficial when considering calls on the health service, to research how to make road infrastructure less damaging in the event of a collision.

There is much research done already on the crumple qualities of cars’ outer and inner structures for both drivers and pedestrians, and this should be used as a basis for work to look into how the use of rubber, foam or other energy absorbent materials on the roads can help reduce injuries.

There is an issue too with the wear to road surfaces from heavy vehicles such as buses and lorries, especially in hot weather, where deep ruts appear often in the road, due to the weight of some vehicles.

These ruts are not normally too inconvenient to two wheeled vehicles, but can be—especially when the surface is made more challenging by road grease, diesel, leaves or simply heavy rain.

Deep ruts have a dramatic effect on the steering of a bike (both motorised and pedal) and when sudden action to avert a collision is called for, make the manoeuvre far more difficult than it need to be.

Allowing the appropriate use of bus lanes for bikes would provide an opportunity here to bring these road users together, training bus drivers in observation for bikes and cycles, and promote the safe use of the inside lane for these two distinct groups.
ENFORCEMENT OF SAFETY STANDARDS

Many motorcyclists take a somewhat blinkered view of safety standards on the road, and will often as a first, knee-jerk response blame car drivers for all accidents.

This is naïve. Proper training in defensive riding—simply, riding with a view to what can happen, and taking care to anticipate any accident—can go a long way to alleviate this, and promote safer roads.

Car drivers, too, should and have been addressed—and the success of the “Think Bike” campaigns shows this to be effective. Still, more could be done to educate drivers that two-wheelers, for example when “filtering” through traffic or pulling to the front of a traffic line are acting not only within the law, but easing congestion. Thus, riding at a sensible speed through traffic means there is one less car space taken up, and pulling to the front of a queue merely reflects a motorcycle’s lightness in pulling away, and for safety assures the rider that the drivers have seen him or her.

Any regular urban motorcyclist will attest to the danger of being trapped between a line of cars, where most drivers do not use their rear mirrors, and often turn or right or drift into another lane without seeing them.

The promotion of reflective garments for night time riding is to be promoted, too, as is a campaign to reduce tailgating—this, annoying for a car, is far more serious for a bike, when in the event of a puncture or other problem means they far more vulnerable to rear impact.

Finally, lane discipline is woefully under-enforced. This not only means our roads are more congested than they need be, but also that safe overtaking is made more difficult, and bike users often find drivers turning into the nearside lanes to make a late run, when if they were using the lanes properly this would be far less of a problem.

The same applies to late braking—motorcyclists tend to be far more aware of road surface changes, and often have to use this knowledge in extremis as car driver’s brake suddenly without thought for either the vehicle behind, or loss of control due to entering a skid.

RIDER TRAINING

Great inroads have been made here in the last 20 years. From a test where one literally rode round the corner to be observed by a tester on foot, to today’s far more effective, radio enabled procedures, the impact on rider accidents has been marked.

There is more to do, and learn from, however. The basic test should foreshadow a more advanced test, perhaps with statutory fiscal or insurance incentives.

Any bike user who has undergone a good, advanced instruction course will attest to the wealth of knowledge still to be learnt, even after passing a first test with ease—factors such as road positioning, the use of vanishing points in corners, counter steering in windy conditions etc.

These should be instilled in every learner, not just those with the time and money to book further instruction privately, and promoted through a later test which brings either a discount in road tax, or insurance cost. These skills not only greatly enhance a rider’s safety, and that of other road users, but also greatly add to the simple pleasure and rewards of riding a motorcycle.

The biggest two wheeled hazard on the road, however, is small, light bikes, used for commercial purposes such as home food delivery. Here, there is still much work to be done in bearing down on exploitative employers who make use of unskilled, often untrained youngsters in order to “guarantee” delivery within 20 minutes, for example. Such commercial imperatives can only add to a wholly inappropriate pressure on delivery bikes, often working in dark, wet conditions.

Higher testing standards and perhaps a Police/Vehicle Inspectorate campaign to bear down on industry cowboys would be most welcome here.

Finally, the ease of access to often very “nippy” 50cc and above scooters, and lack of training needed when compared to bigger bikes, means that these riders often have no idea of safe road positioning, driver blind spots or safe braking.

Indeed their erratic “twist and go” behaviour pains other motorcyclists, who not only view them as a danger to themselves and others, but—as potential ambassadors for all two wheeled vehicles—giving a misleading impression to drivers and pedestrians about bikes.

DE-CLUTTERING THE ROADSIDE OF SIGNS, RUBBISH AND OTHER HAZARDS

There is little doubt that there are often far too many signs for riders and drivers to safely absorb whilst moving. Much greater standardisation and co-operation is needed between main highway authorities, local authorities and, in London, Transport for London.

Rubbish and other hazards too are potentially dangerous to two wheeled vehicles, especially in blustery weather, when it is common to find debris scattered across the road—of little concern to cars, but often dangerous to bikes if turning or braking.
Use of mobile phones in cars has a bigger impact on motorcycles too—as David Lancaster can attest from personal experience, when he suffered several broken bones two years ago when hit by a van driver texting whilst driving.

The law needs to be supported by much higher enforcement levels. Raising the penalties is attractive on the surface, but if—as with many road traffic offences,—people sense that they will not be caught, is off little effect other than to offer legislators some “action” to point to.

A “zero tolerance” approach is needed to this, and other dangerous offences such as red light jumping tail gating and lack of signalling—all of which take their toll on two wheeled road users.

CONCLUSION

It is to be welcomed that there is a strategic overview of the high benefits of motorcycling by the government.

For too long the “poor cousins” of car drivers, even compared to cyclists, the two wheeled community has embraced better and more rigorous training, played a significant part in easing traffic levels, and overcome problems of perception.

They are a legitimate, and rising, part of the road using population, and should be addressed and listened to with far more vigour than has hitherto been the case.

18 December 2006

APPENDIX 2

Memorandum submitted by CTC

1. ABOUT CTC

1.1 CTC is the UK’s national cycling organisation. More than 70,000 people support our work for cycling and use our services. We welcome this inquiry and hope that our comments will prove useful to the Committee.

1.2 The CTC Policy Handbook, which guides our campaigning activity, opens with a statement of Core Principles. Among these, the following Core Principles are relevant to this evidence:

— Cycling is beneficial as a mode of transport and a leisure activity, and should be encouraged in all its forms.
— Cyclists have a right to ride in safety, without intimidation or injury from other road users.
— All road users, including cyclists, owe a duty of care to other users.

1.3 Through various umbrella forums, CTC maintains regular contact with a range of groups with related interests, eg those involved in cycling, road safety and wider community or environmental agendas.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 This submission sets out the views of CTC, on the Government’s Motorcycling Strategy, and in particular the proposals to admit motorcycles into bus lanes and cyclists’ “advance stop lines” (the areas marked out for cyclists at some traffic signals). This inquiry is timely as TRL has recently circulated draft proposals for stakeholder consultation, for a new Traffic Advisory Leaflet on “Motorcycle in Bus Lanes”.

CTC has strong objections to these and other aspects of the Strategy (eg the proposal to promote PTW use through “Green Travel Plans”), for reasons set out in this submission.

2.2 We should make it clear that CTC’s stance is not “anti-motorcyclist”—indeed many of our members (and indeed our staff) are themselves motorcyclists. Motorcyclists are vulnerable road users, and we readily accept that their safety requirements need to be better addressed. Their interests often align with those of other vulnerable road user groups, especially cyclists (eg on issues such as the need for better road maintenance and to avoid sudden road narrowings which create conflict between two and four wheeled vehicles).

2.3 However we draw the distinction between policies to improve powered two wheeler safety (which we support) and those which would lead to increased use of motorcycles (which we do not believe can be justified). We believe that, in addition to the risks which motorcyles pose to their riders, policy decisions in relation to motorcycling also need to reflect:

— The direct environmental impacts of motorcycling (ie the pollutant and noise emissions resulting from PTW use).
— The safety impacts of motorcycling on other vulnerable road user groups.
— The various ways which increased motorcycling undermines the promotion of the healthier and more sustainable alternatives of walking and cycling, both by undermining their relative attractiveness in general terms, and specifically due to the actual and perceived threat which motorcycles present to (would-be) pedestrians and cyclists.

2.4 For all these reasons, we urge the Government to carry out a proper assessment of the likely impact of increasing motorcycle use through policies such as allowing motorcyclists to use bus lanes. Taking account of the possible increased use of PTWs which may result, and the various environmental and safety impacts of encouraging PTW use. Particularly the potential adverse impacts on efforts to promote the undoubtedly greater environmental, safety, health and other advantages of encouraging more walking and cycling.

3. **Environmental Effects**

**The direct environmental effects of motorcycling—pollutant and noise emissions**

3.1 Data from a recent parliamentary answer\(^1\) clearly shows that, for many pollutants, emissions from Britain’s PTW fleet are considerably worse than for cars, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pollutant</th>
<th>PTW emissions relative to cars . . .</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Per passenger-km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methane</td>
<td>11.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carbon monoxide</td>
<td>6.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non methane VOCs</td>
<td>8.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benzene</td>
<td>7.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,3-butadiene</td>
<td>12.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Particulates, PM10</td>
<td>8.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2 For CO\(_2\) emissions, PTWs do have a slight advantage over cars—about 14\% lower emissions per passenger-mile\(^2\). But this is a pretty marginal benefit, bearing in mind not only the other environmental disadvantages listed above, but also the fact that increasing motorcycle use would inevitably undermine efforts to encourage greater use of the far greener, healthier, quieter and safer alternatives of walking, cycling and public transport (see below).

3.3 The Government’s strategy\(^3\) also notes that, whilst smaller PTWs have low emissions rates, larger PTWs often have worse emissions than some cars, due to poor fuel economy. Larger PTWs (ie those over 500cc\(^4\)) now comprise 49\% of the fleet (and this proportion is rising rapidly\(^5\)), that the share of total distance travelled on larger PTWs is a good deal higher (around 4,000 km/year compared with less than 3,000 km/year for smaller PTWs\(^6\)) and that in any case they carry one third fewer passengers per kilometre\(^6\). It makes little sense to advocate measures to encourage motorcycling when those measures will encourage the use of the largest and most environmentally damaging PTWs as well as the smallest and cleanest.

**Noise**

3.4 On the issue of noise, Ecoplan\(^7\) has calculated that the social cost of motorcycle noise is 3.92p per passenger-km. This equates to a total social cost of around £220 million annually for the UK. Even though there are relatively few PTWs, 69\% of people report being “annoyed” by PTW noise compared to 65\% and 63\% for heavy lorries and cars respectively.\(^8\)

**The safety impacts of PTWs on pedestrians and cyclists**

3.5 Using data from the National Travel Survey and Road Casualties Great Britain, CTC calculates that, per mile travelled, PTWs are about 1.5 as likely as cars to be involved in collisions which cause serious injury to cyclists, twice as likely to be involved in causing them serious injuries and about three times as likely to

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\(^1\) Written parliamentary answer to a question by Anne Campbell MP, 9 March 2005 (www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200405/cm050309/text/50309w19.html#50309w19.html\_wqn2).

\(^2\) Written answer parliamentary answer to a question from Lord Taylor of Warwick, 5 July 2004. (www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200304/ldhansrd/vo040705/text/40705w04.htm#40705w04\_wqn4).


be involved in killing them. For pedestrian injuries, PTWs compare even more unfavourably: per mile travelled they are about 3.8 times as likely as cars to be involved in slightly or serious injuring pedestrians, and over 4 times as likely to be involved in killing them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Injury type</th>
<th>PTW involvement rate per vehicle-km relative to cars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cyclist slight injuries</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyclist serious injuries</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyclist fatalities</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian slight injuries</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian serious injuries</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian fatalities</td>
<td>&gt; 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Effects on Other Modes of Transport

The environmental and other consequences of undermining walking and cycling

4.1 We have already mentioned the direct environmental impacts of motorcycle use (emissions and noise—see above). But there are two ways in which encouraging motorcycling undermines efforts to secure the environmental and indeed the health, safety, congestion-reduction and liveability benefits of walking and cycling. The first is a consequence of the safety impacts referred to above—motorcycling has a significant deterrent effect on pedestrians and particularly cyclists because of the disproportionate danger they impose. The second relates to the inevitable fact that increasing the attractiveness of one mode is bound to reduce the relative attractiveness of other modes, including the more sustainable alternatives of walking, cycling and public transport. Policies which attract trips to motorcycle use, are inevitably undermining efforts to promote these cleaner, healthier, less congesting and more neighbourhood-friendly alternatives.

5. PTWs Sharing Space with Other Buses and Cyclists

Powered two wheelers in bus lanes and ASLs: a false solution

5.1 It is often suggested that admitting powered two wheelers into bus lanes and cyclists advance stop lines (ASLs) would improve motorcyclist safety. In fact, an analysis of motorcyclist casualties shows that:

- 33% of serious motorcyclist casualties and 61% of motorcyclist fatalities occur on rural roads.
- Even for those motorcyclist casualties which occur in urban areas, just 11.2% take place at or near a signalised junction.

5.2 In other words, the overwhelming majority of PTW casualties occur at locations where allowing them into advance stop lines would not be relevant to their safety. It is harder to provide an indication of the number of PTW casualties occurring on roads with bus lanes, however, given the clear bias towards rural areas fatal motorcycle casualties, it is likely that bus lanes would be of little help here either.

5.3 Even for those casualties which do occur at locations where a bus lane or advance stop line might be relevant, it is unclear whether or not there would be safety benefits from allowing PTWs to use these facilities. Indeed, the opposite could be the case. It is possible that, far from gaining safety benefits, some PTW users would use the extra space to ride faster, which could negate or even outweigh any protection this extra space might have provided. In doing so, they would also adding to the risks for pedestrians and pedal cyclists.

5.4. Moreover, if such measures led to an overall increase in PTW use, this could also lead to a more general worsening of pedestrian and cycle safety. As previously noted, PTWs have disproportionately high involvement rates relative to cars, in collisions leading to pedestrian and cyclist casualties, especially so for serious and fatal casualties. Increased PTW use would not show up in the limited trials which have so far been conducted of allowing PTWs in bus lanes, but is very likely to occur if PTWs were to be allowed into bus lanes more generally.

5.5 We would also point out that, whilst these trials have so far not found any clear safety disbenefits, they have not shown any safety benefits either. What they have found is that cyclists feel endangered by the presence of PTWs in bus lanes. Regardless of whether or not these fears are well-founded, they are in any case indicative of a likely deterrent effect on cycle and possibly also on pedestrian activity, thereby once again undermining the promotion of these safer, cleaner and healthier alternatives.

6. Are PTWs Good for Congestion?

6.1 The Government’s own strategy acknowledges that, contrary to one’s first reactions, it is far from clear that more motorcycling is good for congestion. A motorbike may be a good way to get through...
congestion, but replacing the cars on a congested road with motorbikes would not necessarily enable more people to get through the junctions on the road network—motorbikes take up roughly the same amount of space as cars, and carry fewer occupants on average.

6.2 The Government’s strategy ignores one of the findings of the research they themselves commissioned which showed that allowing motorcycles to use bus lanes would lead to a 18% increase in motorcycle traffic on urban roads and a consequent increase in congestion delays.\textsuperscript{10}

7. Conclusion

7.1 For all these reasons, we believe that, before adopting new laws or policies likely to encourage increased motor cycle use, (such as allowing motorcycles into bus lanes or cycle facilities), the Government needs to carry out a proper assessment of the wider impacts of these policies, including:

— environmental impacts—this covers noise as well as pollutant emissions; and
— all relevant impacts on policies to promote walking and cycling—taking account both of the direct safety impacts on these groups, and the erosion of demand for these cleaner, safer and healthier forms of travel which would result from increasing the relative attractiveness of motorcycling.

7.2 Therefore, rather than urging accelerated progress on the Strategy, we urge the Committee to recommend that it should be implemented with caution to avoid adverse environmental and road safety impacts, and in particular to avoid undermining the promotion of healthier and more sustainable alternatives. We support those actions with will lead to increased safer for users of PTWs, however we hope that the Committee will find against proposals currently under consideration to allow greater freedom for PTWs to use Bus Lanes, and also recommend the Government re-think the role of PTWs in Travel Plans.

18 December 2006

APPENDIX 3

Memorandum submitted by the Institute of Highway Incorporated Engineers

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Institute

The Institute of Highway Incorporated Engineers is the qualifying body for incorporated engineers and technicians in highways and transportation. It has been a licensed institution of the Engineering Council for 30 years.

The 3,000 incorporated engineers and technicians of the IHIE work in Central and Local Government, Consulting Engineers and supplying contractors.

Incorporated Engineers and technicians are the “day to day” highway engineers designing, installing, operating and maintaining the highway network. As such our members deal with all aspects of highway design and management including highway design, traffic engineering and management, materials & soils engineering, traffic control, transportation and highway maintenance.

The Institute is well known for its training courses, and specialist qualifications in development control, traffic signing, highway maintenance and signal control. IHIE published the industry-standard \textit{Home Zone Design Guidelines} in 2002 and launched the UK home zones website with DfT backing in 2005.

2. The Government Motorcycling Strategy and the IHIE Guidelines for Motorcycling

The Government Motorcycling Strategy sets out how it expects to “mainstream” motorcycling and how central and local Government should take account of motorcycling in the planning process, when designing and maintaining the road network, when managing traffic and when considering safety.

Its key theme is “. . . to facilitate motorcycling as a choice of travel within a safe and sustainable transport framework”.

The IHIE believes that its Guidelines for Motorcycling, “Improving safety through engineering and integration”, should be viewed as a key supporting document to the Government Motorcycling Strategy and highlights the role motorcycling can play in an integrated transport system.

Significant reductions in casualties, contributing to the Government’s 2010 targets, have been made by car and lorry manufacturers over the last five to six years. Such significant reductions are unlikely to be seen with motorcycles, given both their vulnerability and greatly increased popularity (around 60% more usage from 1994–98 to 2006).

In addition, a number of recent studies (MAIDS 2004) have identified the “primary” and “secondary” role that the road environment plays in motorcycle collisions.

The IHIE believes that the Government’s “mainstreaming” of motorcycling, in particular in consideration of highway design, operation and maintenance, should make a significant contribution to reducing the number and severity of motorcycle collisions.

The IHIE submission expands on the IHIE Guidelines for Motorcycling and how it supports the Government Motorcycling Strategy.

A copy of the IHIE Guidelines for Motorcycling “Improving safety through engineering and integration” is included in the submission (Appendix 1).

3. Summary of proposals in the IHIE submission

The submission sets out a number of actions we believe Government should be progressing to achieve its stated aim to “mainstream” motorcycling:

— Government should be more prescriptive on aspects of the motorcycle strategy in the next round of Local Transport Plan advice, requiring firm deliverables from local authorities. (Para 3.6)

— Government should issue supplementary guidance on how Motorcycles can be incorporated into Travel Plans in order to encourage local authorities and developers to include them in future plans. (Para 4.4)

— Government should ensure that the revised European standard for service covers includes a declared skid/slip resistance value based on the “in use” condition of covers and a requirement for “anti-skid” treatment. In addition, public utilities should be encouraged to investigate alternative treatments for their stock of service covers. (Para 6.4.6 and 6.4.7)

— Government should actively investigate the prevention and treatment of diesel spills and disseminate best practice to highway authorities. (Para 6.5.3)

— Government should actively encourage local authorities to increase the provision of motorcycle parking that is “Near, Clear, Secure and Safe to use”. (Para 7.4)

— Government needs to support the innovative works of local authorities in addressing motorcycle collisions by funding trials, carrying out research and disseminating findings. (Para 11.7)

IHIE SUBMISSION

1. The Government Motorcycle Strategy and the IHIE Guidelines

1.1 The first three-year review of “Tomorrow’s Roads; Safer for Everyone” and the Government Motorcycling Strategy both identify an absence of motorcycle specific guidance for highway engineers involved in the design, maintaining and management of the highway network.

1.2 Motorcycles have been a feature of our roads for well over a 100 years. During that time they have served as a basic mode of transport, an economical alternative to the car, a workhorse and even a lifestyle icon. Their popularity has risen and fallen in concert with a number of diverse social and economic factors.

1.3 In recent years there has been an upturn in the popularity of motorcycling, bringing the benefits and disadvantages of the mode into sharp relief; the most obvious of the latter being safety. Although motorcycles exceeded their year 2000 road safety targets, significant increases in sales and use have seen progress, based purely on a “headline” casualty basis, falter.

1.4 However, it is important to remember that those services provided by the motorcycle for over a century are still valid and that being a “vulnerable” mode of transport should not be seen as being an undesirable one.

1.5 New highway design and construction largely relies on technical design manuals that are often based on rules set out in statute. Such technical guidelines help engineers focus on specific areas of design and allow them to develop further solutions, a point ably demonstrated by the developing provision for another “vulnerable” group of road users, cyclists.

1.6 Cycle provision is now well covered by such technical guidelines. They have helped to ensure that cycling is now routinely considered in the design and maintenance of highways and have contributed to the significant increase in provision for cyclists.

2. Background to the IHIE Guidelines for Motorcycling

2.1 The IHIE Guidelines for Motorcycling, “Improving safety through engineering and integration”, which were launched in April 2005, build on and complement the Government Motorcycling Strategy. They seek to highlight the role motorcycling can play in an integrated transport system and to help raise awareness of practical measures that engineers can undertake.
2.2 The Guidelines draw on the combined expertise of engineers, road safety officers and motorcyclists to give local authority engineers, road safety officers and transport planners, their consultants and contractors practical advice on how the different characteristics and requirements of motorcycling can be recognized and addressed.

2.3 In addition, the IHIE guidelines develop the central theme of the Government Motorcycling Strategy “... to facilitate motorcycling as a choice of travel within a safe and sustainable transport framework”.

2.4 The Guidelines cover a number of essential topics:

— Policy.
— Travel Plans.
— Road Design.
— Road Maintenance.
— Parking provision for motorcycles.
— Road Safety Campaigns.
— Traffic Calming.
— Road Safety Audit.

2.5 The innovative nature of the Guidelines and their potential to save lives and reduce injury was recognised by a Prince Michael International Road Safety Award in 2005.

3. Motorcycles and Transport Policy

3.1 The Government Motorcycle Strategy made a promising start by “mainstreaming” motorcycling. But delivering improvements largely lies with Local Highway Authorities (who control approx 90% of the roads in the UK) principally through Local Transport Plans.

3.2 Central Government previously highlighted the role of motorcycles in its guidance to such local transport plans. Thus, the first full guidance for local transport plans in 2000 made significant statements on including motorcycles. Unfortunately, the Guidance for the second round of Local Transport Plans (LTP2), which covered Local Transport Plans from 2006, in keeping with less “target specific” measures, lost much of the valuable detail of the 2000 guidance.

3.3 It did, however, acknowledge the increase in motorcycle use and the part that motorcycles can play in delivering 3 of the 4 key targets for LTP2: Congestion, Accessibility and Air Quality. (DIT, 2005)

3.4 The Government Motorcycling Strategy and the IHIE guidelines should both have encouraged local authorities to involve users, establish specific motorcycle strategies and integrate motorcycling into their local transport strategies.

3.5 Instead, during the last round of LTP submissions, far too many local authorities failed to show the innovation that they had in the past in addressing other vulnerable users groups, and instead have concentrated their attention, if at all, solely on the 4th LTP2 Key Target Road Safety.

3.6 IHIE believes that the Government should be prescriptive about the motorcycle strategy in the next round of Local Transport Plan advice. The Government Offices for the Regions should make it clear that they expect to see firm deliverable provisions for Motorcycles in the next round of LTP submissions.

4. Motorcycles and Travel Plans

4.1 Tailored to each individual organisation and often a requirement of Local Authority planning conditions, Travel Plans are an efficient way of managing commuter journeys and business travel where parking space is at a premium and existing highway networks are at, or near, capacity.

4.2 As the Government Strategy acknowledges, however, few travel plans submitted to Local Authorities refer to the contribution that motorcycles can make to reducing single occupancy commuting (thus reducing congestion), especially for those journeys over five miles, where commuters are unlikely to opt for cycling. The increased emphasis on the development of Travel Plans provides opportunities for influencing the role that motorcycles can play.

4.3 In support of the Strategy and in order to encourage local authorities to incorporate them into future planning applications, the IHIE Guidelines highlight the benefits that including motorcycles in travel plans can achieve, indicate the provisions that need to be made (which are similar to cycle usage) and give a number of examples of excellent “travel planners” who include motorcyles in their plans.

4.4 The IHIE believes that the Department of Communities and Local Government, the department with the planning “lead”, should consider issuing supplementary guidance to PPG13: Transport on how Motorcycles can be incorporated into Travel Plan. This will encourage local authorities and developers to include them in future plans.
5. **Motorcycles and Highway Engineering Design**

   5.1 Many current highway and traffic engineering practices are suitable for all road user groups but, the particular dynamic stability needs of the motorcycle and the “vulnerability” of the rider, require special consideration.

   5.2 The IHIE Guidelines outline a number of areas where engineers need to “think bike”. The following examples illustrate where significant developments have been made over the last 18 months.

5.3 **Motorcycle collisions with Safety Barriers**

   5.3.1 Falling riders, as they slide along the road surface, are likely to be at risk of added injury from the unprotected barrier support posts and projecting surfaces or by sliding underneath barriers. Research has shown that the probability of a falling rider being killed doubles in collisions with safety barrier systems.

   5.3.2 Following a series of trials by the Highways Agency of “Bike Guard” (a retrofit system designed to minimise the risk of injury to motorcyclists), the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges now requires motorcycle protection systems to be fitted to post and rail at high risk sites where safety fencing is installed.

5.4 **Motorcycle access in Bus Lanes**

   5.4.1 The Government Motorcycling Strategy makes a commitment to review access into bus lanes by motorcycles and to update the existing guidance for local authorities—*Local Transport Note 1/97 “Keeping buses moving”*.

   5.4.2 Experience of shared-use bus lanes by a number of local authorities over the last 10 years (eg Bristol, Reading), and subsequent trials by Transport for London, would seem to indicate that shared use of bus lanes can be introduced with little or no detrimental effect on other road users whilst providing significant benefits in collision reductions on treated routes.

   5.4.3 The DfT are presently consulting on a Traffic Advisory Leaflet (TAL) “The use of bus lanes by motorcycles” for publication in early 2007. The draft TAL takes a more “neutral” approach than LTN 1/97 and reflects the valuable research done.

5.5 **Bend treatments to make them more “predictable”**

   5.5.1 In common with cars a significant number of motorcycles have collisions on bends, often involving no other vehicle.

   5.5.2 A site-specific engineering solution to treat such collisions has been implemented by Buckinghamshire County Council on one particular bend where there had been 10 motorcycle collisions, including three fatalities, in five years.

   5.5.3 This low-cost measure appears to have been a complete success with no injury collisions more than four years after completion.

   5.5.4 The Highways Agency is now undertaking trials in Cumbria, in a more rural area that has experienced motorcycle collisions and, if it shows the level of success experienced in Buckinghamshire, the treatment will be rolled out across the network.

6. **Motorcycles and Highway Maintenance**

   6.1 Some features, benign to other road users, can present a hazard to motorcycles. Whilst a good quality surface provides a safer, more pleasant experience for all road users, it is an essential requirement for motorcyclists because of their different characteristics.

   6.2 Highway environmental factors affecting motorcyclists include skid resistance, surface contamination and debris, drainage gullies, utility covers, road markings and road studs. All of these need to be considered by designers from a motorcycle—inclusive viewpoint.

   6.3 Similarly, poorly installed or maintained bridge joints, especially longitudinal ones, need to be maintained adequately.

6.4 **Service covers**

   6.4.1 One of the most persistent problems is service covers in the carriageway. Highway Authorities should take every opportunity to assess the use of steel service covers in the carriageway and, where relocation is impossible, consider replacement with high skid resistance covers.

   6.4.2 The most difficult sites are those where the cover lies on the riding line during a change of direction, either turning a corner, rounding a bend or at roundabouts. New covers should not be installed within the carriageway, especially at roundabouts.
6.4.3 The European Standard on service covers (EN124) is currently under review. UK representatives are recommending that a declared skid/slip resistance value based on the “in use” condition of covers be included.

6.4.4 A number of Local Authorities (Bristol, West Berks and Devon) have decided that they need to press ahead with trials ahead of an amended standard and are installing a large number of “anti-skid” covers.

6.4.5 In theory these Anti-skid surfaces can be retrofitted in existing locations where covers cannot be relocated.

6.4.6 IHIE believes that Government should ensure that the revised standard for service covers (EN124) includes requirements for “anti-skid” surfacing and that covers have a declared skid/slip resistance value based on their “in use” condition.

6.4.7 Local Authority owned service covers account for only a small percentage of ironwork within the highway. IHIE believes that Government should make representation to the public utilities, who it licenses to undertake such works, via national HAUC groups, to consider the effect their works may have on motorcyclists. It should encourage utilities to investigate alternative treatments to their stock of service covers.

6.5 Treatment of Diesel Spills

6.5.1 The spillage of diesel, oil and other similar substances on the road surface is of great concern to motorcyclists. The recent “KILLSPILLS” campaign吸引了 more than 5,000 riders to London to protest about the lack of action.

6.5.2 Ideally the problem should be tackled at source—the overfilling and maintenance of diesel-fueled vehicles—and publicity campaigns (eg Devon County Council’s “Spiller Killer” and the HA “HeavyGoodVehicle”) have sought to address this.

6.5.3 Even the treatment of such spills can present problems for motorcyclists. Limited trials by Devon County Council have shown that the use of absorbent granules (especially sand) to remove these spills can itself be a hazard.

6.5.4 The IHIE recommends that DfT investigates the prevention of diesel spills, through vehicle design and “enforcement”, and the treatment of spills and disseminates best practice to highway authorities.

6.6 The Government’s Motorcycling Strategy highlighted the revision of the Code of Practice on Maintenance Management. A focus on planned maintenance that accounts for the needs of motorcyclists will always be more desirable than even the best reactive fault-reporting system. IHIE hopes to work with the UK Roads Board in the coming year to develop and address maintenance issues as they relate to motorcycling.

7. Motorcycle Parking

7.1 Parking provision is an important tool in local transport policies as well as traffic management and crime reduction. As the Government Motorcycling Strategy identifies, it is also a fundamental requirement for any motorcycle user.

7.2 As motorcycling use has grown, demand for parking has outstripped supply in many cases, especially during peak periods. A recent study of the London Congestion Charging area for Transport for London (TfL) found motorcycle onstreet parking occupancy to be 33% over-capacity (Tilly 2004).

7.3 Motorcycle theft is a continuing concern for riders, police, parking providers and insurers. Motorcycles are attractive to thieves because bikes are relatively lowweight and high-value. Motorcycle theft is often opportunistic and takes place in public places. Theft rates are generally highest in urban areas: police forces covering large urban areas record around three times the rate of theft (per thousand motorcycles) found in more rural areas.

7.4 IHIE believes that Government should actively encourage local authorities to increase the provision of motorcycle parking that is “Near, Clear, Secure and Safe to use” as has been achieved with cycle provision. A revision to PPG13 should set minimum levels of provision and the Government Offices of the Regions should be demanding such provision in LTP submissions.

8. Road Safety Campaigns

8.1 Road safety campaigns are a vital ingredient in the mix of measures needed to improve the safety record of motorcyclists, as the Government Motorcycling Strategy identifies. Rider attitudes play a major role in determining behaviour, irrespective of age or trip purpose.

8.2 Any measure designed to modify such behaviour must address these attitudes and take account of the individuality often expressed in choosing a motorcycle as the travel mode. Riders relate better to messages that reflect their perspective and tend to ignore “must do” or “must not do” approaches.
8.3 The DfT THINK! Campaign addresses motorcycle collisions and there are many new and inventive campaigns by Government, the Highways Agency and Local Authorities aimed at riders. Many are web based and interactive.

8.4 Just as important, however, given the significant involvement of other vehicles in Motorcycle collisions (many of which are subsequently held to be the fault of the other vehicle), is publicity aimed at car drivers and this should be increased.

9. **Motorcycles and Traffic Calming**

9.1 Traffic calming measures are very effective in reducing the number of injury accidents, especially in residential areas, and in polarising public opinion about their desirability. Motorcyclists must expect to reduce their speed. However, they can suffer disproportionately from unintended effects, often safety-related, which undermine the casualty-reducing purpose of the installed traffic calming measures.

9.2 The key point is that riding a motorcycle is a permanent balancing act and the vehicle has only two small tyres to provide grip.

9.3 Traffic calming should be sited to ensure that an approaching motorcycle can pass over or through the feature vertically.

9.4 Materials should offer sufficient grip and maintenance. Poorly maintained traffic calming schemes can be a hazard to road users and pedestrians alike but the consequence of this hazard will often be most severe for motorcyclists.

10. **Motorcycles and Road Safety Audit**

10.1 The root cause of many of the problems faced by road users can be traced back to decisions made at an early stage in the process of infrastructure provision. Road Safety Audits, which have existed in the UK since the late 1980s and are mandatory for trunk roads and motorways, should actively consider motorcycles. As should the broader audits promoted by Manual for Streets.

10.2 Road Safety Audit is a systematic assessment by trained road safety specialists. Whilst it has always been good practice for safety auditors to take a multi-modal approach to the process, audits take special care with safety implications for “vulnerable” road users: equestrians, cyclists and pedestrians.

10.3 Motorcycles, whilst not being completely overlooked, have had a lower profile in this “special care” regime, perhaps because their speeds and safety auditors’ lack of personal knowledge pushes them, almost intuitively but incorrectly, into the same camp as twin-track motor vehicles.

11. **Progress since the Government Motorcycling Strategy**

11.1 IHIE worked closely with DfT representatives in preparing the Guidelines and sees them as a key-supporting document to the strategy. The Government Motorcycling Strategy recognised this by a commitment to work with the IHIE to disseminate the guidelines (and subsequent good practice) over the next one to two years.

11.2 In addition to publishing the guidelines and promoting them to Local Authorities, the IHIE has also set up a web-based discussion forum where practitioners can submit and discuss new materials/ideas. This is a first step to making the guidelines a truly “living” document.

11.3 IHIE also contributed to the European Guidelines produced by the Association des Constructeurs Européens de Motorcycles (ACEM) which draw heavily on the IHIE Guidelines and extend the model into Europe.

11.4 Working with TMS Consultancy and MCIA, the IHIE has trialled a series of “workshops” aimed at Local Authority engineering staff. Such workshops, which have been run for other vulnerable transport groups, help to give an appreciation of particular problems and assist Local Authorities in considering how they can modify their practices.

11.5 Subject to funding, IHIE is investigating publishing the Guidelines on the Internet where, available free to download, they will form the centrepiece of an updatable resource disseminating good practice, new developments and allowing the exchange of ideas via a users forum.

11.6 Engineers now have to be bold and innovative with designs supported, but not constrained, by before and after data feeding into the next edition of the guidelines to be published on the web.
11.7 The IHIE believes it is of the utmost importance that the Government’s lead in publishing its Strategy and supporting the Guidelines is now pushed home. A number of, often small, local authorities have carried out innovative work. Central Government needs to support such work by funding trials, carrying out research and disseminating findings.

18 December 2006

APPENDIX 4

Memorandum submitted by Brake

RECOMMENDATIONS ON REDUCING THE RISKPOSED BY MINI-MOTOS, GO-PEDS AND OTHER MOTORISED TWO WHEELERS WHICH ARE NOT LEGAL FOR ROAD USE

1. Brake recommends that use of mini-motos and other similarly powerful and fast vehicles be restricted to those aged 17 and over. These items are not toys and should not be sold or used as such. There have been a number of fatal and serious crashes involving the use of these vehicles both on and off the public road. Driving a high-speed motorised two-wheeler requires maturity and concentration that children do not possess. Brake recommends that the most effective way to enforce this age restriction would be to regulate sale and ownership of motorised vehicles such as mini-motos by means of a licence. A licence would be granted to those of an appropriate age who had registered their intention to own the vehicle.

2. Brake recommends that the Government make it compulsory to wear a helmet when driving a mini-moto, quad bike, or any similar vehicles, whether on or off the road.

3. Brake urges the Government to introduce an advertising campaign aimed at young people, warning them of the dangers of using these vehicles, and making it clear that it is not legal to use them on the road.

4. Brake urges the Government to make roads policing one of the national priorities in its National Policing Plan, and provide police forces with their resources they need to step up enforcement of all road traffic laws.

5. Brake recommends that the Government introduce compulsory road safety education in schools and colleges. This education should be comprehensive and warn young people of the risks of the road, and should include education about the dangers of mini-motos and similar vehicles.

5 January 2007

APPENDIX 5

Memorandum submitted by Transport for London

1. SUMMARY

1.1 Transport for London (TfL) welcomes the Government’s Motorcycling Strategy and the commitment shown by the Government towards motorcycling. However, motorcycling in London can be a very different experience from the rest of the country, and whilst there is common ground in a number of high level objectives there are areas where TfL feels further action could be beneficial.

1.2 Work related road risk: TfL believes that Government should promote a scheme that encourages employers to offer to Powered Two Wheeler (PTW) riders, using their machine for work, further training or assessment that identifies the risks associated to their line of work. Employers should also be made aware of the potential for more serious injuries that PTW users can suffer as a result of the failure to wear the correct protective clothing.

1.3 Carriageway design and maintenance: There are good examples of well designed schemes throughout the UK. TfL believes most have been captured in the Institute of Highway Incorporated Engineers (IHIE) Guidelines for Motorcycling, “Improving safety through engineering and integration” and would like designers to be made aware of this document through a comprehensive training programme to cover design and safety audit.

1.4 Inspection pit covers: The current British Standard on inspection pits is currently under review and TfL feels the revised standard should not only include provision for a skid resistant surface but the actual construction methods for the wall of the pit should be modified to stop the pit and covers sinking.

1.5 Diesel spills: TfL would like to see alterations to vehicle design to eliminate the problem of diesel spills.

1.6 Funding trials: TfL would like the Government to consider adopting a programme to fund trials of initiatives (such as Advanced Stop Line usage) that can improve safety for PTW users.
1.7 Bus lane usage: The draft Traffic Advisory Leaflet (TAL) from the DfT on bus lane usage that is currently out for consultation and due for publication in 2007 reflects a neutral position and TfL supports its draft content.

1.8 Motorcycle parking: In the short term and especially in view of the central London parking shortage, local authorities should investigate the feasibility of providing extra motorcycle parking with enhanced features to accommodate the users' requests. Nominal fees could be charged and "all day" parking should still be allowed.

1.9 Longer term, TfL believes that the Government should actively encourage local authorities to increase the provision of motorcycle parking which meets the users' needs through a revision in Planning Policy Guidance Note 13 that requires minimum levels of provision.

2. Introduction

2.1 Motorcycles have been a feature of UK's roads for well over a 100 years. During that time they have served as a basic mode of transport, an economical alternative to the car, a workhorse and even a lifestyle icon. Their popularity has risen and fallen in concert with a number of diverse social and economic factors.

2.2 Motorcycle usage in London has largely followed the UK picture but more recently the popularity of Powered Two Wheelers (PTW) has increased quite significantly in London.

2.3 The Mayor's Transport Strategy did not set out a specific policy on motorcycling but, in recognition of this mode of transport, it included a commitment to establish a forum in London to deal with PTW issues. The Motorcycling Working Group was set up in 2003 and, while no specific London strategy for PTWs has been formulated to date, the intention is to publish a strategy document in 2008 which “mainstreams” motorcycling in London and is in line with the central theme of the Government's Motorcycling Strategy which is to

"... facilitate motorcycling as a choice of travel within a safe and sustainable transport framework”.

2.4 TfL welcomes the Government's Motorcycling Strategy and the commitment shown by the Government towards motorcycling. However, motorcycling in London can be a very different experience from the rest of the country, and whilst there is common ground in a number of high level objectives there are areas that TfL feels further action could be beneficial.

3. Issues to be Addressed

3.1 This section deals with the areas of motorcycling strategy that could develop motorcycling in the capital into a more safe and responsible mode of transport and complement the existing and varied modal transport system. Of paramount importance is the safety of vulnerable road users and the majority of areas that need to be addressed fall into that category. The other issues relate to the convenience and comfort of the journey for the user.

Safety issues

3.2 The casualty rate amongst PTW users (18%) is disproportionate to the number of users (3%). There are a number of measures included in the list below which, while in no way exhaustive, provides a targeted series of measures that can only increase the safety for PTW road users. Such a provision has been successfully deployed for cyclists, another group of road users categorised as vulnerable, and some of the below would also be of benefit to them.

Work-related road risk

3.3 PTW journeys in London are predominantly for work purposes. Work-related road risk is a serious issue and the responsibility of the employer to employees who use PTWs for their everyday work must be recognised. It could be argued that such a road risk and associated responsibility to employers could be extended to employees using their PTWs to get to and from work. TfL recognises the benefits of preserving the health of their employees and offers a day's free assessment via the BikeSafe programme which is run in conjunction with the Metropolitan Police and City of London Police.

3.4 TfL recommendation: TfL believes that government should promote a scheme that encourages employers to offer to PTW riders, using their machine for work, further training or assessment that identifies the risks associated to their line of work. Employers should also be made aware of the potential for more serious injuries that PTW users can suffer as a result of the failure to wear the correct protective clothing.
Carriageway design

3.5 The vast majority of components typically used in carriageway design are suitable for all road user groups. However there are a number of elements (such as safety barriers, road markings and location of drainage gullies and inspection covers directly on the riding line) which when included without being considered from a motorcyclists’ viewpoint are potentially dangerous. These shortcomings in the design process could be overcome if designers were trained to “think bike” during the design process. This should also include the work undertaken by the safety auditors in the process.

3.6 TfL recommendation: There are good examples of well designed schemes throughout the UK. TfL believes most have been captured in the IHIE Guidelines for Motorcycling, “Improving safety through engineering and integration” and would like designers to be made aware of this document through a comprehensive training programme to cover design and safety audit.

Carriageway maintenance

3.7 A good carriageway surface provides a comfortable journey for four wheeled motor vehicles. However, for PTW users it is essential for safe passage. Maintenance issues that can significantly compromise PTW safety include inspection pit covers, road markings, skid resistance, connected to debris/gravel on the carriageway, surface rutting and poor trench reinstatements.

3.8 TfL recommendation: Once again, the aforementioned IHIE Guidelines are a good source of best practice and should be adopted UK wide.

Inspection pit/manhole covers

3.9 These can be a serious problem for PTW users, not only for their inherent lack of grip and their location on the riding line, but poor construction and maintenance culminating in the cover sinking below the road surface level.

3.10 TfL recommendation: The current British Standard on inspection pits is currently under review and TfL feels the revised standard should not only include provision for a skid resistant surface but the actual construction methods for the wall of the pit should be modified to stop the pit and covers sinking.

Diesel spills

3.11 Spillage of liquids that are a danger to the safety of motorcycles are commonplace. These liquids remain invisible on the surface of the carriageway and are frequently attributed as the cause for PTW users becoming detached from their machines. These spillages are usually brought about by the overfilling of diesel tanks and it is here that this problem should be tackled. Some diesel fleet operators have been quite active in this area and have fitted a simple “one way valve” to the neck of the diesel tanks on their vehicles which solves the problem at source. However this remedy has not been adopted widely.

3.12 TfL recommendation: TfL would like to see alterations to vehicle design to eliminate the problem.

Funding trials

3.13 There are some fine examples of innovative and good practices across the UK, not just in the engineering field, but also through education. The latter includes dedicated websites, diesel spills campaigns, training/assessment schemes. In engineering, trials for PTWs using bus lanes and advanced stop lines have been sporadically rolled out across the country. Indeed TfL has undertaken its own trial on bus lanes, the results of which will be available in January. Other cities (Reading, Bristol) in the UK have adopted the policy. There has also been another trial carried out by Buckinghamshire County Council which addressed the issue of PTW users being injured on bends often with no other vehicles involved. Trials on the above and other measures have however faltered due to lack of funding and commitment.

3.14 TfL recommendation: TfL would like the Government to consider adopting a programme to fund trials of initiatives that can improve safety for PTW users.

4. Increasing Motorcycle Usage—Convenience Issues

Motorcycles in bus lanes

4.1 There is debate as to whether or not PTW riders using bus lanes is a safety issue or one of convenience. Certainly it is an issue that is quite crucial to the movement of the significant numbers of PTWs who would like to use the many miles of bus lanes in London. Provisional results of the London trial on PTW bus lane usage suggests (along with experience gained from the other schemes around the country) that there is a neutral safety benefit and so the usage can only be one of convenience.
4.2 It would seem that the most logical path for a Government recommendation to take on the issue would be to leave decisions to the local authorities. This would allow local authorities autonomy in their decision-making in regard to PTW access to bus lanes, having due regard to specific situations and reflecting their overall transport strategy.

4.3 The draft Traffic Advisory Leaflet (TAL) from the DfT on the subject that is currently out for consultation and due for publication in 2007 reflects a similarly neutral position and TfL supports its draft content.

**Motorcycle parking**

4.4 The issues surrounding motorcycle parking in London are predominantly ones concerning availability and security. The increase in popularity of motorcycling in recent years, especially with commuters, has meant that availability is quite a problem. A 2004 study on the subject associated with the London congestion charging scheme found that motorcycle bays in central London were oversubscribed by one third.

4.5 Traditionally, motorcycle parking bays have offered free parking 24 hours a day. Motorcyclists are demanding more from such facilities in that they must be in reasonably close proximity to their destination, secure and safe. Authorities must balance these aspirations against ever increasing demands for roadspace. However, it is believed that more can be done to provide better facilities for motorcycle parking in the capital.

4.6 TfL recommendation: In the short term, and especially to address the shortages in central London, , local authorities should investigate the feasibility of providing extra motorcycle parking with enhanced security features—nominal fees could be charged, while continuing to allow “all day” parking.

4.7 Longer term, TfL believes that the Government should actively encourage local authorities to increase the provision of motorcycle parking to meet users’ needs through a revision in Planning Policy Guidance Note 13 to require minimum levels of provision.

5. **Conclusions**

5.1 The Government’s Motorcycling Strategy has highlighted motorcycling issues and attempts to “mainstream” motorcycling. There are many issues in the document that are pertinent to motorcycling in London.

5.2 There is a place for motorcycling in any transport strategy both as a mode in its own right and to complement other objectives.

5.3 TfL is seeking to build on the national model to establish a strategy that deals with London issues and creates a PTW user group that puts safety as the primary objective.

5.4 Addressing road-related risk, both for PTW commuters and users of PTWs at work is the most challenging single task for TfL and London.

5.5 It is also worthy of note that addressing the actions listed in this response would be of benefit to cyclists as well as the riders of PTWs.

19 December 2006

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**APPENDIX 6**

**Memorandum submitted by RoadPeace**

**Summary**

As the national charity for road crash victims, RoadPeace represents both those who have suffered while motorcycling as well as those who have bereaved and injured by motorcyclists. We work to ensure lessons are learned from these tragedies in order to spare others suffering. Our key points on the DfT’s Motorcycle Strategy are:

— Insufficient reference is given to reducing the risk of motorcycling, especially to other road users (not even mentioned), despite the well-known over-involvement of motorcycles in collisions with pedestrians and cyclists.

— The DfT’s Motorcycle strategy should be rewritten to properly reflect the risks involved in motorcycling, including those posed to others, particularly those walking and cycling. The present strategy reads like a promotional publication produced by the motorcycle industry.

— It relies too much on education, an unproven strategy, and fails to tackle speeding seriously.
INTRODUCTION

As the national charity for road crash victims, RoadPeace represents both those who have had loved ones killed while riding motorcycles as well as those who have been bereaved or injured by motorcyclists. RoadPeace was established after the founder’s son was killed while riding his motorcycle by a serial red light offender. Thus we are keenly aware of the vulnerability of motorcyclists as well as the risk they pose to pedestrians and cyclists.

We comment on three main areas:

1. Progress of Motorcycle Strategy

We do not believe the Motorcycle Strategy will have much effect on the risk of motorcycling due to the following reasons:

Risk

While the strategy makes brief reference to the over-representation of motorcyclists in fatal collisions, there is no mention of the risk and intimidation they pose to others, especially those walking and cycling. In 2005, motorcycles killed 3.7 times as many pedestrians and twice as many cyclists as cars did, per distance travelled. We cannot fathom how this was ever approved. Its aim should be revised to include minimising the risk of motorcycling to other road users.

Under-estimation of speeding

Speeding is a leading cause of crashes, particularly so with motorcycle crashes. Yet there is very little reference to speeding in the strategy—virtually no acknowledgement of it being a problem nor how to tackle it. The press has reported the Road Safety Minister’s promise that motorcycles will not be subject to speed control technology.

Over-reliance on training

The strategy includes much reference to training and makes incorrect assumptions of the effectiveness of training. DfT funded research has found drivers are more likely to speed after attending a Driver Improvement Scheme. Given the problem motorcyclists already have with speeding, the Driver Improvement Programme should not be recommended.

2. Specific measures

Daylight running lights

RoadPeace supports the campaign to restrict daylight running lights to motorcycles.

Passive safety

RoadPeace supports the increased use of passive safety features to reduce the risk to road users, particularly motorcyclists.

Vehicle design research

We support the focus on the windscreens design and the priority given to minimising any “blind spot”. For too long, “blind spots” have been tolerated and used as a defence in bad driving cases instead of being eliminated.

Bus lanes

RoadPeace does not support the use of bus lanes by motorcyclists due to potential conflict with cyclists, pedestrians and bus passengers who perceive this as a safer part of the road. However RoadPeace does not object to the use by motorcyclists of bus lanes on motorways.

3. Post crash response omission

In addition, we would like to highlight the lack of reference to the post crash stage, particularly the insufficient priority assigned to collision investigation and prosecution.
Collision investigation

Despite the recent improvements made in fatal collision investigation, there still remains much more to be done, including standard post crash checks on eyesight and mobile phone records. The Road Death Investigation Manual is also recommended for serious injury collisions, especially those involving life threatening or life changing injuries.

In 2003, a young teenager crossing the road was hit by a motorcyclist. The collision investigator estimated the impact speed of the motorcyclist as if it was a motor car, thus underestimating its speed (it would have to be going faster to be able to throw a pedestrian as far as a car would). His father did a freedom of information request to all police forces before raising it with the Minister responsible for Criminal Justice.

This does not appear to be a unique incident and we are concerned about the apparent regular under-estimation of motorcycle speed in pedestrian collisions. According to TRL Report 492 An Analysis of Police Reports of Fatal Accidents involving motorcycles, excessive speed was involved in 32% of motorcycle only crashes, 26% of crashes between motorcycles and four wheel motor vehicles but only 13% of collisions between motorcycles and pedestrians, which seems unusually low.

Criminal prosecution

A common cause of motorcycle collisions is drivers looking but not seeing and turning across the motorcyclist’s path. This is only considered to be “careless driving” although we believe it would qualify as a serious error which would fail a driver on their driving test, and the CPS and police should also treat it as “dangerous driving”.

Civil compensation

RoadPeace supports “driver liability” whereby motorists, including motorcyclists, are liable for civil compensation for injuries to pedestrians and cyclists. We are not aware of any country where this extends to motorcyclists, ie four wheel motor vehicle drivers held responsible for any injuries to motorcyclists. Given the problem with drivers looking but not seeing motorcyclists, we believe this is a logical extension of driver liability that should be considered.

SUMMARY

To have a motorcycle strategy that “aims to mainstream” the most dangerous road user mode without even mentioning the risk it poses to others is inexcusable.

22 January 2007

APPENDIX 7

Memorandum submitted by the Department for Trade and Industry

BRIEF ON SALE OF MINI-MOTOR BIKES

LINES TO TAKE

— the sale and usage of mini-motos have caused great public controversy and concern recently but the necessary regulations are in place to deal with the problems;
— the relevant authorities have been hugely active over the past year at local, regional and even international levels with marked success; and
— this will remain the case until the problem is effectively eradicated

BACKGROUND

Mini-motorbikes (“mini-motos”) may only be used lawfully on private property and organised racetracks. Their sale is regulated in the UK by the “SMR” Supply of Machinery Regulations (1992) which transpose the provisions of the EU Machinery Directive (originally 1989). DTI is responsible for Machinery Directive policy although practical enforcement of the regulations is carried out jointly by the Health and Safety Executive, for industrial products, and, as in this case, by the Trading Standards Departments (TSDs) of the Local Authorities.

The SMR lay down the essential health and safety requirements of products within their scope. They also enable a wide variety of measures to be taken, where justified, against products that do not fulfil these requirements and against those who are responsible for offering them for sale.
Mini-motos have been the single most prominent enforcement issue over the past year or so across the many products covered by the machinery directive. Growth in the levels of imports into the EU was for a time exponential and, in response to the numbers of unsafe mini-motorbikes that were notified under the Rapid Information Exchange by Member States, the European Commission asked each Member State to report on the enforcement measures that had been taken on these mini-motorbikes.

The UK was able to report on a very wide span of activity from TSDs across the country either individually or in regional project teams and often in collaboration with other government agencies like VOSA (the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency) and independent test houses. The results of the tests highlighted the extent of the safety problem associated with these bikes and plans are being drawn up for further testing projects to be carried out at the instigation of Trading Standards.

Separately, officials at the Department of Trade and Industry have written to importers of mini-motorbikes to remind them of the law in place against unsafe products and the consequences of not complying with their legal obligations. The use of mini-motos has separately caused concern on grounds of public nuisance etc and the relevant authorities in that area, most notably the Home Office Respect Task Force and the Police, have also become heavily involved, including in the seizure and destruction of bikes.

As result of these initiatives there seems to have been a decrease in domestic demand and correspondingly in the number of products being imported into the UK. However, the activity described above across a number of fronts is set to continue until the overall problem is effectively eradicated.

22 January 2007

APPENDIX 8

Memorandum submitted by United Kingdom Permanent Representative to the European Union

I am replying on behalf of the UK authorities to the letter that you issued to Member States earlier this year entitled “Safety of mini-motorbikes” in the course of which you requested reports on their market surveillance activity.

2. We particularly welcome your letter because the issue of mini-motorbikes in terms of both safety and use has assumed an increasing prominence in recent months. The issue stems from the ease of availability of these products resulting from a rapid increase in imports coupled with their relatively low cost. In terms of imports the Motor Cycle Industry Association (MCIA) estimate that over the last year 195,000 mini-motorbikes were imported directly into the UK. The growth in imports has been exponential year on year but because these products are of low quality they do not have a long life expectancy and so it is estimated that there are approximately 250,000 unregistered motorbikes in circulation. The MCIA has reported that there are indications of a fall in demand for these motorbikes as a result of high-profile enforcement activity but problems remain in a number of hotspots, which are being targeted.

3. I can therefore, report that the current market surveillance situation in the UK is one of very significant activity. Your letter helpfully provided a number of headings under which such activity might fall and so I am structuring my reply along the same lines.

4. Before discussing the detail of the market surveillance activity, will raise one general problem we have come across that can distract the attention of various parties from the main point at issue. This is the precise relationship between these products and the underlying EU legislation. Your letter plated them unequivocally within the scope of the Machinery Directive but also mentioned other legislation that may be considered relevant. We should mention that a certain amount of confusion has been caused in the UK by an interpretation of one of he exclusions from the directive in the so-called “Van Gheluwe” Guide (“Community legislation on machinery”—1999 Edition). This suggested that bikes that were placed on the market and used exclusively for competitive purposes were not in the scope of the directive (on the basis that competitive circuits could be considered as a road network) and thus fell presumably, to the GPSD. The UK authorities do not believe this is the correct legal interpretation and have specifically repeated clarification of this advice from the Commission. However, having such an interpretation in the public domain, has not been helpful in the course of organizing this market surveillance activity and in prosecuting in cases of non-compliance. It should be noted, finally, that the revised Machinery Directive makes the legal situation clearer but this does not come into force until three years from now.

Providing Guidance for the Authorities in Charge of Market Surveillance

5. Because mini-motorbikes are consumer items the principal responsibility for enforcing the product safety aspects of them lies with the various Local Government Authorities (especially, but not exclusively, with the Trading Standards Departments within three organizations). Until your clear opinion that these products fell within the scope of the Machinery Directive was issued, the Local Authorities had been using the General Product Safety Regulations to take action against unsafe products although in doing so the
available national standard was found to be wanting (I cover this in more detail later in this letter). In addition the UK customs authorities have been involved in activity where these products first enter the UK. All of this is described in more detail below.

6. At the same time as the inherent safety of mini-motorbikes on the UK market has come under scrutiny, there have also been concerns from the relevant authorities about the noise and the related anti-social behaviour aspects of their usage either on the public road in open public spaces such as parks, when they are used illegally. This activity, most especially under the supervision of the Department of Transport and the Home Office, is not directly the subject of this report. It should nevertheless be borne in mind that where the actions of Local Government Authorities are described below in terms of removing such products from the market and so on the underlying justification for doing so can be based on a variety of reasons, not just product safety.

7. Against this background of rising concerns and the issuing of your letter, DTI called a meeting of all parties interested in the product safety aspects at its offices in early September. The objective was to take stock of all the relevant activity that had taken place up to that date to identify any gaps and to evaluate on that basis what the next steps should be. A number of Local Authorities that were known to have been active in the area were represented and as a direct result of the meeting the reports cited below under “Sampling and testing” were made available to the DTI. The meeting also enabled us to talk through with the key industry and enforcement players the use of the Machinery Directive as opposed to the use of the General Product Safety Regulations as the basis for enforcement action.

8. Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs (HMRC) also attended the meeting because of their interest in a separate project in this area, which addresses fiscal, intellectual property rights and product safety risks. HMRC is participating in a pilot exercise, set up under the auspices of the DG TAXUD—Customs 2007 Programme, that targets the various risks posed by importation of mini-motorbikes and is due to report the outcomes in accordance with the agreed pilot timescales (pilot to end on 15 December and outcomes to be reported on by mid-January 2007).

ADVICE FOR MANUFACTURERS, IMPORTERS AND DISTRIBUTORS

9. The UK has no domestic manufacturers of mini-motorbikes. The main stakeholder organization in the UK, the Motorcycle Industries Association, advises that c 90% of mini-motorbikes on the UK market originate from the People’s Republic of China (PRC). As the Commission is aware the PRC practices a policy of export as well as import inspection through the Department of Supervision on Inspection within the AQSIQ organisation. The UK government has taken great strides, uniquely, to its knowledge, amongst EU member states, to develop its own strong links with this part of AQSIQ both independently and in partnership with the Commission. Thus, in November 2005 Mr Michael Dodds (DTI), whilst visiting Beijing as part of the EU delegation to AQSIQ’s “International Forum on Special Equipment Safety”, also pursued contacts independently with the Department of Supervision. His focus on this occasion was construction equipment falling under the scope of the Machinery Directive but, following the rise in the profile of mini-motorbikes in the intervening period he has since renewed his contact with the relevant AQSIQ official, Mr Yang Wanshan, in the margins of the visit to Brussels of an AQSIQ delegation in September 2006. AQSIQ now stands ready to receive and act upon information about poor quality minimotorbikes of Chinese origin entering the UK market.

10. In the absence of domestic manufacturers the focus of the September meeting with the industry, as on other parts of the distribution chain notably the importers of mini-motorbikes that fall is within TARIC Code 8711 10 00 (motorcycles of less than 50cc). MARC produces publicly available data on importers through its Trade Information website. This data can sorted in a number of ways including by TARIC Code DTI, armed with a comprehensive list of importers in the UK over the past year, sent a letter to each one outlining the applicable regulations in force, the associated risks attributable to the product and the penalties available to the enforcement authorities for non-compliance. An example of the letter is at Annex I. This letter has largely been well received by the importers who are keen to comply and actively welcomed closer co-operation with the Local Authorities. The letter was copied across the Local Authorities’ Product Safety Network organised by its co-ordinating body LACORS (Local Authorities Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services).

MAKING INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO GENERAL NUMBIL

11. A considerable amount of information has been made available to the General Public on minimotorbikes, but again the inherent safety of the products is intertwined with the safe and lawful use of the machines. There are essentially three main sources of this information: central government via the Home Office’s Respect Task Force, via Local Government Authorities which typically deliver locally focused information and through safely organizations (Annexes 2, 3 and 4 respectively provide examples from each of these sources). Over the summer of 2006 in particular, information has appeared across the media, eg in
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the television, printed media, and increasingly the internet (see Annex 5 for an example of this). Mini-motorbikes have also been the focus of a number of debates and Early Day Motions in Parliament. Additionally, the UK has notified the Commission via RAPEX of a number of unsafe products, which, as you know are subsequently made available to the public.

**Sampling and Testing of Mini-Motorbikes**

12. The September meeting allowed the various authorities who had been acting largely independently and on their own initiatives hitherto to compare notes on what they had achieved as well as to discuss what difficulties they had come across. The following looks at each of them in turn:

**CENTSA**

13. The full report from Centsa (the “Central Trading Standards Authorities”, an association of individual authorities covering a large part of the English Midlands) is attached as Annex 6.

14. CENTSA reports on a project it set up in July 2006 to look at the safety aspects of mini-motorbikes. In summary six mini-motorbikes were purchased and passed for testing to the Vehicle & Operator Services Agency (VOSA). VOSA is an Executive Agency of the Department of Transport and has responsibility, *inter alia*, to enforce the General Product Safety Regulations in respect of all vehicles, road going and non-road going, within the UK.

15. VOSA based their testing on a checklist of the essential requirements in Annex 1 of the Machinery Directive (reproduced in their entirety in Schedule 3 of the UK regulations that transpose the directive). Several of these requirements were failed by all of the bikes including sections 1.6.3 and section 1.2.2 on various control devices. There were also more general examples of poor construction of some of the models.

**SCOTSS National Safety Group**

16. The full report from Mr Gordon Robb, Principal Trading Standards Officer, Highlands Trading Standards on behalf of the SCOTSS National Safety Group (an association of Scottish Local Authority Trading Standards Authorities) is attached as Annex 7.

17. The report highlights the co-operation between the Highlands, Devon and Hampshire Local Authority Trading Standards Departments which eventually led to the withdrawal of a number of mini-motorbikes from the supply chain (the Devon and Hampshire authorities in the south of England became involved because of the locations of the distributors of the bikes).

18. The report also details activity in the major cities of Scotland. In Edinburgh, for example, retailers have signed a code of practice to agree to ensure that any bikes are sold as safe as defined by the General Product Safety Regulations 2005, and that they sell the machines in a responsible manner. Glasgow City and Renfrewshire Council activities have resulted in the suspension of the sale of mini-motorbikes in the Paisley area. In terms of future activity they hope to produce trader and consumer guidance backed up by a press release to raise public awareness. This would be followed by a co-ordinated inspection programme across the Scottish Authorities, including, where appropriate, the seizure/sampling of suspect products for tests and a further press release to be issued on the outcomes.

**Tameside (Greater Manchester)**

19. Tameside appointed a consultant to look specifically at the mini-motorbikes issue resulting in the report, entitled “Mini Motor Bike Mania” that is attached as Annex 8. Tameside submitted a number of off-road bikes and similar vehicles to an independent engineer “Vehicle Survey” to test for compliance with the General Product Safety Regulations. These machines were also submitted to the Tameside College of Technology for safety tests including metallurgical tests. All of the vehicles supplied failed all of the safety tests and were particularly defective in such respects as sharp areas on the fairings and visors, lack of guards for the chains and a number of areas which presented trapping hazards. They subsequently contacted the Police and were informed that a number of similar machines had been seized.

20. To draw attention to the dangers Tameside/Manchester Police organised a joint publicity event inviting local news radio and television to a photo-shoot where the machines would be crushed. This eventually led to the National press publishing photographs of this event and television showing machines being crushed, and was very successfu ll in getting the safety message across.
Other authorities

21. We have had reports of enforcement activity on mini-motorbikes in many other parts of the UK including Wales, Yorkshire, Kent and Sussex and these are being added to continuously.

VOSk

22. Separately from their work with CENTSA mentioned above VOSA has produced an extensive report entitled “investigation into the level of conformity displayed by a sample of miniature motorcycles with the Machinery directive” (attached as Annex 9) in which a number of mini-motorbikes were tested against the Essential Health and Safety Requirements of the Machinery Directive. The report lists the failings of the bikes and makes a number of conclusions and recommendations.

Further Projects

23. DTI has been actively considering together with Local Authorities and a Government test laboratory whether there is scope for more comprehensive testing of a sample of the UK mini-motorbike market. This is in recognition that testing costs can be extremely expensive for Local Government Authorities and the envisaged comprehensive testing may be able to provide a good guide to typical defects of a low cost machine in comparison with a higher specified model typically used for competition. This is an ongoing initiative, the outcomes of which will doubtless be reported on in due course through the Administrative Co-operation mechanism.

Relevant standards

24. One recurrent difficulty reported variously by Local Authorities, industry and also by the official from the Chinese authority AQSIQ, is the absence of a harmonized standard in this area against which products can be tested. In the UK a national standard exists (BS 7407: 1901 — “Vehicles directly propelled by energy derived from a fuel, capable of carrying children”) but this has not been updated largely because of the lack of domestic manufacturers. However, it is also recognised that this standard is not wholly adequate for assessing the safety of mini-motorbikes, a type of product that was largely not on the market when the standard was developed. The checklist of essential safety requirements from the directive that are especially relevant to mini-motorbikes, Melt was produced by the Commission, is roundly acknowledged to be helpful here but not quite sufficient to deal with a certain amount of vagueness. Consideration is being given to reviving work in the UK on the standard and a number of organizations including Local Authorities, the MCIA, and the Auto Cycle Union (representing sporting interests) have been engaged in trying to take this forward by developing a draft standard for “Motorcycles for Use on Private Property”. However, in the absence of UK-based manufacturers, this may prove to be a rather difficult task to bring to fruition. This may be an area for further consideration by the Commission in line with the European Standards Organisations,

Ensuring the withdrawal from the Market of Unsafe Products

25. As reported above Local Authorities have been active in using the powers available to them under the General Product Safety Regulations and the Consumer Protection Act to remove products from the market that are in breach of specific or general product safety regulations. This action has been taking place across the UK and the measures available are sufficient to deal with the problem. In addition the Police have powers to seize and destroy unregistered motorcycles that have been used unlawfully.

Final Remarks

26. In conclusion, a great deal of activity has been taking place in the United Kingdom involving both individual and co-ordinated efforts against the threat derived from the widespread availability of unsafe mini-motorbikes. Much of this effort has been underway for some time and will continue whilst there is still a risk associated with these unsafe goods. Lawful use of safe mini-motorbikes for example in organised and controlled competitive racing for children, is not affected by these enforcement activities. We expect that the overall result of the above mentioned activities will be to dampen the market for mini-motorbikes in the United Kingdom in which case there could be some diversion to other Member States and third countries. From our experience, the Commission could assist Member States by (i) providing unambiguous guidance on mini-motorbikes falling within the scope of the Machinery Directive (including models that can be used for competition) and (ii) mandating the European Standards Organisations to develop a harmonized standard for mini-motorbikes.

19 February 2007
APPENDIX 9

Memorandum submitted by the City of London Corporation

OFF ROAD VEHICLES (REGISTRATION) BILL
HOUSE OF COMMONS DEBATE ON SECOND READING

BACKGROUND

1. The City of London Corporation owns and maintains numerous open spaces within London and the Home Counties. City Corporation officers at Epping Forest, West Wickham and Coulsdon Commons (South Croydon and on the LB Bromley/Kent Borders) have been experiencing an increase in problems associated with the anti-social use of motor bikes and quad bikes in the last couple of years. The City Corporation is well aware that it is not alone in its suffering and is in full support of the objectives behind the Off-Road Vehicles (Registration) Bill.

2. The use of so called “mini-motos”, a relatively new phenomenon, is the cause of particular concern. These bikes, of course, intend to replicate professional motorbikes that are designed for off-road use, but incorporate none of the same safety features. It is often argued that these vehicles represent a considerable anti-social nuisance, not least because of the noise that they generate and the apparent difficulty faced by police when they try to identify the offenders. By the very nature of the open spaces it is very difficult to prevent access to the sites of off-road vehicles and their situation close to a large population means they are particularly vulnerable.

3. Clearly this is a serious problem that needs to be addressed and the City Corporation welcomes any attempt which seeks to address it. In assessing the Bill we are mindful of the Transport Committee’s inquiry into the Government’s Motorcycle Strategy and the approach taken by some witnesses who have pointed out the potential problems associated with a compulsory registration scheme.

COMPELLARY REGISTRATION

4. The Bill proposes to require compulsory registration of vehicles exclusively used and kept off public roads, defined as “off-road bikes”. It is clear that a workable definition must be found that brings off-road vehicles within the scope of legal sanctions and the Bill’s approach is welcome. It appears, however, that a case could be made for Parliament to clarify that existing statutory definitions such as “mechanically propelled vehicle” apply to mini-motos when they are used on public open spaces. One potential benefit of this approach might be greater legal consistency.

5. A registration-based approach has definite attraction particularly since the DVLA already maintains a voluntary scheme. Clear benefits would arise from being able easily to identify anti-social users of mini-motos and similar vehicles as a precursor to sanctions, however some have suggested that vehicle users who are intent on breaking the law will not concern themselves with registration. This has, for instance, been the view taken by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and the RAC Foundation.

6. Evidence suggests that it is difficult to catch those responsible for anti-social behaviour not least because of the safety consequences that could ensure from a high speed chase. For this reason, some have argued that this poses a challenge to a registration scheme which would of necessity require the offender to be caught before their vehicle could be checked.

SEIZURE

7. Better use of existing controls should be applauded where they could help curb the problem and the proposed extension of seizure powers contained within the Police Reform Act 2002 to “off-road bikes” would undoubtedly be beneficial. Those in the field have argued that a constant uniformed presence on the sites, along with the useful assistance from local police officers when they are available, has enabled the situation to be kept under a certain level of control for the time being but this approach is by no means a panacea. It appears to work best where the culprits are local youths who do not like being disturbed and soon learn to go elsewhere (of course that may result in a problem for someone else). They are also usually deterred when police officers warn that their vehicles will be confiscated if they are caught again.

8. There seems little doubt that an increased police presence would assist but concerns have been raised about the capacity of police forces around the country to devote substantial additional resources to this problem. For this reason it appears that a strong case could be made for increased powers of seizure to be given to park wardens and park constables throughout the country equipping them to deal with this matter on a level comparable with the police. Some existing legislation11 gives attested park constables equality of arms with police forces for the enforcement of local byelaws and it could be argued that such constables in possession of expert local knowledge are well placed to address the anti-social use of off-road vehicles on land for which they are responsible.

11 For example, The Corporation of London (Open Spaces) Act, 1878, section 16.
Further Measures

9. Besides proposed solutions such as a registration and increased seizure powers there are practical noise and safety concerns—the by-products of anti-social use—which this Bill does not address. Some have argued that compulsory basic safety features should be present when off-road vehicles are used on public open spaces to include, for instance, working brakes, an audible warning system and sound and emission suppression equipment.

10. The wider problem however is the constant supply of people coming from elsewhere, who see an empty public open space and assume they can use their vehicles on it. It is clear that dealers who sell these machines do not always let consumers know about the law associated with riding off-road, and some are even advised to come to specific areas on City Commons, Burnham Beeches and Epping Forest, giving the purchasers the false impression that this is a place they are allowed to ride. More recently this problem has been exacerbated by an increase in the use of radio controlled and petrol powered model cars at some of the City’s Open Spaces.

11. Echoing the views of witnesses before the Transport Committee there may be a case that better education and training is needed but it could be argued that this approach should work in tandem with a more effective trading standards regime, with Trading Standards Officers given greater powers to counteract irresponsible selling by retailers. Such proposals would naturally require careful thought and may not be best achieved through legislation.

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