

The most urgent political priorities for the industry can be summarised as **safety, environment and acceptance in transport policies**. But within these lies a very large agenda, most of which needs to be addressed in order to achieve industry benefits in the three key areas. However, the most urgent issues can be defined thus:

## 1. Safety

- Campaigning to ensure that adequate Multi Purpose motorcycle test sites are in place for the new motorcycle test
- Reducing casualty numbers
- Encouraging Government and local authorities to implement guidelines on roads infrastructure safety
- Getting bikes into bus lanes

## 2. Environment

- Creating an environmental case for PTWs – particularly on CO<sub>2</sub>. Our key message is that currently, the fleet of new PTWs produces 110g/km of CO<sub>2</sub> on average. This compares favourably to EC targets of 120g/km for cars (130 through technology and 10 through complementary measures such as eco driving)

## 3. Transport Policy

- Implementation of the Government's Motorcycle Strategy
- Arguing PTW credentials as transport which can contribute to society's aims (mobility & environment)
- 'Mainstreaming' PTWs i.e. lobbying for PTWs to be given fair and supported status as a low polluting, zero congesting form of transport (safety is holding this up). The new Government policy framework 'Towards a Sustainable Transport Policy' is a key item of work in this area.



*Challenging confusing road signs can help improve road safety*

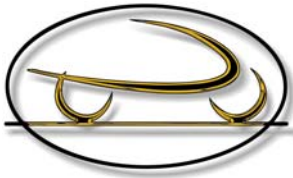
Within these core areas is a programme of activities aimed at the main political institutions and other public and private organisations. MCI is also replicating some of this activity with our European partners at ACEM (European industry) level.

During 2008, MCI has also been involved in a number of specific campaigns that are linked to the core areas.

## Now's The Time



The Now's The Time (NTT) campaign was launched in 2007 to encourage people to take and pass their motorcycle tests in advance of the introduction of European legislation which will introduce new elements to the motorcycle test. The new rules were due to be introduced on September 29th 2008.



Previous experience shows that changes to the bike test often herald a temporary reduction in the new motorcycle market, as the public take time to get used to the new rules. MCI's aim is to minimise this 'trough' and at the same time spread the word about the benefits of motorcycling.

In 2007, the campaign led to an increased uptake of motorcycle tests, even during periods of the year when fewer people normally present themselves for a test to get their full licenses.

In 2008, the NTT campaign reinforced the key themes of 2007, but as the deadline for the new test approaches, the campaign is evolving to provide a more generic message about the benefits of biking to the non motorcycling public.



*Bike Squads Say Yes to Two Wheels*

## Licensing Test Centres

Linked to NTT has been an underlying campaign to ensure that there will be adequate test sites available when the test changes. The Driving Standards Agency (DSA) had already announced that motorcycle tests would be focussed on new 'Multi Purpose Test Centres' (MPTC). Their proposals will reduce the number of test centres by 80%, with a planned 66 MPTC replacing the current 260 sites.

If things had gone as planned, the new MPTC arrangements would have provided reasonably adequate coverage for motorcycle test candidates (though with some significant holes). But as 2008 has progressed, it's become increasingly apparent that the DSA have underestimated the scale of the task involved in changing the system and as of September 2008, only 39 sites were finished.

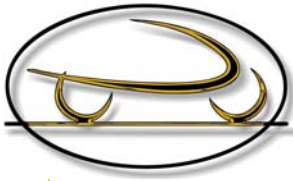
As a result of this and other indications that the testing system could fall into administrative chaos after September, the MCI called for Ministers to delay the implementation of the new testing system by six months. This has been successful and the Industry is working with the DSA and other stakeholders to introduce measures which will give riders safe and easy access to motorcycling, in place by the new deadline of March 30th 2009.

## Bus Lane Access

Since 2003, MCI has been working with Transport for London (TfL) on an experimental scheme to allow access to bus lanes on certain London routes. The scheme resulted in a TfL report which contained good news about the initiative, with safety benefits noted among all road user groups, including cyclists, if motorcycles were allowed access to bus lanes.



*Bikes Getting More Access to Bus Lanes*



This report was submitted to former Mayor Livingstone, who for political reasons of his own decided not to accept TfL's findings and ordered a rewrite, removing certain parts of the research, creating a neutral safety result.

A leak of the original report sparked a political and media storm, heightened by the looming London Mayoral Election campaign.

Access to bus lanes is seen as key to creating an environment that reduces motorcycle rider vulnerability and improves access to towns and cities. It is very much a benchmark issue when it comes to judging how well motorcycling is catered for in traffic.

MCI launched a media and political campaign to expose the scandal and called for opposition candidates to support motorcycles in bus lanes. Boris Johnson supported MCI's call and in his first days as the new Mayor of London announced that motorcycles would indeed be allowed access to the network of roads controlled by TfL.

## Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) Evasion

One of the more pleasurable successes of 2008 was finally blowing the myth that a third of motorcyclists don't pay their road tax. The Public Accounts Committee held an enquiry into VED evasion and although MCI submitted evidence regarding our concerns about the methodology for detecting VED evasion, the Committee produced a report that supported claims about high rates of VED evasion among bikers.

MCI responded by providing further evidence and in tandem with this, the DfT announced new VED evasion rates for 2007 using a more accurate methodology. This reduced motorcycle evasion from a third to under 10%.

The Public Accounts Committee issued an apology and DfT officials were hauled before the Committee to explain how they had got the evasion issue so wrong for so many years.

This was an interesting campaign to deal with, as the notion of high VED evasion rates among bikers helps to perpetuate an image of motorcyclists as irresponsible. The wider policy implications of this negative view are clear.