

Joint letter calling for better basic training to improve motorcyclists' safety

The Rt Hon Mark Harper MP
Secretary of State for Transport
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
SW1A 4DR

18 / 07 / 2023

Dear Secretary of State,

Improving Compulsory Basic Training (CBT) for motorcycles will make a huge impact on the safety of the United Kingdom's roads. This letter is signed by representatives from the business sector, local government, road safety charities and motorcycle rider representative organisations, led by the Motor Cycle Industry Association (MCIA), and the National Motorcyclists Council (NMC)¹. We have come together to consider what initiatives can be taken forward to enhance safety.

Nationally, in 2021 motorcycles comprised under one per cent of traffic but accounted for 20 per cent of people Killed or Seriously Injured (KSI), and 20 per cent of those killed. In London people riding motorcycles, mopeds and scooters represent approximately 2.6 percent of the motorised traffic, but tragically have accounted for around 27 per cent of deaths and serious injuries over the last five years. The most frequently injured are riders on low-powered bikes and scooters who are riding on L-plates. We estimate up to 40,000 riders work in the motorcycle courier industry, and this sector is growing. This problem affects cities across the UK, with many reporting that a significant percentage of deaths and serious injuries on their roads come from people motorcycling.

In London, TfL is working in partnership with the food delivery industry specifically to improve safety for their riders and other road users. However, the current CBT for motorcycles and mopeds – which enables people as young as 17 years to ride motorcycles up to the national speed limit with L-plates after one day of training and without a theory test – was developed over 30 years ago. We believe the CBT needs to be revised by government.

Following a 2016 Department for Transport consultation (Improving Moped and Motorcycle Training²), the Driver & Vehicle Standards Agency issued a response on 19 December 2017 supporting several changes to motorcycle CBT and other related areas. This was also announced by the minister at the time, Jesse Norman, who we know is a current member of your ministerial team. We'd welcome the opportunity to work with him on these essential changes which have wide ranging support across different local authorities, the business sector, road safety charities and motorcycle users groups. When introduced, the changes will greatly enhance safety, but they have yet to be implemented. We would like to draw your attention to these and to request that these changes are now implemented.

The changes cover the following areas:

- a training course to upgrade motorcycle licence entitlements
- powers to revoke CBT certificates or take other measures for learner riders who have accrued six penalty points

¹ The MCIA represents the supply side of the UK L-Category Powered Light Vehicle (PLV) industry. The NMC represents the largest coalition of UK motorcycle user and user related organisations, with membership including road safety interests.

²https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/668960/improving-moped-motorcycle-training-response-to-consultation.pdf

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- learners who complete their CBT course on a machine with automatic transmission being restricted to riding an automatic machine
- how riders with such a restriction would be able to upgrade their entitlement to manual
- a combined CBT and DAS instructor qualification assessment
- limiting the time period that down-trained instructors can give instruction
- changes to the CBT syllabus, including requiring instructors to ensure trainees are appropriately dressed
- condensing the five elements of CBT to four
- strengthening the quality assurance scheme for motorcycle instructors
- a theory test as part of or prior to CBT
- digitising the CBT administration process
- earned recognition.

We consider these changes to be fundamentally important to the development of safer motorcycling across the UK. As mentioned above, they are widely supported by the vast majority of UK safety stakeholders, industry and motorcycling organisations, as well as public authorities at a local and regional level.

We believe this is urgent. In the five years since the results of the consultation were issued, 1,634 people have been killed and nearly 30,000 have been seriously injured while riding a motorcycle in Britain.

The good news is that a number of the changes can be implemented quickly via statutory instrument. Some others require primary legislation, but we urge that work should commence to draft this potentially life-saving legislation, so that it is ready for when a suitable opportunity emerges. We would draw your attention to the implementation plan on page 43-44 of the attached document 'Improving Moped and Motorcycle Training; Response to Consultation'.³

We know that you will want to act quickly to stop these preventable deaths and injuries and ask that this matter is given urgent attention.

We would be delighted to discuss these matters with you further and stand ready to meet you. In the meantime, we urge you to commence action to implement the 2017 consultation response.

We look forward to your reply.

Yours faithfully,



Tony Campbell, Chief Executive, the Motor Cycle Industry Association



Craig Carey-Clinch, the National Motorcyclists Council



³ Ibid

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Lilli Matson, Chief Safety, Health and Environment Officer, Transport for London



Ross Moorlock, Interim CEO, Brake



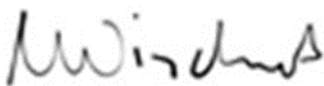
Nick Simmons, CEO, RoadPeace



Tobyn Hughes, Managing Director, Transport North East



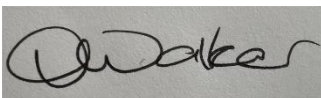
Mark Corbin, Director Network Resilience, Transport for West Midlands



Margaret Winchcomb, Deputy Executive Director, Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety (PACTS)



Eamonn Boylan, Chief Executive, Transport for Greater Manchester



David Walker, Head of Road and Leisure Safety, Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA)

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Lindsey', written in a cursive style.

Darren J Lindsey, Director, Project EDWARD