

# Network

**MARCH 2014**

views expressed in this publication are not necessarily the views of the Motorcycle Action Group (MAG UK) or the Editor

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## EDITORIAL

The best news I heard over the past few weeks is that the attempt by Brian Hampton, who you may remember hit the 16 year old Jade Clark on the A31 resulting in her death in February 2013, to appeal his pathetic 6 year sentence (2 for causing Jade's death and 4 for perverting the course of Justice) was not upheld.

Banned for drink-driving at the time, Hampton not only drove off after stopping, but he then attempted to cover up his involvement by having his car repaired and lying to his family.

A petition was created by Robert Parker when he heard the news which, at the time only had 1,000 signatures on it. Its no secret MAG thinks Hampton should be locked up and the key thrown away so we helped the petition along a bit via social media and within days the amount of signatures accumulated exceeded 10,000. People power.

You may remember this from the February edition:- *'Having seen a couple of articles on 'filtering' recently I was hoping to include something in the way of legislation for guidance in this edition. However, having exhausted my sources all I can find are articles citing past court cases, which appear to come out in favour of the rider. If anyone finds anything more definitive, can you let me know. '*

So, I was extremely pleased to hear from a serving police officer - with the usual caveat - "this is my opinion not that of my employers". Here's his response:- *"I'm afraid that's all there is. It works under case law rather than a change in legislation. Previous cases that are found in the favour of the rider (case law) set a precedent that judges have to follow (or are meant to follow). That is good for us, but won't stop blind car drivers knocking us off. Hope this helps?"* Yes, it does, thank you.

Winter Tyres! Hands up who haven't been expecting this from the Eurocrats? The European commission has commissioned a study on tyre use and performance related to road safety. FEMA was asked to provide an answer. Ongoing - watch this space.

BRAKE have surveyed 1500 drivers and found four out of ten drivers are not concentrating. Really!! I think most of us who ride 2 wheels could have told

them that without the necessity of a survey - in fact, I'm surprised 60% concentrate on their driving, but, hey, that's just me! Nevertheless, I have reproduced their findings in this edition.

We lost our long time MAG member, Gary Green, from Western Region in late February after an extremely long fight against Cancer. Gary was only 52 and always turned up at events with his MAG flag on the back of his bike. Gonna miss him.

Ride free Guys, A. [AnneGaleMAG@aol.com](mailto:AnneGaleMAG@aol.com)

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**Acknowledgements: Bikerpost. FEMA. George Legg. Lembit and Leon. Rowan Publications. David French, Roadrunner. RAC. Chris James. The BMJ. DVLA. BRAKE. Visordown. And anyone else I might have forgotten.**

**From the MAG Campaigns Office that is Lembit and Leon.**

*Here's a round-up of some key campaigning features.*

***Potentially lethal 'Bedford Turbo Roundabout'***

Dr Leon Mannings has been leading the campaigning to prevent the construction of what he calls 'one of the most life-threatening schemes in British road planning history for bikers.' Essentially, the authorities intend to create a raised kerb to separate traffic flowing round a roundabout in the Bedford area.

The kerb is certain to cause accidents, the severity of which will vary, but which could easily be fatal. That's because the kerb would be low and hard to see in poor visibility conditions, such as rain. Snow could easily obscure the kerbs completely.

Leon has taken the matter to the transport Minister Robert Goodwill, to request an urgent meeting, and to highlight the probable liability of the Department in the event of an accident. 'We really don't want to use corporate manslaughter legislation as a threat, but this proposal is such a dangerous precedent, we've got to get the government and local authority to see sense before it's too late.' MAG Members in the area are asked to write to object to the Council, and say that they'll not hesitate to sue the Council in the event of an accident, since they have been warned of the increased danger to riders. A demonstration is also a possibility.

Local Transport Today has credited MAG as the only organisation to formally object to the proposals. While it's nice to be noticed

***E-bikes***

Lembit & Leon have had preliminary discussions with various electric bike manufacturers about the possibility of MAG supporting the roll out of such vehicles in the UK. There's a clear environmental benefit in doing so, but more than that, it also fits the image of motorcycles as relatively eco-friendly. Lembit wants to know how interested you are in E-bikes. If there's an appetite for this, it could be feasible to create an ad hoc steering group to link up with the industry. 'Personally, I find the subject extremely interesting. The larger e-bikes are remarkable powerful, and I'm sure they'll make an impact on the retail side. It would be great to promote them through MAG, as we'll be riding the front of the curve as far as this new technology is concerned. If you're interested, let us know at HQ (01926 844 064) and we'll take it from there.'

### **Bus lanes**

Leon has made great progress on securing bus lane access for powered two wheelers in London. This could be a structured campaign across the country, with MAG reapplying what's worked in the Capital. If you'd be interested in learning how we've been achieving these results, call HQ and we'll be happy to help.

### **Website**

The new website is at the stage where we need content for all the regions. Lembit has put together a list of questions which it would be great for us to get content for – see below. It's a pretty big job, but we think you'll like the new site. If anyone would like to volunteer to help collect the info from MAG regions, that would be massively appreciated! Please let HQ know if you can spare some hours to do this. Here are the list of questions, with recommended max wording, as a guide. Even if people can get some of the questions answered, that would be great:

- Introductory paragraph welcoming people to the region: (max 200 words)
- Who to contact in the region for various things: (max 150 words)
- Campaigns (max 250 words per campaign, unlimited number of campaigns)
- Forthcoming events: (max 400 words)
- News (max 1,000 words).
- Ideally, we'd get content back by 22<sup>nd</sup> March. Then it will be uploaded on the website.

### **MAG Anthem**

A song called 'It Means So Much' is nearing completion. It's on schedule and gin got be launched in April. This is being performed by 'Stranger' and has some major musicians performing on it. The more we sell, the more money we'll have for campaigning. It's going to cost 79p and we hope to sell enough copies in the space of a week to get it in the charts. Please be ready to promote it when the time comes, which will be in our next edition. Oh, and it also happens to be a great song!

**[Update: new song for MAG – It Means So Much – will be having its world premiere on BBC 5 Live on the night of Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2014. It's quite late on in the evening, but if members want to hear it, they'll be able to. The actual song launch in the charts will be in April, as planned.]**

## **From MAG**

### **Still as relevant today as it was in 1999.**

It seems that Intelligent Transport Systems are back on the EU agenda. MAG's position has not changed. If something is ignored even when you think you've beaten it; it will bite you on the backside.

### **A DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, MULHOUSE, FRANCE, 1999**

The weekend of 16th - 17th October 1999 saw the Public Policy Conference organised by the Federation Internationale de Motocyclisme (FIM) in Mulhouse, France. At this conference the issue of Intelligent Transport Systems or 'Telematics' as this technology is sometimes referred to, was discussed at great length with serious concerns being raised. There follows the text of a resolution proposed by Neil F. Liversidge, National Chairman of the Motorcycle Action Group of the United Kingdom which the assembled delegates as individuals UNANIMOUSLY supported when a vote was taken. It was agreed that the individuals having committed their personal support would take the resolution and commend it to their respective organisations. The organisations themselves were not committed at Mulhouse. Most delegates had no such plenary powers. It is significant however that for the first time ever the leaders of all the major motorcyclists' organisations, together with leading figures in the motorcycle industry, spoke with one radical voice in the defence of personal freedom. In committing themselves to this resolution the persons concerned signified their determination to defend the independence of the ordinary motorcyclist, embodied in the control he or she exercises over his or her own machine. This is truly then a declaration of independence in the most literal possible sense.

### **RESOLUTION**

We the undersigned utterly oppose the compulsory fitment to privately owned vehicles of any device designed to arbitrarily remove control from the driver to remote operation. We note with extreme concern the tendency of governments to impose ever more intrusive and restrictive regulations upon the citizen. We caution governments to remember that they are permitted to govern only by the consent of the people and that such consent when given through an election does not grant unlimited licence to interfere in the daily life of the citizen. We further caution all governments that to impose unduly on popular freedom is to imperil the respect in which government and the rule of law is held.

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From 1 October 2014, the paper tax disc will no longer be issued and required to be displayed on a vehicle windscreen. DVLA holds a digital record of taxed and untaxed vehicles.

If you have any remaining months left on your current paper tax disc from 1 October 2014, you can either remove the tax disc from your vehicle or display the disc until it expires.

### **Checking the tax status of a vehicle**

You can check the tax status of your vehicle [online](#) [www.vehicleenquiry.service.gov.uk](http://www.vehicleenquiry.service.gov.uk) (including rental vehicles). DVLA will still notify you when your vehicle tax is due for renewal. You will still need to renew your vehicle tax if your vehicle is exempt e.g. historic tax class.

## **Buying or selling a vehicle**

When buying a used vehicle you will be able to use the V5C/2 - new keeper supplement to pay vehicle tax at a Post Office branch, along with the MOT certificate (if applicable) and fee. From 1 October 2014 you will also be able to pay vehicle tax using the V5C/2 online or by phone.

When selling a vehicle to a new vehicle keeper, the vehicle tax will no longer be transferable. Vehicle tax will end when a vehicle is sold and the new keeper will need to get the vehicle taxed immediately before the vehicle can be used.

## **Paying vehicle tax by Direct Debit**

From 1 November 2014 you can pay your vehicle tax online by Direct Debit either:

- annually
- 6 monthly
- monthly

Whichever option you choose, the payments will continue automatically until you tell DVLA to stop taking them or you cancel the Direct Debit with your bank.

If your vehicle needs to be taxed from 1 November 2014, you can set up a Direct Debit when paying online for vehicle tax. DVLA will forward your instructions to your bank.

If you have been paying your tax annually or every 6 months, you will get a refund for any full calendar months left on the tax period when you tell DVLA you no longer require tax.

## **When the Direct Debit scheme can't be used**

Paying by Direct Debit will not be available to:

- first registration vehicles
- fleet schemes
- HGVs (paying the Road User Levy)

## **Declaring your vehicle is off the road (SORN)**

DVLA will automatically stop taking Direct Debit payments from your bank once you [declare the vehicle off-road \(SORN\)](#) – [www.gov.uk/register-sorn-statutory-off-road-notification](http://www.gov.uk/register-sorn-statutory-off-road-notification) .

Keep your eyes peeled across the regions...as we head towards the MEP elections in MAY, Meetings with the prospective MEP candidates may be in a town near you. Giving you the chance to establish which MEP would be best for you and have an understanding of the issues you feel that are important as they head towards a term in European office. Never forget.....Riders ARE Voters!!!!

## **Around GB**

### **Bletchley Park**

#### **Most secret transport – Bletchley Park seeks help**

Bletchley Park is looking for enthusiastic volunteers to carry out essential maintenance on a rare WW2 Dispatch Rider's motorcycle, as well as other vintage vehicles - two of which were used in the 2001 film, Enigma.

A passion for motorcycles and patriotic duty prompted many enthusiasts to become Dispatch Riders during World War Two. At the peak of Bletchley Park's WW2 Codebreaking operation, around 3,000 messages per day were brought to the Government Code and Cypher School's top secret HQ by Dispatch Riders. Some were based at Bletchley Park with more stationed around the country, collecting messages from the many Y (listening) stations. Some were armed and they travelled up to 1,200 miles per week.

Dispatch Rider Nevil Horsfall said "We knew that Bletchley Park was a 'big deal' and although we were bright enough to recognise that it was not just a cipher school and that interception of enemy signals was somehow involved, we had no idea about enemy codebreaking and the importance of Bletchley Park efforts during the war, to us it was largely, business as usual."

A WW2 Norton WD16H Dispatch Rider's motorcycle is now on display in the newly refurbished garages at Bletchley Park, where visitors can learn about other forms of transport used in the process from intercepting encrypted radio traffic to delivering suitably disguised vital intelligence to commanders in the field. Meanwhile a BSA (Birmingham Small Arms Company) motorcycle has recently been kindly donated by the family of the late John Hazel.

Anyone interested in volunteering to help maintain any of the vehicles on display at Bletchley Park is invited to contact Sarah Kay, [sarahkay@bletchleypark.org.uk](mailto:sarahkay@bletchleypark.org.uk) 01908 640404.

### **DARTFORD.**

Brilliant news for everyone on a bike who regularly uses the Dartford river crossing.

The government has no plans to charge bikes.

MAG's '£50 note' campaign to exempt bikes from the charges years ago is still paying off!

## HASTINGS.

The next town that is looking to get access for bikes in bus lanes in Hastings. Alright, they've not even been built yet, however, the bus lane is being built in the next year or so, and it's best to get in beforehand! So far, we have three of the five local councillors affected onside.

Just like Eastbourne, which MAG successfully lobbied for eight years ago, but as yet no real bus lanes have appeared.

Action is always better than reaction.

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## FEMA

On Saturday 1 February 2014 FEMA's members elected a new board and re-elected president Frédéric Jeorge

The delegates from the national motorcyclists' organizations got together in Brussels for FEMA's Annual Committee Meeting 2014.

At this meeting the strategy for the coming years was discussed and a new board was elected. A grand total of seven candidates were up for election, so FEMA's board is now bigger and stronger than ever.

The re-elected FEMA president Frédéric Jeorge said: "This will be a very exciting year, not just because of the numerous challenges facing the European motorcyclists' community, but also because in March 2014 FEMA will be organizing the European Motorcyclists' Forum again. With this new board filled with people that have all earned their stripes in fighting for riders' rights, FEMA is ready for any challenge that comes along!"

The FEMA Committee thanked Juha Lieslinna from the Finnish SMOTO and Njall Gunlaugsson from BLS Iceland, who stepped down as members of the board, but will stay active in FEMA as delegate for their national organization.

The FEMA Committee also thanked Chris Hodder from the British BMF. After many years as Government Relations Executive at BMF and as the representative of his organization within FEMA, Chris will be pursuing a new career.





**The new board with FEMA's secretary-general.** From left to right: Morten Hansen (NMCU Norway), Neil Liversidge (MAG UK), Pat van Aalst (MAG UK), Rolf Frieling (Biker Union Germany), Maria Nordqvist (SMC Sweden), Frédéric Jeorge (president), Anna Zee (BMF UK), Aline Delhaye (secretary-general) and Wim Taal (MAG NL).

And

### **Can motorcycles benefit from new technologies?**

This year's European Motorcyclists Forum will discuss the impact of new technologies on motorcycling and related issues from a motorcycle specific angle. To prepare the debate, discussions on social media are being launched by RIDERSCAN media partners at national level.

For the second time, the European Motorcyclists' Forum is hosting the RIDERSCAN project discussions. RIDERSCAN is an EU co-funded project aiming at gathering all relevant knowledge and information about motorcycle safety in Europe and provide guidance to road authorities.

The event, taking place on March 5th and 6th, is hosted in the European Parliament premises 2 months before EU elections, thanks to the support of MEP Bernd Lange (S&D), also Chair of the FIA's Forum for Automobile and Society. Mr. Lange said: "Powered two-wheelers will play a crucial role for our future mobility, especially in urban areas. They are however often overlooked in the discussion. It is therefore all the more important to put them into focus, especially in the context of the integration of intelligent transport systems (ITS)."

This year's Forum will discuss the European Commission's work on Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) and deployment efforts. This is in the context of EU initiatives including the Cars2020 Action Plan, the ITS Directive and Action Plan and Horizon2020, but from a motorcycle specific angle. 4 working sessions will structure the debate around ITS and motorcycle specific related issues including: user needs and acceptance, research and development (R&D) roadmap, human factors and impacts of new technologies on the riding tasks, data collection and privacy (with the support of the FIA), aiming at identifying priorities for the motorcycling sector.

To prepare the discussions, the RIDERSCAN project launched a new survey. Currently available in English, French, German, Italian, Dutch, and Danish (more languages to come), the ITS User Survey will help to draw a European map of rider awareness and acceptance of new technologies applied to transport systems. Preliminary results on the willingness of riders to test, use, and buy systems, will be discussed at the Forum.

In parallel, FEMA is launching a debate over new technologies and motorcycling on three social media channels (Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter). Comments from the public will be conveyed all throughout the Forum discussions.

As the Forum on ITS is a logical step towards a better integration of motorcycling in European transport policies, the Forum will be recorded and videos will be made available on YouTube for further sharing, comments and coming discussions.

FEMA and the RIDERSCAN project team kindly invites all European riders to make use of this opportunity to generate fruitful inputs to feed discussions between the motorcycling

community, EU authorities, researchers and experts using the following social media channels.

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## VisorDown

### **E-petition demands motorcycles be taxed in the same way as cars**

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An e-petition is calling for motorcycles to be taxed using the same approach as cars.

Car tax rates are based on CO2 emissions while motorcycles are taxed according to engine capacity.

According to Paul Sealey who started the [petition](#), 'A Toyota Aygo or Citroen C1, a tax class B car, pays just £20 a year, producing 139g/km of CO2... But a Honda VFR making just 16.5g/km of CO2 pays £78 a year, nearly 4 times as much... It's about time this fundamental unfairness was addressed.'

But Chris Hodder, Government Relations Executive for the British Motorcyclists Federation, said: 'The problem is that there are no official CO2 figures for bikes as there are for cars and therefore the government won't/can't do it.'

And Craig Carey-Clinch, spokesman for the Motorcycle Industry Association, said the petition was misinformed and the CO2 figure for a VFR 'seriously wide of the mark'.

Carey-Clinch said: 'The really important issue though is how the case is made. If we asked for a simple parity of policy between car and bike, we'd see the majority of riders of smaller bikes paying little or nothing. But we are concerned that many larger bikes could come under a higher VED bracket, with riders possibly paying much more than they do now. I don't yet know for sure how many would be affected though. But we can be sure that riders would not be impressed.

'Therefore once CO2 measurement is brought in for large bikes in 2016, MCI will be taking a very close look at the nature of the case that we will put to Government. This to ensure that as well as gaining real benefit for commuter riders on small bikes, we don't see a ratcheting up of costs for the enthusiast sector.

'So although I feel we are philosophically sympathetic to what the petitioner is trying to do, the petition does not use accurate info and the timing is not right if we are to get real benefit from changes in VED.'

And

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### **Bikesure launches short term insurance cover (part)**

Specialist broker Bikesure is offering a new scheme allowing people to ride their own, or other people's motorbikes, for up to three months at a time.

The scheme covers a wide range of bikes and has premiums starting at £32.

The minimum rider age is 21 and the scheme offers various levels of cover:

- Comprehensive (maximum value £10,000)
- TPFT (maximum value £7,000)
- Third Party

To get a quote, call 0800 587 9718 or visit [Bikesure](#).

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## DVLA / DSA

### **Motorcycle, lorry and bus driving licences and driving test rules – consultation outcome**

The government is introducing the proposals that were set out in the consultation on motorcycle, lorry and bus driving licences and driving test rules. The changes will come into effect by the end of March 2014.

The consultation affects driver and rider trainers and people taking a **motorcycle**, lorry or bus test and sought views on changes to driver licensing and the vehicles that can be used to take a driving test.

1. [Response to consultation report](#)
2. [Impact assessment](#)
3. [Summary of feedback from the consultation](#)

### **Motorists warned when applying for a driving licence online**

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**Motorists are warned that when applying online for your driving licence to always make sure you use the official GOV.UK site.**

**DVLA** warns that when applying online for your driving licence, you should always make sure you use the official GOV.UK site.

**DVLA** has been made aware of several websites offering a check and send service for driving licence applications. These services are in no way affiliated with **DVLA**. You may come across these websites in the sponsored links or paid-for results section when using online search engines. The Office of Fair Trading has ruled that websites which charge additional fees and services are not acting illegally.

These websites will claim to offer value-added services to ensure your application is correct before you send it to **DVLA**. However, using this service will mean you can end up paying as much as 3 times the normal price for your driving licence, and all you will receive is a paper application form that has been completed for you.

The government, led by Cabinet Office's Government Digital Service (GDS), will continue to investigate reports of organisations which may be actively misleading users about their services or acting illegally, taking swift action when necessary. By using the online driving licence transactions on GOV.UK you can be sure that you are dealing directly with **DVLA** and will not be charged any additional fees for your driving licence. Your application will be completed online without the need for a paper application in most cases. By using the online

driving licence transactions on GOV.UK – [www.gov.uk/browse/driving/driving-licences](http://www.gov.uk/browse/driving/driving-licences) you can be sure that you are dealing directly with **DVLA** and you will not be charged any additional fees for your driving licence. Your application will be completed online without the need for a paper application in the majority of cases.

And

### **DVLA New style photocard driving licence**

#### **DVLA has introduced a new style photocard driving licence from February 2014.**

Holders of valid driving licences will not need to replace their current driving licence. The old driving licence format is still valid and will be updated gradually as they are renewed and replaced.

#### **What's changed**

The new card, provided by Gemalto (UK), will have a refreshed design and incorporate a host of improved security features including a new security holograph, raised surface pattern and an Optical Variable Ink (OVI) which will continue to keep the driving licence secure. The latest security features will also help in the fight against fraud.

And

### **DSA / DVLA**

#### **Changes to motorcycle, lorry and bus driving test rules (part motorcycles only)**

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The Driving Standards Agency (DSA) has published a response to the public consultation about these changes that ran in 2013.

#### **..... Motorcycle riders**

DSA will reduce the minimum engine power requirement for medium motorcycles (category A2) from 25kW to 20kW.

There will be more changes from 2019. DSA will:

- raise the minimum engine power requirement for large motorcycles (category A) from 40kW to 50kW
- introduce a minimum mass weight requirement for large motorcycles (category A) of 180kg

[Read the full report on the consultation. www.gov.uk/government/consultation/motorcycle-lorry-and-bus-driving-licences-and-driving-test-rules](http://www.gov.uk/government/consultation/motorcycle-lorry-and-bus-driving-licences-and-driving-test-rules)

[The motorcycle practical riding test. www.gov.uk/motorcyclers-practical-test](http://www.gov.uk/motorcyclers-practical-test)

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**Interesting – not PTWs but cycling helmets – Chris Boardman speaks out:**

#### **Cycle helmets are “massive red herring”: Chris Boardman**

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Helmet use is one of the least important cycling safety measures, according to British Cycling policy advisor Chris Boardman

Talking to the [road.cc website](#) at the London Bike Show, Chris Boardman said: "I think the helmet issue is a massive red herring. It's not even in the top 10 of things you need to do to keep cycling safe or more widely, save the most lives.

"It's a bit like saying people are sniping at you going down this street, so put some body armour on."

He went on to suggest that even talking about making helmets mandatory "massively puts people off" cycling.

He described the Government's encouragement to wear helmets as "a big campaign to get people to wear body armour, by the people who should be stopping the shooting".

He cited the Netherlands as "a better solution to the problem of cycle safety", pointing out that just 0.8% of cyclists wear helmets yet the Dutch have the lowest rate of cycling head injury, thanks to segregated cycling infrastructure.

He added that 30% of journeys in the Netherlands are made by bike, as are 50% of children's journeys to school.

Chris Boardman said: "The best way to deal with [the head injury issue] is what the Dutch have done. Where you have the highest rate of helmet use, you also have the highest rate of head injury: us and the US."

[Click here](#) to read the full road.cc report.

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## British Medical Journal

### Time to act on mobile phone use while driving, say experts

It's time to act on mobile phone use while driving, say two senior Canadian physicians in an editorial **published on bmj.com**

Although there is still some uncertainty about the association between mobile phone use and risk of crashes, given the proliferation of mobile phones, the prevalence of distracted driving is undoubtedly increasing, they write.

Texting is the riskiest activity because the distraction is cognitive and visual, they explain. Handheld phone use (particularly when making or receiving calls) comes next, and hands-free use is probably the least dangerous.

*[This is happening across the Atlantic – as you know one of my pet hates and, in my humble opinion, nothing short of a ban suffices!]*

### AMCA opens its doors

The Amateur Motorcycle Association (AMCA) made a significant rule change on Saturday, the 8th of February 2014, which will allow its members to also ride at events run by other organising bodies.

Since its inception, one of the AMCA's principal rules was that anyone holding an AMCA licence could only ride at AMCA events. It was an exclusive club and back then, one-day

licences were unheard of. Simply put, to ride AMCA, a licence was required and members were expected to remain loyal and ride only AMCA authorised events. Anyone caught breaking this rule faced two weeks in exile.

The rule has served the Association well over the years, with riders guaranteed events and clubs guaranteed riders at their events. However, recognising that the demands of the modern rider in 2014 are very different to those of the riders back in the seventies and eighties, the AMCA has accepted change and with immediate effect, the restriction has been removed.

AMCA licence holders now have total freedom, as long as they honour their own club duties which typically involve helping at two local events per season. Riders can join the AMCA and choose a licence fee and entry fee that suits how often they plan to ride, either £139.00 (A Type) with an entry fee of £25 or £59.00 (B Type) with a race entry each week of £35.00. The AMCA now welcomes the rider that may only want to ride a few times a season with the AMCA and then ride a few other events with another organisation. The doors are open to all riders to ride with the AMCA and enjoy the local, friendly, safe environment on which AMCA prides itself.

Suzanne Potts, AMCA General Manager; "This is the most significant rule change that the AMCA has undertaken in recent times, the AMCA clubs chose to change this rule through their club and group structure with the final vote being taken at the Motocross Committee meeting on Saturday. This is what makes the AMCA so strong, it's run and owned by its members, and the AMCA evolves with what riders want."

Visit the AMCA website for further information – [www.amca.uk.com](http://www.amca.uk.com)

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### **RAC urges Government to revisit 80mph speed trial (part)**

New speed cameras commissioned by the Highways Agency for variable speed limit 'smart' motorway sections may be used by the police to enforce 70mph on a more widespread basis, warns the RAC.

The HADECS3 (Highways Agency Digital Enforcement Camera System) cameras are designed to enforce speeds on the motorways that are set up to use the hard shoulder permanently or temporarily as a running lane, but the police could choose to use the new verge-mounted grey cameras, which can monitor all four lanes of traffic, on normal stretches of motorway.

The cameras are a replacement for the gantry-mounted HADECS2 which are currently used to enforce variable speed limits. These cameras, however, require white lanes on the road, whereas the new model does not.

**RAC technical director David Bizley said- (part):** "We have been supportive of trialling an 80mph speed limits on some sections of motorway where construction and usage patterns are such that the benefits to users would offset any detrimental safety or environmental impact. Unfortunately, the Government has stated there are now no plans to do such a trial which is disappointing.

"If the new HADECS3 cameras are to be used more generally we think that this will result in better adherence to speed limits. One of the objections to an 80mph limit was that motorists would be more likely to travel at 90mph or more. But with better enforcement, it would be appropriate to revisit the 80mph motorway debate given that the majority of motorists

support raising the speed limit on motorways.

"The RAC Report on Motoring 2013 voiced drivers' frustrations that, despite Government announcements some time ago of plans for trialling of an 80mph limit so that the benefits and disadvantages could be quantified, nothing has happened to date and there are real doubts as to whether the current ministers have the will to proceed.

"Only 20% of motorists surveyed said that the current 70mph motorway speed limit should never be broken and 65% of motorists admit to breaking this limit while 92% of all drivers consider themselves to be law-abiding."

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## **BRAKE**

### **Survey finds four out of ten drivers not concentrating**

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**Only sixty per cent of drivers concentrate when they are behind the wheel, according to a poll by IAM/Vision Critical of nearly 1500 drivers.**

However, there is good and bad news in these findings.

The good news is that older drivers are much less likely to lose concentration while driving. Seventy-three per cent of over 65 year-olds say they concentrate on the road all of the time that they are driving. Twenty-six per cent said that they concentrate most of the time.

The bad news is that 50 per cent of younger drivers aged 18-24 admit to not concentrating on driving 100 per cent of the time. Not far behind, 47 per cent of 24-34 year olds admit to not concentrating.

Nearly a quarter of drivers (24 per cent) say that simply daydreaming was the most common reason for not concentrating. Among 18-24 year-olds the figure is 30 per cent.

Other reasons given for not concentrating include stress (22 per cent), thinking about what you will be doing when you arrive (21 per cent) and thinking about family, friends and personal relationships (21 per cent).

In the North East and in Wales, 64 per cent of drivers, said they concentrate all the time.

Londoners are most likely to be distracted while driving, with forty-seven per cent admitting to not concentrating one hundred per cent on the road. Yorkshire and Humberside, the South West and Scotland were not far behind with 46%.

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### **Interesting – from the US**

For some time now controversy has been raging about the effects of E15 in fuel with some motorcyclists claiming their bikes' engines have been damaged due to the additive.

However, the American Motorcyclist Association has welcomed news that President Obama has signed into law this month a provision to stop the future distribution of E15 fuels across the U.S.

The 2014 Agricultural Act, which will run until 2018, prohibits the use of grant money by the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) to purchase and install ethanol blender pumps to

dispense E15 at retail gas stations. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack had intended to use REAP funding to install a further 10,000 blender pumps in the U.S. by 2016.

E15, ethanol fuel, often causes confusion at gas stops where drivers and riders sometimes accidentally use the fuel in their vehicles. This has led in some cases to a void of their vehicle's warranty and in some extreme cases engine failure.

Alcohol in E15 fuel is mainly made from corn and contains less combustible energy than gasoline and it is thought, but not proved, to be the cause of some engine failures that car and motorcyclists have experienced.

The AMA said that it considers this farm-bill provision a major victory for the owners and riders of the estimated 22 million motorcycles and ATVs currently in operation in the U.S.

Since 2011, the AMA has campaigned to prevent the distribution of E15 fuels, seeking independent scientific tests on their effect on motorcycle and all-terrain vehicle engines and fuel systems. After the introduction of E15 into the marketplace, the AMA fought its spread, because of concerns about people using the fuel by mistake from blender pumps.

"It is gratifying to see our efforts on behalf of U.S. motorcyclists and ATV riders achieve this level of success," said Wayne Allard, AMA vice president for government relations. "We plan to continue to monitor the E15 issue, including the Environmental Protection Agency's proposal to reduce the 2014 requirements under its Renewable Fuel Standard."

Although the EPA has approved E15 use in 2001-and-newer light-duty vehicles, which include cars, light-duty trucks and medium-duty passenger vehicles, the EPA has not approved its use in any motorcycles or ATVs.

Read more: <http://rideapart.com/2014/02/e15-fuel-sale-banned-us/>