



Motor Cycle Riders Association Of South Australia Inc.

<http://www.mrasa.asn.au>

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To the members of the Motorcycle Riders Association of South Australia,

The MRA SA has adopted a different approach to our ongoing fight against the Serious and Organised Crime Bill (Anti Bokie Bill).

This campaign has, up to now, been based on informing our members, along with the general public, on the very real concerns we have over the proposed changes to our civil liberties. The biggest challenge we face is the public's lack of knowledge and therefore the lack of interest in proposed bills. It seems most people only get fired up when they are personally affected.

We have, of course, worked hard in approaching and tendering submissions to the elected representatives who want this absurd piece of legislation.

It is scary when we ask our elected politicians, who passed this bill in the lower house a couple of weeks ago, about a possible/probable ramification and they respond with an amazed voice, "I didn't know it would do that." and "This will only be used to target rebel bikies, trust me".

This proposed law has the potential to affect a large number of people who will have to rely on SAPOL not charging them. A charge under this bill will result in a conviction and 5 years in jail. The bill specifically states that court evidence can not be challenged if the Police wish it to be confidential and a Judge must accept it as valid. You will not be able to challenge the evidence they will use against you.

Fines are not an option. The Judge must award JAIL time, up to 5 years!!!

OK, so who are the innocent people who could be caught up in this legislation?

Do you know someone who has fought a speeding fine? If they lost, then they have a conviction recorded against their name. They and any body else who has a conviction, like a friend of mine who a few years ago was an idiot and got caught drink driving, will be found guilty of a new offence if they socialise with another person who has a conviction 6 times in a 12 month period. Not just that person, BUT that can be 1 meeting with 6 different people. By socialise I really mean to contact. Like go on an MRA SA Samrats ride. Include in that, attend a meeting or get a phone call or even an email or sms. Chat with a rider at Lobethal or even at the Toy Run and you could be gone.

I have had a few people ask why the MRA SA is wasting time and resources fighting this proposed legislation when the MRASA is not at risk of being a banned organisation. We are assured that the bill will be only used to target the feral bikies.

This bill can, and will, put at risk many of the freedoms that we as citizens take for granted. Those freedoms are worth fighting for. Members who have stuffed up and been charged for an offence in the past have a right to associate freely with other people without fearing they may have a volunteer spy for SAPOL reporting who they ride with or when they have a cuppa with a mate. (The spy for SAPOL reference relates to another bill going thru our Parliament to recruit unemployed people to do surveillance for the SA Police dept. That one is someone else's battle). These members have already paid the price for the offence that landed them in court and should now be able to move on with their life. Can you imagine having to ask friends if they have a conviction before you can ask them around for a BBQ to ensure 2 convicted people don't meet and you are then guilty of abetting a crime? If you have a conviction you would live in fear of meeting a person who would decrease by 1 the safety margin between you and 5 years in jail.

Consider the number of indictable offence charges laid in SA.

The following info was taken today from a SA Government website,

Total offences reported in 2006 are: 263,369.

Total offences reported in 2005 are: 272,599.

I would be surprised if ANY club or association with more than 100 members did not have a few members who WILL be caught up by this horrific bill.

An MRASA member convicted of an indictable offence charge would not be able to ride a bike with us again for fear of another convicted person joining in on a ride.

Wouldn't you want the MRA SA to fight for your rights if this was you?

This is the most dangerous attack I have ever seen on the freedoms of association that we all take for granted and is not only worth fighting but MUST be fought.

This is not as simple as riders having to put headlights on during the day or paying too much for a licence.

This is not about unfair laws that cost us money because some chair warmer who rides a swivel chair thinks he understands riding a motorbike.

This is an attack on personal freedoms.

Fall foul of the law just once and.....

It is as serious as that.

Phil McClelland

President MRA SA Inc.