

*Press release on motorcycle fatalities for 2007 for South Australia*

South Australian motorcyclists welcomed the New Year with the news that there had been a dramatic downturn in the number of motorcycle fatalities for 2007, down to 8 from the previous year's number of 22, a significant 64 % decrease. This is a far cry from the all time high of 45 deaths in 1985. The 2007 tally was the lowest ever recorded in this State.

There was an increase of 10% in motorcycle numbers on the road last year together with the fact that riders were covering longer distances as part of the continuing popularity of motorcycling as fuel prices surge.

The Ulysses Club's National Vice President, Mr. Neville Gray, welcomed the news saying that the strong message given out to the States motorcyclists during the year of being more responsible for their own safety was finally being heeded. 'That and the work being done by the Governments Motorcycle Task Force in implementing the recommendations of the Motorcycle Safety Strategy were the main reason for this very pleasing trend' he said. 'An in depth analysis of the 2006 crash statistics revealed that more than 80% of motorcycle fatalities involved rider error, either going too fast for the conditions or inattention being the main two elements. It is noticeable that riders who indulge in high risk behavior have slowed down and are more aware of their own vulnerability'.

'There will be those that will say that this number is only a statistical aberration, so it is up to the States motorcyclists to continue this downward trend in 2008 – the challenge is there'.

Mr. Phil McClelland, President of the Motorcycle Riders Association concurred saying that he believed that an increase in Police presence in popular motorcycle riding areas, especially in the Adelaide Hills, has lead to this decrease in fatalities. 'We still have a high percentage of illegal riders amongst the fatalities, either unlicensed or riding unregistered machines', he said. 'These people need to be educated and currently enforcement seems to be the only method they respond to. Car drivers not seeing motorcyclists is still an ongoing problem, and with the increasing numbers of motorcycles and scooters on the road, there simply is no excuse for this' he said.