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EU Road Safety Action Programme

FEMA recommends solutions to improve motorcycle safety

With the Third Road Safety Action Programme, the European Commission is setting a very ambitious goal: halving the number of deaths on European roads by 2010. FEMA welcomes this document, and promotes recommendations to improve motorcyclists' safety in the areas of road user behaviour, safety of vehicles, and road infrastructure.

From the early stage of its drafting, FEMA worked on having motorcyclists' points included in the document. And we follow the matter through the democratic process to make sure that motorcyclists' recommendations, the resolutions and opinions stated by the EP and the EU Governments in the general White Paper on EU Transport Policy(*), are taken into

consideration.

FEMA supports the EP's resolution that the EU Road Safety paper should focus on solutions to reduce high risks for motorcyclists, and concentrate on "improved mobility for (...) motorcyclists through institutional investment, subsidies and legislation reflecting this preference". The EU Governments also underlined "the urgent need to give special attention to the needs of vulnerable road users - such as pedestrians, motorcycle riders, moped riders, and cyclists, (...) - which should be duly reflected in Member States road safety policies".

Having achieved this, FEMA developed recommendations related to motorcycle safety, to improve the situation on the

different areas defined in the document.

The aspect of road user behaviour should include, amongst others, proper consideration on the way to provide an initial rider training of quality. FEMA conducted a EU funded project, which spotted the shortcomings of the existing training schemes across Europe,

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Motorcycle Trailers: Spain complies with EU Regulation (P.3)



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EU ENLARGEMENT

Appeal to riders in new EU Member States

Be part of the European Motorcyclists' Lobby!

In the context of the enlargement process of the European Union, FEMA is undertaking a campaign to establish contacts with road riding organisations in the new EU Member States. We think it is important that motorcycling citizens in these countries are properly represented and their interests promoted. This campaign aims at raising awareness amongst motorcyclists, and inform them about the EU operation, objec-

tives and strategies related to road transport matters of interest for them, such as road safety, social mobility, environmental and consumers' issues. With the full support and experience of FEMA member organisations, we create an incentive to encourage their implication and involvement in matters affecting them at national level, and resulting from the implementation of EU legislation.

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EU Driving Licence Directive: Accessible & Affordable Bike Licences (P.2 & 4)

EU Third Driving Licence Directive

Bike Licences must remain accessible and affordable

The proposal for a revision of EU legislation on driving licenses has now been published, and starts its way through the democratic legislative process. Motorcyclists urge legislators to find the right balance between road safety, accessibility and affordability.

In drafting this recently published proposal on EU Driving Licenses, the European Commission's (EC) main objectives were to reduce possibilities of fraud, ensure a true freedom of movement to EU drivers and improve road safety.

The Commission believes that the best way to achieve better road safety for Powered Two-Wheels (PTWs), is to reinforce progressive access to the most powerful motorcycles by varying the minimum age between 16 and 24 years, depending on the technical characteristics of the motorcycle and the experience of the rider. A new license category for mopeds is also proposed, in order to make the most vulnerable youngsters safer. The EC thinks that this very popular means of transport should no longer be left outside the scope of the legislation.

FEMA encourages the objective of improving safety on European roads and, on the other hand, promotes a point of view that will also make sure that motorcycling remains attractive for people, through accessible and affordable procedures in order to get a motorcycle license. The proposed minimum age of 24 years to directly access all categories of motorcycles is far too high, and would undoubtedly discourage people to start riding a motorcycle, if they have not yet ridden a less powerful one through the stepped licensing system. We think that the current minimum age of 21 years is a more reasonable target, as no evidence supports the safety benefit of increasing it to 24 years.

The Commission is proposing a practical test in between each category of motorcycle license. FEMA is not opposed to the stepped access approach, this gives the opportunity for the motorcyclist to gain experience on a machine of smaller engine capacity before riding in safer conditions more

powerful motorcycles. But we believe that the rider who has successfully passed the relevant test to ride a motorcycle of small capacity, and after two years experience on the road, should not be required to further pass a practical test to access the higher category. FEMA strongly argues in favour of removing this requirement from the proposal, to ensure that riding a motorcycle remains affordable, whilst safety is enhanced through progressive access to the most powerful motorcycles. The crucial element here is to provide an initial rider training of quality, that gives the rider the appropriate skills since the beginning of his/her licensing. Furthermore, Member States are already required to meet better testing standards by 2008.

Another important aspect of the EC proposal is related to mopeds. We think that these should be accessible to youngsters at the age of 14. We also underline that, whilst it is not the purpose of this proposal, there is a need for an increased speed limit of 50km/h instead of the proposed 45km/h.,

this would allow mopeds to ride at the same speed as other vehicles in urban traffic.

Keeping in mind that PTWs are playing an important role in improving urban mobility, we think that car license holders should be allowed to ride mopeds and light motorcycles. Concerning the intermediate category (A2), FEMA thinks that the new proposed criteria in terms of maximum power and power/weight ratio, are acceptable.

The proposal will now start its way through the co-decision procedure within the European Parliament (EP) and the Council of Ministers (CoM). FEMA, and its national member organisations, are making representations on behalf of motorcyclists. We are closely following the developments on this very important issue until the final text is adopted.

The full position taken by European Motorcyclists on the Third Driving License Directive can be found at: <http://www.fema.kaalium.com/issues/docs/FEMADLDPoS.PDF>

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EU Road Safety Action Programme

and recommended important elements such as hazard awareness and avoidance, and rider attitude and behaviour to be included in the rider training schemes. Currently, FEMA is proposing to conduct a EC funded project which will develop a European model to be used by all Member States.

FEMA asks that road infrastructure, when developed, meet the specific needs of all road users, including motorcyclists. This means of course "rider-friendly" design of crash barriers. This was also the subject of a EU funded project undertaken by FEMA, and proposing improved designs and alternatives to make them safer for riders. We also support the EC's proposal for a harmonised system to identify "black spots",

and making motorcyclists aware of the dangers in certain traffic situations.

FEMA is convinced that active safety is the key element to safer motorcycling. On the other hand, motorcycles have gained much in terms of safety in the way they are built. This allows the rider, who has been properly trained, to benefit from the enhanced optional technologies such as anti-lock braking systems. We therefore argue in favour of them being progressively available as optional and affordable equipments on all motorcycles.

The full text of FEMA's response to the Road Safety Action Programme can be downloaded on: <http://www.fema.kaalium.com/issues/docs/RSAPFEMAPoS.PDF>

EU Regulation on Motorcycle towing Trailers

The principle of freedom of movement prevailed in Spain!

The Spanish government finally complies with their obligation under EU legislation(*), to allow the circulation of motorcycles towing a trailer on their national territory. FEMA cooperated closely with the European Commission to force Spain respecting the principle of freedom of movement in the European Union.

Motorcyclists planning to ride through Spain on holidays this Summer will be pleased to know that they are now allowed to circulate in the country with their bike towing a trailer, without risking to be stopped at the border and refused to enter the country.

This is the result of a complaint introduced in 1998 by the European Commission against the Spanish government, with the active support and co-operation of FEMA, before the Court of Justice of the European Communities (EC). Indeed, Spain was in breach with the EC Treaty's articles on the free movement of persons and goods and the freedom to provide services. At last, a royal decree(**) was adopted earlier this year in order to repeal the total ban on using a motorcycle towing a trailer in the territory.

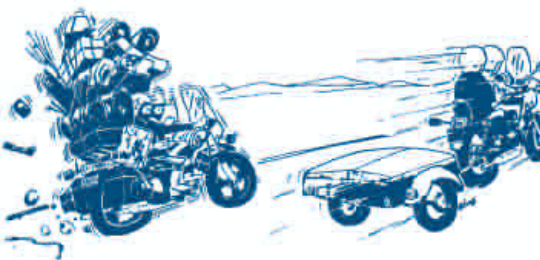
FEMA is still working on this issue, as some needless restrictions are linked to the circulation of motorcycles towing trailers. The most incredible one is that these vehicles can only circulate during daytime, and in conditions that guarantee good visibility... So when it's light and sunny! A discriminatory decrease of 10% of the maximum speed limit in traffic is also required. FEMA will strongly argue to have these senseless measures removed, because there is no safety evidence supporting them.

Motorcyclists travelling through Spain with their bike towing a trailer can contact the FEMA office to receive original text of this new Spanish law, in order to make sure that you are not stopped or fined at the border or on Spanish roads by police forces who would not be aware of this new

regulation.

(*) *EU legislation related to the subject: Directive 97/24/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17th June 1997 on certain components and characteristics of two or three-wheel motor vehicles. In other words, the EU Type-Approval Regulation, also known as "Multi-Directive"*

(**) *Royal Decree adopted by the Spanish authorities, nr 1428/2003 of 21st November 2003 approving the General Road Traffic Regulation in implementation of the Law on road traffic, motor vehicles and road safety of 2nd March 1990. This new General Road Traffic Regulation entered into force on 23rd January 2003. Original text (in Spanish) available on request. Summary in English: the new regulation*



authorises motorcycles to tow trailers or sidecars only if they do not exceed 50% of the weight of the towing vehicle. The use of these trailers is also subject to certain conditions: they must be used during daylight and in conditions that guarantee good visibility, the speed of the motorcycle must be reduced by 10% compared with the speed limit, and these trailers may not in any circumstances be used to transport people.

FEMA's European Agenda for Motorcycle Safety



The EU Road Safety Action Programme is promoting shared responsibility and exchange of best practices to make improvements in this area. FEMA is developing, with the full commitment of its national member organisations, a paper highlighting the different aspects related to road safety. The document promotes solutions to improve safety for motorcyclists on European roads... to be included in European and national road safety strategies.

The outline of this FEMA paper presents the different aspects to focus on, and on which actions can be undertaken in order to improve motorcyclists' safety. Whilst most of these solutions already exist and

are being used in some Member States, there are not known by local, national and European authorities. The points included in the 26-page outline, are developed in parallel with the EU Road Safety Action Programme, as the contribution riders can make to help achieving its ambitious objectives. The themes tackled in the document include, amongst others, road infrastructure and maintenance, black spot management, rider training and licence test, Intelligent Transport Systems, driver awareness, safety equipment and motorcycle design.

The European Agenda for Motorcycle Safety will be presented by FEMA, together with its position paper, to the European institutions within the EU Road Safety Action Programme. And by FEMA national organisations to their local and national road safety authorities.

The full text of FEMA's document "European Agenda for Motorcycle Safety" can be downloaded on: <http://www.fema.kaalium.com/safety/>

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FEMA appeal to Riders

Motorcyclists' interests must be in the new EU Member States is needed!

Represent the interests of motorcyclists of your country in the European Union. Be part of FEMA, the European Motorcyclists Lobby.

In the context of the enlargement process of the European Union (EU), FEMA, the European Motorcyclists' organisation, seeks to establish contacts with road riders' organisations in the new EU Member States. It is important to join our efforts and be ready to properly represent and promote motorcyclists' interests in your country as new EU Member State.

FEMA, the Federation of European Motorcyclists' Associations, is regrouping national road riders organisations, and exists to represent riders' interests at the European and International institutions. FEMA unites 22 riders' organisations across Europe who are representing motorcyclists in their countries.

Since 1988, the European Motorcyclists' Lobby, through its work with the EU institutions, is making sure that motorcyclists' interests are looked after when EU legislation related to motorcycles is drafted, in areas such as Road Safety, Mobility, Consumers' issues, Environment and Technical Standards. FEMA works also proactively and undertakes EU projects in the field of rider training and rider friendly infrastructure. We also work at the International level through represen-

tations within the United Nations' Working Groups dealing with motorcycle issues.

Most of the laws and regulations motorcyclists have to comply with come from Europe, it is therefore crucial that a European representation of riders exists so that we can act directly on these regulations before they are implemented in the EU Member States.

Your country is part of the European Union and, within the process, you already have to comply with existing EU laws. These have been closely followed and acted upon by FEMA to make sure that motorcyclists get the best deal and are not overlooked.

If you are a road riders' organisation or group and wish to do something for the riders of your country, we urge you to contact the FEMA office based in Brussels, so that together we can join our efforts and efficiently represent and promote the interests of motorcyclists in your country.

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DRIVING LICENCE DIRECTIVE

The European Parliament's Transport Committee, in charge of the proposal, decided to postpone any consideration or vote on the EU Driving Licence issue until after the elections to the EP next June.

This means that the issue will be back on the agenda in September... With new Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) appointed to the Transport Committee, including the ones from the 10 new Member States, FEMA will have to start its representations from scratch at the EP level.

More information soon...

National Riders' Rights Organisations (RROs) affiliated to the FEMA

Motorrad Aktionsgruppe (MAG Austria - www.mag-austria.at), Motorcycle Action Group (MAG Belgium - www.mag.be), Česká Motocyklová Federace (CMF Czech Republic - cmf@cmf.cz), Danske Motorcyklister Råd (DMC Denmark - www.dmc-org.dk), Motorcycle Touring Club (MCTC Denmark - www.mctouringclub.dk), Moottoripyöräkerho 69 (MP69 Finland - www.mp69.org), Suomen Motoristit (SMOTO Finland - www.smoto.fi), Fédération Française des Motards en Colère (FFMC France - www.ffmc.asso.fr), Biker Union (BU Germany - www.bikerunion.de), Bundesverband Der Motorradfahrer (BVDM Germany - www.bvdm.de), Kuhle Wampe (KW Germany - www.kuhle-wampe.de), Hellenic Motorcycle Federation (MOTOE Greece - www.motoe.gr), Motorcyclists' Action Group (MAG Ireland - www.magireland.org), Coordinamento Motociclisti (CM Italy - www.cmfem.it), Lëtzebuerger Moto-Initiativ (LMI Luxembourg - www.lmi.lu), Norsk Motorcykkel Union (NMCU Norway - www.nmcu.org), Motorrijders Aktie Groep (MAG Netherlands - www.mag-nl.org), Federação Nacional Motociclismo (FNM Portugal - www.fnm.pt), Sveriges Motorcyklistes Centralorganisation (SMC Sweden - www.motorcykliserna.org), IG Motorrad (Switzerland - www.ig-motorrad.ch), British Motorcyclists' Federation (BMF United Kingdom - www.bmf.co.uk), Motorcycle Action Group (MAG United Kingdom - www.mag-uk.org).