

DRAFT AMC POSITION PAPER
NATIONAL GRADUATED LICENSING SCHEME (GLS)
for
MOTORCYCLE & SCOOTER RIDER TRAINING AND LICENSING

ELIGIBLE AGE

In recent times some states have increased the minimum age for a motorcycle learner permit to that commensurate with or higher than the provisional licence age for a car. This has been largely based on advice that motorcycle riding is a higher order skill than that of car driving and also on the belief that if a person is licensed to drive a car they may be less likely to pursue the riskier activity of motorcycle riding.

There is very little evidence to support this view and the AMC finds this to be discriminatory against those wanting to enter motorcycling.

The AMC recommends that the eligible age for obtaining a motorcycle learner permit under a national GLS becomes 16 years and 6 months. Further the AMC recommends that the eligible age for obtaining a motorcycle provisional licence becomes 17 years.

TRAINING

There is no empirical evidence that rider training reduces motorcycle crash risk. However, government initiated rider training (either voluntary or compulsory) exists as part of the current licensing scheme in all states and territories except Western Australia.

The training differs markedly between states in duration, content and cost and is delivered by accredited training providers that in many states also provide the tests of skill and knowledge that are the only means through which novice riders can gain a licence.

Rider training therefore is an integral part of motorcycle licensing programs across most of Australia.

TRAINING CURRICULUM

Competency Based Training and Assessment

Competency Based Training and Assessment (CBTA) by definition requires that a student progresses at their own individual pace through various competencies (usually in a sequential order) and demonstrates "competency" of each task

before progressing to the next. This requires an open-ended duration within the learning environment for each student until completion of all competencies.

Progressing at their own pace would be logistically impossible within the current style of training in Australia; usually a set course with a set duration for a set fee. None of the current state and territory training systems are true CBTA programs

The NSW course claims to be competency based but is in reality a CBTA de-facto that expresses the objectives in a competency form but actually requires the students to proceed through the course very much in a lock-step teaching approach although some opportunity is provided for students that do not achieve competence to return for further tuition on a one-to-one basis.

The other major difficulty with true CBTA is that of ensuring that the numerous accredited private providers can actually structure their teaching programs to accommodate students progressing at their own rate. There seems to be more than enough difficulties in getting the accredited providers to follow the stipulated competencies of the various state and territory training curricula.

The AMC does not recommend following a true CBTA curriculum for the GLS.

Best Practice (Australia)

The RTA NSW training and assessment curriculum is considered by the AMC as currently best practice in Australia and incorporates most of the elements of leading international training curricula and course structure with its specified competencies, balance of riding range exercises, classroom knowledge and on-road riding training/assessment. This curriculum has also been adopted by Tasmania since 2005.

The AMC recommends the NSW model for motorcycle training and licensing is used as the basis for a national motorcycle and scooter GLS.

Licensing for riders of scooters (step through, automatic transmission machines) varies between states ranging from permission to ride with a car licence to that of requiring motorcycle training and licensing.

In New South Wales scooter riders are required to complete the Learner training program and are issued with a restricted "automatic" learner licence to ride scooters of up to 160cc. After 3 months the scooter rider may pass the P Skill test on the automatic scooter and be issued with a restricted Provisional licence. This may be upgraded at any time to a motorcycle licence by completing the provisional training course on a motorcycle with a manual gearbox and being issued with a motorcycle provisional licence. The normal requirements of motorcycle learner and provisional licence duration and restrictions apply to both scooter and motorcycle licences.

The AMC recommends that the NSW model for scooter licensing is adopted for a national motorcycle and scooter GLS.

The AMC recommends the establishment of an expert committee consisting of qualified rider trainers, rider representatives and researchers with riding experience to identify best practice elements from among current state and territory curricula and to develop a national model for training and assessment of motorcycle and scooter riders in Australia.

Care should be exercised to ensure that the content of the training/assessment is achievable. For example, in Queensland's Q-Ride Training Program, under the Apply Roadcraft section, the "assessment environment" stipulates:

b. All available road systems including:

- b1 one way roads
- b2 marked and unmarked roads of varying width
- b3 merge/exit lanes
- b4 unsealed surfaces
- b5 curves/bends
- b6 roundabouts
- b7 marked and unmarked driving lanes
- b8 intersections (combination, staggered, cross roads and T-Intersections)
- b9 controlled and uncontrolled intersections (signs, lights)
- b10 directional markings and signs
- b11 edge lines
- b12 pedestrian, children's and level crossings
- b13 various speed zones
- b14 varying traffic density

It is doubtful that accredited providers would employ all these road systems in their on-road training and assessment. It would be far more important to ensure learners demonstrate appropriate visual scanning, hazard perception, safest positioning of the m/c and speed appropriate for the conditions in a variety of strategic traffic conditions / roadway characteristics and are assessed using appropriate checklists.

no throttle
control?

Further, it is recommended that the three critical skills vital to rider survival of **braking** (the #1 primary skill for riders) **swerving** (being able to steer around a hazard) and **riding curves** (a situation which results in a third of rider fatalities annually) be afforded much more emphasis and competence in the off-road part of the training curriculum.

These three critical skills were identified by A. James McKnight in the early 1980's as essential components for the remedial skills training component of the *Improved motorcyclist licensing and testing project* Anderson, J. W., Ford, J. L. & Peck, R. C. (1980) and are still valid today as important vehicle control skills within a comprehensive training and licensing program.

Training/Assessment Stages and Duration

An **initial Learner stage** where the student

- learns/identifies an understanding of the risks of motorcycling and the value of protective clothing

- and also learns/demonstrates competence of the basic controls, mounting/dismounting, starting engine and low speed operation.

Duration approx 4 hrs

A consolidation Learner stage where the student

- learns/demonstrates competence of the fundamental control skills of changing gears, turning corners, riding curves within marked pathways, stopping at a point and stopping quickly on command (this to be initially demonstrated at 25-30km/h and then at 35-40km/h)
- learns/demonstrates competence of appropriate visual scanning, safe positioning of the m/c, wearing appropriate protective clothing, hazard detection and response and road rules applicable to riders
- satisfactorily passes a knowledge test of riding techniques and road rules based on information in a motorcycle handbook.

Duration approx 8 hrs

(2 x 4 hr sessions)

Students demonstrating competence at this point and passing the knowledge test and other eligibility requirements (proof of identity and age) would be issued with a learner permit and be allowed to ride solo on road to gain further experience while complying with L restrictions within the 12 months duration of the permit.

Those completing the Learner course on an automatic scooter up to 160cc would be issued with a restricted automatic learner licence.

A licensing proficiency stage where the student learns/demonstrates competence of:

- road survival skills of braking, swerving and riding curves at 40-45 km/h, assessed on prescribed criteria by electronic means (MOST or similar);
- application of the above skills, road rules and safe road riding behaviours during a set road ride in urban and rural situations of at least 1 hour comprising a variety of roadway and traffic situations, and assessed according to prescribed checklist criteria;
- appropriate hazard detection and response to a variety of computer based visual riding situations; assessment measured by HP computer program.

Duration approx 8 hrs

(2 x 4 hr sessions)

Total Training Duration approx 20 hrs

Students demonstrating competence at this point for the off-road skills and the on-road ride and passing the computerized Hazard Perception assessment would be issued with a Provisional licence and be required to comply with P

restrictions for the 3 year duration of the provisional licence

TRAINING INSTRUCTORS

The success of any training and licensing program is dependent upon the quality of the instructors. In most states the training of instructors is the responsibility of the accredited providers and since the mid 1990's Certificate IV in Workplace Training has been the recognized instructor qualification.

However the AMC is concerned that in some locations the licensing jurisdiction does not exercise sufficient audit control functions over accredited providers to ensure the specific "on the job training" of instructors in delivery of the training and testing processes that often results in sub-standard quality of the training program for novice riders and a subsequent outcome of a less than competent licensed rider.

The AMC therefore recommends that to ensure the quality of instructors, the expert committee established to develop a national best practice curriculum also considers a core curriculum for the training of quality motorcycle instructors.

MANDATORY or VOLUNTARY TRAINING

Rider training across Australia is currently mandatory in 5 states/territories and voluntary in 2 states.

The AMC supports mandatory training to ensure everyone seeking a learner permit or licence has undergone the training and demonstrated competence in all the specified tasks. However the mandatory training and assessment should follow the established best practice national model recommended previously.

TESTING

Testing should form an integral part of the training and licensing program.

To offer a system of licence testing in parallel to the training and licensing system, such as with the current system of Q-SAFE in Queensland, leaves much to be desired in ensuring competence of the persons assessed under such a system. The skills being assessed in the case of Q-SAFE by an examiner following in a car are markedly different from those being learned and assessed in the Q-RIDE rider training system.

The AMC recommends that parallel testing programs offered by jurisdictions be discontinued and all applicants be channeled through the national GLS training and licensing program.

MINIMUM DURATION for LEARNER AND PROVISIONAL PERIODS

Learner

During the learner stage a car learner driver is accompanied by a supervising fully licensed driver who supervises up to 120 hours of extensive learning and practice that is recorded in a log book. A motorcycle however does not readily accommodate the carriage of a supervising driver and the additional weight factor would provide difficulties in handling and control for the learner rider.

There is no evidence to support the introduction of a supervising rider during the learner period and supervisor advice given by radio technology may be confusing to the learner and could have potential crash and injury outcomes.

Motorcycle learners therefore ride solo during the learner stage and for this reason the transition from learner to provisional licence is typically shorter than for car drivers and the use of a "log book" for recording mandatory hours of practice is more difficult. However, there may be some scope for recording riding experiences in a journal or similar. This should ideally comprise equal amounts of urban riding in 50 - 60km/h speed zones and rural riding in 80 - 100km/h speed zones.

The AMC suggests 6 months as the minimum duration for holding the learner permit prior to eligibility for provisional licensing.
The maximum duration of the learner period is suggested as 12 months.

Provisional

The duration of the provisional licence currently varies between jurisdictions ranging from one to three years. Given that the principles of a GLS aim to extend the skill and experience level for novice riders it appears that 3 years duration for the provisional motorcycle licence would be most appropriate.

The AMC recommends that 3 years becomes the duration of the provisional licence period (P1 + P2) prior to being issued a full motorcycle licence.

REQUIREMENTS - RESTRICTIONS

Display of L & P plates - P/W – pillion - BAC

Most states already require learner riders to display an L plate and provisional riders to display a P plate for the entire learner and provisional licence periods. Due to the design and construction of motorcycles this is only on the rear of the vehicle.

The AMC supports the display of L and P plates as a requirement during the

learner and provisional licence periods for all states and territories.

Power/Weight/Capacity - LAMS Restriction

During the past decade the Learner Approved Motorcycle Scheme has been progressively introduced in all states and territories except Western Australia. This is based on a maximum power to weight ratio of 150kW/tonne with an engine capacity limit of 660cc and has been accepted in most jurisdictions as a replacement for the previous 260cc learner and provisional restriction.

The AMC fully supports LAMS as a restriction for the entire duration of the learner and provisional licence periods.

Pillion Passenger

The restriction on pillion passengers during the learner period and the first year of provisional licence has long been the practice in most jurisdictions.

More recently it has been suggested that in keeping with the principles of a GLS, this restriction should be extended to the entire learner and provisional licence periods to increase the skill and experience level of solo riding for the provisional licence holder prior to handling the additional weight and also for increased passenger safety.

The AMC supports the restriction on pillion passengers for the entire duration of the learner and provisional licence periods.

Zero BAC

The effects of alcohol impairment on novice riders/drivers is well documented and a restriction of 0.00% BAC for learners and provisional licence holders exists currently in most states and territories.

The AMC supports a zero BAC restriction for the entire duration of the learner and provisional licence periods.

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