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## **Motorcycle Licence Recommendations for Improving Safety**

*Submission from Livestock SA, February 2018*

Livestock SA, which represents beef cattle, sheep and goat producers across South Australia, appreciates receiving the invitation to make a submission on the motorcycle licence recommendations for improving safety.

The Centre for Automotive Safety Research report: *Recommendations for a Graduated Licensing System for Motorcyclists in South Australia* includes the following recommendations:

- Raising the minimum age to gain a motorcycle learner permit from 16 to 18.
- Introducing a minimum tenure of six months to hold a motorcycle learner permit.
- Prohibiting riders on learner permits and R-Date licences from carrying pillion passengers, riding between midnight and 5am, riding with any concentration of alcohol or prescribed drugs, towing a trailer, using a mobile phone (whether hand-held or hands-free).
- A minimum tenure of three years for R-Date riders.
- A lower demerit point threshold for R-Date riders.
- Restricting riding to an automatic motorcycle if tested on one.
- Requiring learner riders to wear high visibility clothing.
- Requiring training and licensing for people wishing to ride a moped.
- Introducing an on-road component to the motorcycle licence testing process.
- Including a motorcycle specific Hazard Perception Test to the motorcycle licence testing process.

It is the first recommendation that this submission addresses.

### **Raising the minimum age to gain a motorcycle learner permit from 16 to 18.**

Of the ten recommendations listed, this is the one of most concern to livestock producers in South Australia.

This proposal would raise the age for legal motorcycle riding on public roads to at least 18 years. This is far too restrictive for South Australian agriculture where motor cycles are an essential part of the business.

For people in agriculture, this means that young farmers under the age of 18 cannot cross a road or move down a road on a motor bike to other parts of their own family farm or travel along public roads near where they are living and working.

In the pastoral industry in particular, currently young people under 18 are recruited and it is essential they can ride motorcycles which are used extensively for moving and managing livestock. As often public roads run through these properties, a basic motorcycle licence is required.

In the rural community, many young people get a motor cycle licence so that they can also transport themselves around to get to work (particularly for part-time, off-farm employment) and for education, sporting and social activities. It should be noted that there is also no public transport in rural areas.

If this recommendation was to be implemented, there is a need for a special provision for young people involved in farming. As one solution, Livestock SA suggests that where the motor cycle is owned by a Primary Producer, the rider can get a Learner's permit under the same conditions that currently apply (minimum age 16), but then must hold that Learner's permit until he/she is the same age as all other riders to come off their Learner's permits (at least aged over 18).

Livestock SA is very aware that road safety and reducing motorcycle accidents and fatalities is paramount, but if the other recommendations in this report are implemented this should assist. Fortunately, the figures for South Australia from 2012 to 2016 show that for riders involved in fatal crashes, only 7% were on learner permits - but this is still four riders which is four too many.

Rather than raising the minimum age, there needs to be an increased emphasis on driver and rider education. This needs to start in schools. Farm children gain experience in driving and riding well before turning 16 through involvement with farm machinery, vehicles and bikes, and driving off-road. But even for farm children the safety message needs to be reinforced.

As part of any training courses, it is essential that the current provision be continued for riders in rural areas so that they do not need to complete rider safe training courses in the city and instead are able to undertake tests (both theory and practical) administered by local Police Officers. To do otherwise would be impractical.

Any changes made must work for South Australian rural people, so they can continue to live safely but also continue their business.

Livestock SA is concerned that raising the minimum age to gain a motorcycle learner permit will impact negatively on work and education opportunities for young people in country areas.