

Presidents Message



Well it's that time again to put pen to paper and reflect on how things are going. I'm really pleased to see the work that has been going in to build our membership, with

advanced tests coming through for more riders and drivers, more observers coming on board it seems like weekly, and even a new region with the Top of the South team now joining us at our Executive meetings and being signed off to conduct examinations in their region. I'm keen to see sustainable growth continuing as there's always more demand than we can cope with, and what excites me is to see us getting to that tipping point where we can do more and more. I remain in awe of the tireless efforts of our observers, examiners and Executive members who give so much of their time towards making us all safer riders and drivers, and look forward to the next AGM in Christchurch.

As most of you know, I'm completely immersed in motorcycle safety as ACC's new Senior Injury Prevention Programme Manager for Motorcycles (and that's a real mouthful). It's not just motorcycles though, as I sit in ACC's wider road team, and it's fantastic to work amongst people who genuinely want to make it safer out there for all road users.

This role sees me working alongside the Motorcycle Safety Advisory Council

(MSAC) and sector partners including NZTA, MOT and Police. I was absolutely pleased to attend the recent "Shiny Side Up" motorcycle event at Southwards Car Museum. Peter Hookham was there with the Wellington Regional team, and us ACC folk had the Ride Forever tent up. We pointed more advanced riders to IAM and those that needed a lot of work first got pointed towards the appropriate level Ride Forever courses. We had demonstrations on ABS braking and machine control presentations on safe gear with the inspirational Brittany Morrow (www.rockthegear.org) and Suspension and bike ergonomics demonstrations by Dave Moss (<https://www.facebook.com/davemosstuning>). We had some great conversations about training and it was heartening to see the real interest in increasing skills and how we can focus on safety at an event in an enjoyable way.

Teaser

Which Manufacturer makes the most tyres per year?



Answer

The company making the most tyres in a year is the Lego Group, making a staggering 318 million or an amazing 870,000 every day of the year.

Waikato Road Deaths



The Waikato's road toll is the highest it has been in five years, a new report shows.

Waikato Regional Council transport committee chair Hugh Vercoe said the road toll is "way too high" after the region recorded the greatest number of road fatalities nationally.

"Collectively, we need to sharply reduce the number of road crashes to end deaths, injury and heartache for too many families."

Each week, there are on average 70 crashes in the Waikato. Five of those result in a death or serious injury.

"We are driving too fast for our roads and it's killing us. We should consider the right speed for the road every time we drive. Many of our roads are unforgiving and leave no room for error. We need to drive to the conditions," he said in a release.

Last year, 68 people died on Waikato's roads, according to a report presented to the committee on Monday. This accounted for 21 per cent of the national road toll - 16 more than the next highest region, which was Auckland.

Waikato Road Policing Manager Inspector Freda Grace told the meeting that 18 people had died in crashes in the wider Waikato so far this year.

"Waikato's share of these is still way too high," Mr. Vercoe said.

"Agencies are working hard to curb the number of road crashes in the wider region, but motorists using our roads need to heed safety messages to help end this carnage," Mr. Vercoe said. He said the committee aims to halve the annual regional road toll by 2040 from the 2004-08 average of 79.

Multiple agencies are working to take a regional approach to speed management and carry out targeted education initiatives under the Reduce the Risk banner, he said.

Mr. Vercoe said agencies were particularly concerned about the number of motorcyclists dying in the Waikato. One focus is therefore on promoting safety messages to people returning to motorbikes after time away and first-time riders.

Four of the 18 Waikato deaths this year – 22 per cent – involved motorcyclists.

"However, while agencies need to play their part in cutting the toll, we also need the general public to be part of the solution."

Ack Te Awamutu Police Facebook Page.

Personalised Plates.

Mark Revill-Johnson

These little self-indulgences have fascinated me for a long time. In many cases they are used as a business advertising tool so that the vehicle is a mobile advertising tool, such as the Westpac vehicles that bear WPAC and one or two digits to follow, or H2O MAN on a plumber's van and of course our own motorcycle Chief Examiner

1PSGA

There are the common or garden names that conveniently fit into the permitted 6 characters. Now these are not usually a source of admiration or amusement but there is one that is to be seen around Rotorua that proudly announces "IM JUDY" only the letter I is actually a numeral 1.

1MJUDY

I'd say the majority of people will see this as it is intended. However, those people who are or have been police officers in New Zealand will no doubt already have figured out why this number plate has amused me. For the uninitiated the chuckles are caused by the fact that 1M is the police code for an incident involving a mentally disordered person. I'm fairly sure that JUDY has never been stopped by the local Police!

However, I have to admire the inventiveness of some people when they think up their ideas for plates that reflect their interests or hobbies or whatever else. For example

INSP71

I happen to know that this is owned by a big fan of Clint Eastwood's "Dirty Harry" (Inspector 71)

WEBLIS

Often seen in Taupo and clearly a big fan of rugby. (Webb Ellis)

NR4D

Seen in different places in the Bay of Plenty on a Ford Falcon. Clearly a homage to the company's founder Henry Ford.

YZXY

Now this one really had me for a couple of weeks. I didn't take long to work out that the YZ represented "Wise". This is a fairly common usage. The XY on the other hand took much longer, and it was only through a chance conversation that the connection was made. The clue was genetics. And the XY Chromosome is male. The penny dropped! The plate says..... Wise Man! Not in my case obviously!

No doubt there are many more of these clever ones about. Feel free to send them in for future newsletters.

Motorcycle Airbag Jacket

Carey Griffiths

I remember my amusement when Honda released the Goldwing with an airbag, thinking it would never catch on. And the bike mounted airbag hasn't on bikes generally, but I have been looking at some of the technologies available to protect riders, who have not benefited to the same extent as car drivers from new safety technologies.

Internationally, the primary causes of rider death are head trauma and trauma to the thorax and internal organs and spinal area. Limbs get damaged but generally damage to limbs won't kill you.

Helmet choice is obvious but there's little on the market to protect the front of the body from impacts with solid objects. Moto GP riders are now making the use of integrated suit airbag technologies, so I have had a look at those available that don't require complex electronics either in the jacket or vest, or on the bike (which tends to make them costly).

I have been quite impressed with the tethered airbag vests available and recently obtained a sample of a Helite Airbag Vest to have a look at. It tethers to the bike and goes off if you come off. It won't go off by simply forgetting to unhook it when you dismount, and can be re-used simply by replacing the CO2 cartridge. It's not as bulky as you'd expect and is a bit thicker than a standard hi vis vest. There's a review at: <http://www.webbikeworld.com/r4/helite-airbag-vest/> and you can see an airbag vest in action at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BQuAtAZsWp8&feature=youtu.be>

It's not just about vests either. More and more manufacturers are integrating the technology into jackets, and there's an example here: <http://www.webbikeworld.com/r5/helite-adventure-airbag-jacket-review/>

I have been talking to riders about whether they'd use such technologies and the views are mixed. A big issue is cost. Vests are about a thousand dollars at this stage, but as Duncan Seed pointed out, over 5 years that was about a cup of coffee a week and he felt his safety was worth more than that. Some folk don't see the need for them, some aren't sure about how they work, some don't want to pay that much. Yes, vests are expensive, especially on top of a jacket and I rather suspect that the jackets with the integrated airbag will win that argument.

Anyhow, have a look for yourself and see what you think.



Shiny Side Up Event



The highly anticipated event Shiny Side Up, hosted by Greater Wellington Regional Council, New Zealand Transport Agency and Accident Compensation Corporation, was held on Sunday 21st February, at Southwards Car Museum

The inaugural Shiny Side Up Bike Fest saw lots of stunning bikes on display (including some of the museum's), and heaps of things to see, do and enjoy – all with a motorcycle connection.

The day included a riding display by the NZ Police team, music, food and coffee stalls, discounted museum entry, plus a whole lot more.

Top riding instructors and racers were present, the inspirational Brittany Morrow (icon of rockthegear.org), Avalon Biddle, Ian 'Afterburner 2' Wilkins, and US-based suspension guru Dave Moss. The public were encouraged to come along, meet the experts and get some tips on technique, set-up and advanced riding.

The I.A.M. stand was situated close to the A.C.C. stand and there was a lot of cross-referring done between the two, dependent on which was the more appropriate place for rider enquiries. A fine example of collaboration between organisations working towards a common goal, attacking the issue from different directions.

Thank you to Davey Uprichard and Paul Kane who stuck around all day talking to interested people at our stand. Some of us don't have the gift of the gab like that, so the help was much appreciated. Peter Hookham did a fantastic job arranging a spot for us and setting it up on the day.



The Southward Car Museum is an automobile museum housing a collection of over 250 vehicles, as well as three aircraft, located on Otaihanga Road, Otaihanga, just north of Paraparaumu on the Kapiti Coast.



Test Passes

John Stephens

Anita Dekker

Greg Steel

Lloyd Hollis

Alan Hockey

Qualified Observer

Malcom Prebble – Mentored by John Heebink

Cat Merrick – Mentored by most of the Wellington Group! (belatedly from December 2015)

Congratulations everyone on your achievements and your commitment to safer roads in NZ.

Senior Observer

Jarrold Kirk

Editor's note.

I'd like this to be a constant part of the Newsletter. In this case I've trawled through the new Group Facebook pages for notifications, so my apologies for those who have been missed out. At present the Motorcycle sections are pretty good at announcing the passes. Hopefully in the next issue we may see some more from the Car and Heavy Vehicle sections.

Editorial

Due to pressures on his time, Peter Henson has stepped aside from his duties as Newsletter Editor. Thanks Peter for your dedication and efforts in preparing past newsletters.

As the co-editor I have rather rapidly put this edition together in order to get a newsletter out before the end of March.

I'm hopeful that the next one will be a little more organised, though of course I have similar demands on my time as Peter does.

Nonetheless it's an honour to put something back into the organisation that has given me so much, both in the UK and in NZ.

So far we have only one regular contributor aside from the President and Chief Examiners. Please do feel free to send me little snippets for inclusion.

Useful things are those such as public events that IAM groups have attended or assisted with. The Shiny Side Up event in Wellington is a great example of this.

Do keep an eye on your local group Facebook pages and contribute your thoughts, photos and comments. Keeping us all up to date with new information and developments in road safety helps us all to keep spreading the message – Better trained road users are safer road users, whether on two wheels or four.

You can send me things via email to mrevj@hotmail.com (Check the "read Receipt" box so you'll know when I have opened it – and be sure you haven't been classified as Junk!)