

Network

AUGUST 2013

views expressed in this publication are not necessarily the views of the Motorcycle

Action Group (MAG UK) or the Editor

Editorial	1-2
Short Statement by Leon Manning on the Roads Task Force Report. SUNDAY 18TH AUGUST 2013 @ 07.00 – protest against lack of parking for bikes. MAG PRESS RELEASE - Status quo on test regime.	2-3
Dept for Transport: Motorcycle Test Review	4-5
Transparency of Lobbying, Non-party Campaigning and Trade Union Administration Bill. (Dods Briefing July 18 2013)	5-7
ACEM statistical service reports a 15% decline in the European Powered Two-Wheelers market for 2013 so far.	7-8
D S A: Changes to motorcycle, lorry and bus driving licence and driving test vehicle rules.	8-9
AROUND GB: Northern Ireland. London, Ace Cafe - Three Days, Three Rides, One Reunion!	9-12
Road Safety Knowledge Centre team. Further studies of the skid resistance of asphalt surfaces in their early life: TRL	12
France: compulsory reflective stickers on all helmets	12-14
Events and Contacts – please see the MAG website	

Editorial

If you are able to get to **Southend** on the **18th August at 7 in the morning** (detail further on) to support the **protest** at the lack of secure parking spaces, over-zealous enforcement officers and apathy from the council, this will be one of the most important things you do this year.

The aim is to fill all 260 car park spaces on the seafront and by the Sea Life centre.

In Western Region, we have first hand experience that this definitely works. Some years ago the then Weston & North Somerset Rep, Ian Moore, organised a similar protest. Within a half hour of parking, Councillors appeared on the scene. Since then there has been good liaison with the Council which resulted in a superb bike park.

Touristy places who fail to provide adequate parking for bikes are extremely short sighted. Riders spend money.

There appear to be conflicting reports on whether the French authorities are enforcing the compulsory reflective stickers on helmets for tourists so the last article in this edition, although first published in March, covers this issue. To quote: "Bikers caught wearing a helmet without stickers may face a 135 euros fine payable on the spot". Up to you guys to decide what you want to do if you're travelling to or through France. Me? Well, 135euros buys a lot of nice French wine!

I've included a report on the Transparency of Lobbying, Non-party Campaigning and Trade Union Administration Bill. Whilst this may or may not be relevant to us, we are a lobbying group so it could be useful, if only to have knowledge of.

Any one in or around the Bristol area on 17th, we have the Bristol Bike Show in the Centre of the City (St Nicholas Market) and the After Show Party - camping/band. All details on the MAG website.

Ride Free, A

If you have anything for Network, please email AnneGaleMAG@aol.com. Please remember that if you're lobbying at a local level on an issue, someone else may just need to know how you're doing it.

Acknowledgements: George Legg. Leon Manning. Rowan Publications ... and anyone else I've forgotten

From LEON MANNING – MAG's Transport Policy Adviser

"There is some excellent news for the future expansion of UK biking in the finally published version of the Roads Task Force Report and in TfL's official response to the recommendations that includes various commitments to take action.

And, MAG can take full credit for these key developments as we were the only biking group

to have a representative amongst the RTF team of fifteen stakeholders/experts.

Below is a link to the PDFs of the RTF and TfL Reports – and in case you don't fancy it or have the time to wade through over 300 pages of it all (!) I am preparing summaries for The ROAD in my campaigns page and for the next NC meeting.”

<http://www.tfl.gov.uk/corporate/media/newscentre/28241.aspx>

SUNDAY 18TH AUGUST 2013 @ 07.00 – protest against lack of parking for bikes.

MAG UK is fully supporting this protest against the lack of parking in Southend. Due to recent development works, most of the bike spaces have been removed.

The protest is a simple one. 1 or 2 bikes per car parking space. The more the merrier. The aim is to fill all 260 spaces on the seafront and by the Sea Life centre.

This is something that motorcyclists/scooterists visiting coastal towns around the country have to deal with – a lack of secure parking spaces, over-zealous enforcement officers and apathy from the council. MAG thinks it is time for a change.

For more info, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/602169459806202/>

MAG PRESS RELEASE.

... Status quo on test regime

The Motorcycle Action Group is disappointed that after months of discussion and half a million pounds of taxpayer's money, the motorcycle test protocols remain an unreasonable barrier to novice riders.

The Driving Standards Agency (DSA) has paid the Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) £500,000 to speculate that it would be too dangerous and costly to hold the whole motorcycle test on the road.

In consequence the status quo remains, which means that some learner riders in rural areas will still have to make round trips of as much as 100 miles to specialist test centres.

MAG remains critical of the DSA's interpretation of the EU test protocols that has led to the closure of hundreds of long established test centres that afforded easy access for riders nation-wide. Now that changes have been announced – VOSA and the DSA are merging into one organisation, and Rosemary Thew, the DSA Chief Executive has moved on – MAG hopes that the system will get better.

MAG Chairman John Mitchell said, “The Impression that emerges from this debacle is that there are those in the DfT whose approach to safety issues is to discourage motorcycling by making access to it as hard as possible.”

Dept for Transport

Motorcycle Test Review

The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport (Stephen Hammond): Following research into the safety and feasibility of a single event on-road motorcycle test, I am today announcing the conclusion of the Motorcycle Test Review.

The test review was commissioned to consider alternative ways of providing a single event practical motorcycle test that can be carried out on the road in a way that would maintain riding standards, protect safety and increase accessibility of the test for candidates, while meeting the requirements of the European legislation.

The test is currently carried out in two separate modules. Module 1 is undertaken off-road on a purpose built manoeuvring area and tests the higher speed and slow manoeuvres. Module 2 is the practical on-road ride.

The research, which ended in March 2013, used test-ready learners to complete the proposed on-road manoeuvres and the existing module 1 manoeuvres under mock test conditions. Direct comparisons were made between the on-road and module 1 test.

The research concluded that an on-road test:

- would result in a substantial increase in the number of incidents during tests;
- increased the duration of the test, which would result in higher costs for both candidates and the Driving Standards Agency;
- resulted in significantly more faults than the off-road test; and
- was likely to encounter technical difficulties in identifying suitable sites with appropriate signage, and suitable speed measurement equipment .

I have therefore concluded that a single event on-road motorcycle test would not be in the interests of motorcycle test candidates or their trainers and examiners and have decided to conclude the Motorcycle Test Review.

The research findings have been published today on the gov.uk website.

This does not mean that the review has been in vain. It has provided a welcome opportunity for the Department of Transport and the Driving Standards Agency to work with stakeholders to look at how the module 1 test could be improved. The Driving Standards Agency made changes to the module 1 test by re-ordering the manoeuvres and introducing greater flexibility in the way that riders speed is assessed. These changes were welcomed by both examiners and trainers and have resulted in fewer incidents, particularly during the hazard avoidance exercise.

Since the review started, the Driving Standards Agency have implemented a range of improvements for stakeholders and customers taking tests in Great Britain. Test provision has been increased by opening three additional sites for module 1 tests and introducing module 2 tests at an additional eight driving test centres. More motorcycle examiners have been made available following a successful recruitment campaign; and improvements to the booking system has resulted in more test bookings being made available at times and dates that provide better access for motorcycle trainers and candidates.

The Government will continue to seek out new ways of improving motorcycle training and tackling motorcycle casualties, so that motorcycle incidents continue to fall.

Link to documentation: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/motorcycle-manoeuvres-review-the-feasibility-and-safety-implications-phase-1>

Transparency of Lobbying, Non-party Campaigning and Trade Union Administration Bill. (Dods Briefing July 18 2013)

Background Government's initial proposals for lobbying reform were published in a White Paper in January 2012 as part of the Coalition's transparency agenda, which was announced in 2010.

The proposals, which included reforms to party funding and trade union rules, came after three peers and a member of Parliament were accused of agreeing to carry out parliamentary work in return for payment.

Following recent scandal around lobbyists using all party groups (APPGs) to lobby MPs, action was taken by the Houses of Parliament to crack down on parliamentary passes. Since June 2013, it has been reported that more than 80 people have had their passes removed, with no further APPG passes to be issued.

Register of professional lobbyists The Bill establishes a register of professional lobbyists and a registrar of consultant lobbyists to supervise and en-force the registration requirements.

Consultant lobbyists engaging in lobbying activity will be required to sign the register, regardless of where the lobbying takes place or where the lobbyist is based.

It will not be possible for lobbyists to avoid the registration requirement by structuring their business to receive payments from clients via a third party, for periods of service or in a non-monetary form.

The Bill will make it an offence to offer consultant lobbying without an accurate and up to date register entry; to fail to supply the information required by an information notice; or to supply inaccurate or incomplete information.

Definition of a "consultant lobbyist"

The Bill defines a "consultant lobbyist" as a person who communicates either in writing or orally:

- With UK government ministers or permanent secretaries (including specified equivalent positions)

- About government policy, legislation, the award of contracts, grants licences or similar
- Benefits, or the exercise of any other government function such as the exercise of the prerogative
- On behalf of another person
- In return for payment
- In the course of business

Exceptions include:

- The lobbying of devolved administration as the Bill only relates to reserved matters (the list of non-reserved matters can be accessed here: [Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland](#))
- Bodies who cover lobbying on a pro-bono basis or who are funded altruistically to undertake work that seeks to benefit others
- MPs who lobby on behalf of their constituents
- Persons whose main business is not lobbying, persons who act generally as representatives of people of a particular class or description, and who make lobbying communications only as an incidental part of their representative function

Other proposals

The Bill makes provision in two other areas:

- Changing the legal requirements for people or organisations that campaign in relation to elections but are not standing as candidates or a registered political party
- Changing the legal requirements in relation to trade unions' obligations to keep their list of members up to date. The consultation, launched in conjunction with the proposed measures, is available [here](#)

Reactions to the Bill

Three organisations who have been eagerly awaiting the Bill are Spinwatch, Lobbying Transparency and Unlock Democracy. Following the publication of the proposals, they issued a breakdown of organisations which would not be covered by a statutory register, including law firms, trade bodies, third party lobbyists and in-house lobbyists.

Labour's shadow lobbying minister, John Trickett, has outlined amendments which Labour would be seeking to make, including to close the "loophole" which would mean Lynton Crosby would "get around" being on the register, and to ensure people doing senior jobs in politics can't also be lobbying without people knowing about it.

Iain Anderson, deputy chair of the Association of Professional Political Consultants, said the plans would result in "less transparency" because fewer organisations and

individuals would have to register than under the industry's self-regulatory regime. "The new bill will not capture the 99 per cent of lobbyists who meet regularly with ministers," he said.

The **Public Relations Consultants Association** had outlined the key tests of lobbying legislation before the Bill, and has now updated it to show where it has "passed" and "failed".

The **TUC** said the Bill failed to tackle "rich corporate lobbyists."

The **National Council for Voluntary Organisations** said the Bill was "narrow" in scope, and said it would create a code of good practice for charities involved in lobbying.

Next steps

Second reading of the Bill will take place on Tuesday September 3rd, with three days in committee stage to follow on the 9th, 10th and 11th.

The Labour Party is planning to table a number of amendments to the Bill to "close the loopholes" in the Bill, and make the following changes:

- All professional lobbyists working in the UK will be required to declare their full list of clients on a statutory register and also declare the approximate value of their lobbying activity
- Anyone doing a senior job for the government of the day - whether in-house or a contractor, formally for the party or directly by the government - who is a professional lobbyist must be declared
- Senior officials or ministers leaving government to take up posts in related areas must have their appointment scrutinised by a committee, and potentially have conditions placed on their activities. The same should apply to people coming into senior roles in government

The focus before the Bill was published was on whether businesses or charities should be included on the register. It is therefore possible that amendments may be tabled in an attempt to add this into the Bill.

The consultation on trade union obligations closes on August 16 2013, and will feed into secondary legislation in the Bill.

ACEM

ACEM statistical service reports a 15% decline in the European Powered Two-Wheelers market for 2013 so far.

Since the beginning of 2013 ACEM has been reporting monthly double digit drops. Economic stagnation in southern countries and widespread unemployment rates, especially among young people are the main causes of the troubled situation affecting the PTW market since 2008 keeping the motorcycle market down in May at -15% year to date.

Compared to the previous two months the magnitude of the drop has slowed somewhat. In May alone Powered Two-Wheeler sales in Europe totalled 140.951 units. Compared to the same month in 2012, May 2013 shrunk by 5.7%.

Over the first five months of 2013 510.836* vehicles were sold, compared to 601.031 in 2012.

In the first five months of 2013 motorcycle registrations fell 12.4% while moped sales were down 20.5%.

All countries are recuperating from a dramatically negative month of March caused by unprecedented winter conditions. Germany, losing 16% in March, stands at -5.4% in May. Similarly, Austria (March -25%) drops "only" 5.8% in May.

The United Kingdom is also above EU average with -7,4%, together with Spain -12,2%. Other countries: France -16,7%, Poland -18,4%, The Netherlands -18,7%. Italy with -25%. Figures refer to all categories (2-, 3- and 4-wheeled L-category vehicles).

However,

The Retail Motor Industry Federation says

Motorcycle Market begins to improve

"After a long period of decreasing motorcycle sales it is encouraging to see a boost in registrations during June" said Sue Robinson, Director of the National Motorcycle Dealers Association (NMDA) which represents motorcycle retailers across the UK.

The latest new motorcycle and scooter figures show sales overall were up 3.6% against June 2012. Whilst under 50cc scooter sales were down 16.3% in June, while all larger over 50cc motorcycle sales have increased by 6.4%.

Robinson continued "Whilst sales of smaller bikes continue to suffer, there was strong demand for the larger machines during June, with the custom, touring and endure sectors leading the market.

"Sales of these heavy weight machines over 1000cc have begun to stabilise during 2013 suggesting that this established market with its more mature riders has been less affected by the current financial pressures.

"The NMDA continue to call on motorcycle manufacturers to introduce more customer friendly offers to their forecourts that would boost sales and profit."

Driving Standards Agency

Changes to motorcycle, lorry and bus driving licence and driving test vehicle rules Some rules for motorcycles, lorries and buses used for driving tests are changing to let trainers use more easily available vehicles.

Manufacturers are phasing out production of the types of vehicles that were commonly used in 2000 when the European Commission first introduced the minimum standards.

Alastair Peoples, Chief Executive of the Driving Standards Agency (DSA) said: Today's manufacturers are producing safer, more energy efficient vehicles and the regulations need to change to allow these newer vehicles to be used for driving tests.

"If we don't change the regulations, trainers and operators will find it increasingly difficult to find vehicles that meet the current statutory criteria for driving tests."

Consultation launched

DSA has launched a consultation about the EU directive that introduces these changes to driver licensing and the vehicles that can be used to take the driving test. It runs until 26 August 2013.

Take part in the consultation @ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/motorcycle-lorry-and-bus-driving-licences-and-driving-test-rules>

The changes are:

- updating restriction codes used on driving licences because of new vehicle categories introduced in the EU Third Directive on driving licences which came into effect in January 2013
- changes to the test for non-professional medium-sized lorry drivers (category C1) as shown on the licence by a new restriction code
- removing the need for 8-forward gear ratios for large test vehicles (category C)
- letting people who take a lorry or bus test (category C and D) in an automatic vehicle to get a manual licence for those vehicles, if they've already got a manual licence for any of these (with or without trailers):
 - cars (category B)
 - medium-sized vehicles (category C1)
 - large vehicles (category C)
 - minibuses (category D1)
 - buses (category D)

All of these changes must be introduced by 31 December 2013.

Motorcycle changes

DSA is not consulting on changes that affect motorcycles, as they either:

- add no burden and offer benefits
- must be implemented by the UK because of EU law

These changes will be introduced by 31 December 2013:

- allowing a tolerance of 5cc below the minimum specified engine size for small, medium and large motorcycles that can be used for the test - categories A1, A2 and A
- reducing the minimum engine power requirement for medium motorcycles (category A2) used for the test from 25kW to 20kW

These changes won't be introduced until 31 December 2018:

- raising the minimum engine power requirement for large motorcycles (category A) used for the test from 40kW to 50kW
 - introducing a minimum, mass weight requirement, for large motorcycles (category A) used for the test of 180kg.
-

AROUND GB

Northern Ireland

Motorists in Northern Ireland to be given greater choice and improved services
Roads Minister Stephen Hammond sets out proposals for better and quicker services for Northern Ireland motorists.

Motorists in Northern Ireland will benefit from a better, quicker service under proposals set out today (17 July 2013) by Roads Minister Stephen Hammond. The wide-ranging reforms would ensure parity of service for Northern Ireland motorists with the rest of the UK.

Key to the planned improvements is giving Northern Ireland motorists the ability to tax vehicles online or by telephone for the first time. Motorists would also have access to more vehicle registration and licensing services than ever before at around 150 Post Office® branches across Northern Ireland.

The proposed improvements could result in an estimated £12 million year-on-year saving for the taxpayer.

Roads Minister, Stephen Hammond said: These changes will give customers more choice and flexibility and mean that for the first time, motorists in Northern Ireland will have access to the same services as those across the rest of the UK.

It is right that motorists in Northern Ireland are able to go online or pick up the phone to tax their car at a time and place that suits them. The proposed changes I have announced today (17 July 2013) will ensure the high quality of service continues while giving every motorist in Northern Ireland greater choice and flexibility.

The consultation which is launched today (17 July 2013) will look at modernising the services available to Northern Ireland motorists and centralise the delivery of **vehicle licensing** and registration services at the **DVLA** in Swansea. The consultation will run until 11 September 2013.

Notes

In summary, the consultation - <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/future-of-vehicle-registration-and-licensing-services-in-northern-ireland> seeks views on the proposal to modernise the services available to Northern Ireland motorists and centralise the delivery of **vehicle licensing** and registration services at **DVLA** in Swansea.

The Driver and Vehicle Agency (DVA) is based in Coleraine and provides vehicle registration and licensing services on behalf of **DVLA**. This service is also provided in the Local **Vehicle Licensing** Offices in, Armagh, Ballymena, Belfast, Downpatrick, Enniskillen, Londonderry and Omagh.

Motorists in Great Britain have been able to tax their vehicle online or by phone since 2004. As part of the changes announced today (17 July 2013) in the consultation, motorists in Northern Ireland would, for the first time, be able to tax their vehicle online or by automated phone. There will be more telephone lines available providing a quick service and will be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from home, work or abroad. They will also be able to tell **DVLA** that their vehicle is being kept off the road in the same way, as well as having access to more vehicle registration and licensing services at around 150 Post Office® branches across the country.

Under the proposals the DVA would no longer provide vehicle registration and licensing services for Northern Ireland motorists. **DVLA** in Swansea would be responsible for all vehicle registration and licensing in the UK.

Driver licensing is a devolved matter in Northern Ireland and will remain the responsibility of DVA.

LONDON

Ace Cafe - Three Days, Three Rides, One Reunion!

Taking place over three days in September, the 19th annual Ace Cafe Reunion Weekend and Ride With The Rockers this year not only celebrates the unique history, culture and style of Ace Cafe London and what it represents, but also the 75th anniversary of the cafe having originally opened in 1938. The event acts as a focus in the motorcycling calendar for all those who are not only interested in the Ace Cafe, Ton Up and Rocker heritage, but also for many others who enjoy a weekend full of rock 'n' roll and fun!

The outline for the weekend is as follows:

Friday 13th September from 6pm – The Continental Run Ride-In

Saturday 14th September – Cafe Racer and Rockers Ride-Out

Depart: 10.30am

Destination: Battersea Park (Central London)

Sunday 15th September – Brighton Burn-Up and Ride With The Rockers

Depart: 10.30am

Route: A406 – A40 – M25 – M23 – A23 to Madeira Drive, Brighton Seafront

Over the years, Ace Cafe London has forged lasting and strong links to the global motorcycling and rockin' community, which is reflected by the many visitors from overseas. One of the largest contingents is The Continental Run, this year powered by BMW Motorrad celebrating the 90th anniversary of their producing motorcycles. They will be kicking off with a party on Thursday 12th September at Cafe Hubraum in Solingen, Germany, before departing the next morning to cross Holland, Belgium and France – gathering numbers en route – to the ferry, arriving at the Ace late Friday afternoon. The evening will carry on the party, with live rock 'n' roll from the band Serious Charge and DJs Bill and Jimmy Guntrip, who will get the weekend started with a bang!

On Saturday 14th September, at about 7.50am, it's full steam ahead as the 70000 Britannia, the first of 55 Standard Class railway locomotives built in Crewe, 1951, by British Railways and capable of speeds in excess of the ton, steams past the cafe over the bridges close by at Stonebridge Park!

At 10.30am the Cafe Racer and Rockers Ride-Out to London's historic Battersea Park will depart from the cafe, led again this year by the Limited Edition Ace 904S Thrupton Special, returning to the Ace for the 5th annual Cafe Racer Review, this year including celebrations of the 110th anniversary of Harley Davidson, the 90th anniversary of BMW's Boxer and the 50th anniversary of Royal Enfield's Continental. There will be prizes for the best cafe racers based on these marques, as well as for the Best Ridden Cafe Racers, Best Classic Cafe Racer, Best Modern Cafe Racer and Best Triumph Cafe Racer.

Sponsors of the competitions include: Lewis Leathers, Red Torpedo, Lucky 13, 19-60, Prison Blues, Delta Music, Veetone Records, Jack Lilley Triumph and Warrs HD, with awards and prizes being presented on the Ace stage from 2.30pm.

Returning for Ace Cafe Reunion 2013, we are again delighted to host Manx man an renowned author Mick Duckworth who will be signing copies of his definitive hard back book *Ace Times – Speed thrills and tea spills, a cafe and a culture*.

The feisty London Rockin' Rollers who have been rollin' with the punches since 2007, will be with us again, raising funds on Saturday 14th September for The Samaritans, the cafe's chosen charity, which celebrates their 60th anniversary this year having been founded in 1953 by the late Rev. Chad Varah.

On Sunday 15th September in Brighton, as well as an array of club, trade stands and live bands, the annual short seafront service and blessing is being kindly undertaken by Father Denis of the 59 Club, which, as well as being a church charity, is also a motorcycle club, following a visit to the Ace by the late Father Bill Shergold in 1962.

The Brighton Burn Up and Ride With The Rockers has been an integral part of Ace Cafe Reunions since 1996 and is a free, grand day out at the seaside on Brighton's famous seafront road, Madeira Drive. With trade and club stands, stunt displays, live music and special guests, it's an experience not to be missed!

There will also be a Best Scooter competition on the seafront, with prizes sponsored by Dr Martens new Brighton store, with a pair of Cherry Red Vintage 8-eye DM boots!

As part of Battle of Britain Week and with Sunday being Battle of Britain Day, the cafe's chosen charity RAFA Wings Appeal will be in attendance and, for your convenience, the charity Riders For Health will be on the seafront with a helmet park, where you can leave your gear and enjoy the day.

Road Safety Knowledge Centre team.

Further studies of the skid resistance of asphalt surfaces in their early life: TRL (DOP: 3/13)

For some years it has been known that new asphalt surfacings have different skid resistance properties to surfaces that have been in service for some time. This report provides the results of a study to investigate the physical phenomena associated with the early life condition of new asphalt.

<http://www.roadsafetyknowledgecentre.org.uk/knowledge/1141.html>

France: compulsory reflective stickers on all helmets. March 16, 2013

In early January of this year, we advised all our readers that the current French Interior Minister, Manuel Valls, had decided to scrap his predecessor's ludicrous proposals for all motorcyclists to wear any form of reflective clothing while riding their motorbike or scooter. Unfortunately, there has been for some time another (stupid) piece of legislation forcing all

bikers in France, whether residents or visitors, to wear a helmet with reflective stickers on, and this one has not been scrapped. Bikers caught wearing a helmet without stickers may face a 135 euros fine payable on the spot and 3 points taken off their licence. The police have recently been enforcing this rule quite severely in Paris and other locations throughout France.

All helmets must have four reflective stickers: one on the front, one at the rear and one on each side. The surface of each sticker must be 18 cm² and, within each sticker, you must be able to draw a 40 mm diameter circle, or a 12.50 cm² rectangle with a minimum of 20 mm length, as shown on the below picture.

Helmets with stickers

Rest assured, when you buy a new helmet in France, compliant stickers usually come with it, however, it is your responsibility to correctly stick them on your helmet. There is one more requirement which is that the stickers should not be removable without damaging the helmet and must remain reflective over time. They must also be water resistant and not interfere with the opening and closing mechanism of the helmet (if applicable). If you live in the United Kingdom (or any other country for that matter) and intend to visit France on motorised two or three wheels, you must by law enter France with compliant reflective stickers on your helmet. It is entirely your choice whether you do or not, but if a nasty policeman in a bad mood spots you with no compliant stickers on your helmet, you may find yourself being given a hard time.

As far as we know, France is the only country in the entire world that requires reflective stickers on helmets. We all know very well that the current French socialist president, François Hollande, has no interest other than stealth tax everyone in that country to fund the huge public deficit, so this piece of legislation, which has been in place for some time, is unlikely to be scrapped. On a much wider scale, he has already made thousands of French citizens leave their country and take advantage of the free mobility and relaxed immigration rules within the European Union to escape from the French tax system, which is one with the highest tax rates in the world. Thousands of French citizens have decided to relocate to the neighbouring United Kingdom where London is the sixth largest ³French city², a large proportion of whom have done so purely to escape from the French tax system and the on-going pressures and economic uncertainties in the euro zone. This piece of legislation to force all bikers to have reflective stickers on their helmet, which could have been scrapped considering its stupidity, is a typical example of the current French government's practice to grab any ³centime² they possibly can by deliberately introducing ridiculous laws which the vast majority of residents and visitors would find useless and ignore. Can you imagine how many bikers the French police may have caught so far not having compliant stickers on their helmet and how much they may have cashed in on behalf of the French government?

Motorcyclists are already obliged to ride with their bike's head lights (front and rear) switched on, is this not enough to remain visible at all times? Reflective stickers, like any reflective clothing in general, are precisely not reflective during day light, so where is the logic in this law?

Let's see how long the reputable and most respected FFMC (Fédération Française des Motards en Colère) will take to force the government to reverse this stupid and money grabbing piece of legislation, now that it is being enforced. In the meantime, you have been warned put stickers on your helmet or you may get done (or else don't ride in France all together)! It is time that the French government starts to treat motorcyclists like responsible adults and not like children to whom apply punitive rules.