

if enacted, would definitely mean the end of the air-cooled engine and would require fully-faired styling on all motorcycles to contain the mechanical noise from their engines and transmission. This must not be allowed to happen.

Roadside controls on motorcycles with defective, modified or illegal replacement exhaust systems, by the police and by governmental environmental and transport authorities, is the only way to deal with the motorcycle noise problem. The Federation of European Motorcyclists' Associations believes that funds should be made available by the European institutions to enable the development of effective, fair and consistent road-side noise measuring equipment.

Riding a motorcycle is more than just a means of cost-effective, time-effective and environmentally friendly transport. It is also a very enjoyable pastime where being in tune with your machine is central to that enjoyment. Further noise reduction legislation from the European Union will mean the demise of air-cooled engines and will lead to heavier, fully-enclosed motorcycles with exhaust systems that not only strangle the exhaust noise but also severely limit the machine's normal performance.

Riders' accept that they cannot live in isolation, unaware of the effect of their machines on the public at large. They believe that they have the right, however, to be treated reasonably and not be subject to constant legislative attacks based on ignorance or even worse, bigotry.

*For further information please contact*

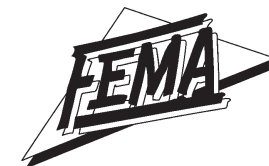
*Federation of European  
Motorcyclists' Associations*

Rue des Champs 62, 1040 Brussels  
Tel: +32 2 736 9047 Fax: +32 2 736 9401  
E-mail: [fema@chello.be](mailto:fema@chello.be)  
Homepage: <http://fema.ridersrights.org>

# Motorcycle Noise



## The Sound of Our Demise?



**The Federation of European Motorcyclists' Associations**

## The problem

No one can doubt that excessive noise is a serious problem.

Not the most serious when compared to the quality of the air that we breathe or the cleanliness of our rivers and seas, but loud noise can be extremely irritating at best and health-damaging at worst.

Road traffic noise is a particularly worrying area of noise pollution. Many people live close to motorways, major trunk roads and road junctions and the quality of their lives are often blighted by the associated fumes, vibration and noise. The sound of a heavy lorry grinding up through its gears or the noise from the tyres of a typical family saloon car travelling at 100 kilometres an hour on a concrete road or an urban flyover, with regular ridges between the sections, can be genuinely distressing.

Similarly the noise of a young person on a moped on which the baffles have been removed from the silencer, or of a more mature rider of a larger motorcycle with a straight-through replacement exhaust system, all can make the life of other citizens unpleasant or even unbearable.

These are examples of the real problem with road traffic noise and particularly with noise from powered two-wheelers. The problem that riders' organisations have, however, is that most politicians, legislators and policy makers do not either recognise or address the real problem.

With a few notable exceptions, such as the Members of the European Parliament, those responsible for ensuring that one person's freedom is not at the expense of another person's misery, either choose to understand or portray the problem as being an all encompassing one. One that can be rectified by simply imposing ever lower, restrictive, legislative standards.

The Federation of European Motorcyclists' Associations, believe that the real problem of motorcycle noise should be addressed. The real problem is that of excessive noise arising from the illegal modification of a bike's exhaust system, or from the fitting of



an illegal replacement exhaust system.

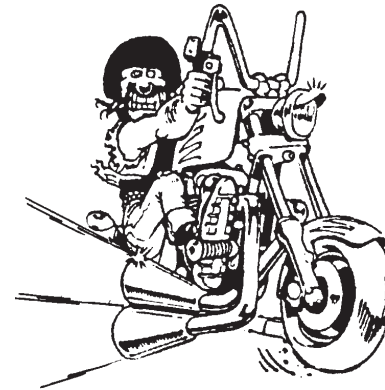
We do not believe that further reductions in overall noise limits will help, because the real problem is a result of riders not complying with existing legislative standards. To further lower the standards, which will result in further restricting the flow of gasses into and out of the engine, with a consequential restriction of the machine's performance, will only be an incentive to more riders to modify their machines.



## The solution

In a series of practical demonstrations, actively supported by the Amsterdam Traffic Police, the Federation of European Motorcyclists' Associations convinced over 95% of the Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) that the then generally applied national noise levels of 82 dB(A) were more than adequate and did not give offence. As a consequence MEPs agreed to

propose amendments to European legislation to maintain that reasonable standard. Unfortunately the Member Governments and the European Commission did not agree with the FEMA's representatives and the European Parliament. They went ahead and imposed an 80 dB(A) limit.



Recognising that the new 80 dB(A) limit is only just coming into force it might be thought that it is the end of the matter. Unfortunately that is not the case. Already further reductions are being planned which,