



**THE MOTORCYCLE RIDERS' ASSOCIATION
OF AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED (VICTORIA BRANCH)
PO BOX 64 COLLINS ST., MELBOURNE 3000.**

January 15, 1985.

TO ALL VICTORIAN REGISTERS.

Dear Secretary,

I am instructed by the Victorian State Committee meeting of the ninth (9th) of January 1985 to send this letter to all Victorian Registers, with a copy to MRA Australia. Please present this letter to your committee as early as possible, certainly no later than your next committee meeting.

Much to this Committee's regret; a situation has occurred which threatens the very existence of this Association and the credibility of motorcyclists everywhere, whether members of the MRA or not. The Melbourne 4B's committee has resigned en-masse, and formed a separate organisation known as- "The Bent and Buckled Bikers Bureau Incorporated."

The new organisation has been legally incorporated; and has applied for a protective trademark identical to the MRA 4B patch, but with all reference to the MRA removed. All this was done in secret prior to their resignations.

This Committee has received no explanation of this action, neither during the period preceding the 4B resignations or since. The new 4B Incorporated comprises of no more than 15 people, but they have taken this unilateral action without any reference to the State Committee which represents the 4,800 members in this State. We cannot understand this action at all, it achieves nothing positive and simply threatens the credibility of the MRA.

The formation of such splinter groups cannot be accepted by the State Branch, as to do so would create a precedent resulting in a totally ineffectual State body. Of course, any person may form any group for specialised purposes, this Committee would regret such action but would have no complaint.

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In this case however, an organisation which was created by MRA motorcyclists working in unity, given credibility and sustained by the MRA (ie. the 4B's) has had its name literally stolen from this Association. This action deprives us of access to accident statistics and the opportunity to gain good public relations.

Consider how ridiculous motorcyclists will appear when two people claiming each to be the "REAL" 4Ber turn up to visit a downed rider in Hospital.

This Committee is faced with two problems;

- (a) What to do about the present 4B situation, and,
- (b) What we can do to prevent such a thing happening in future.

The first problem will cost the Association money it can ill afford, but it can and will be resolved. We have the most experienced legal advice to the effect that MRA Victoria has "Possessory Rights" to the 4B name under common law, and we are accordingly taking a "Passing Off" action in the form of a Supreme Court Injunction. This will prevent the 4B splinter group using any 4B name or logo, and organising any events or hospital visits using the name.

You are probably aghast that the Association has to resolve internal conflicts by reference to the courts, and we share this revulsion but the legal system has been used to attack the Association and we must fight fire with fire.

The state Committee will continue to run the original 4B's under the temporary directorship of Vice-President Tony Scicluna. Obviously we need new members to replace the Melbourne 4B's personnel and rebuild this important MRA sub-committee.

The second problem we face is that of avoiding any such event in future. We conclude that the underlying failure which caused the split has been the poor communication between the various registers and committees. Members can only have become so alienated that they chose to attack the Association they represent.

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It is therefore imperative that communication is improved so that every member of committee believes that the MRA interest is his/her interest. To this end we propose the following:

- (1) That all committees keep accurate minutes in a minute book and distribute copies of each meeting minutes to the State Secretary at the MRA Shop.
- (2) That all committees keep a motion record book to record all motions passed at meetings. This enables speedy reference to changes implemented.
- (3) Copies of all minutes, including motions passed, to be sent to the state Committee.
- (4) On our part, we will distribute copies of all State Committee meetings to all other Victorian Registers Committees, and undertake to distribute copies of Register minutes to MRA Australia along with monthly reports.
- (5) In Future the MRA State Committee will hold meetings twice a month, on the first and third (1st & 3rd) Tuesdays at the MRA Shop.

All Registers have automatic right of attendance at State meetings with both President and Secretary, or their delegate, having voting rights. Any other financial member is welcome to attend as an observer.

As there is little value in issuing these guidelines unless there is general approval, we need to have an immediate response from you. Please discuss this letter as soon as possible, and form your views on it. We would like a written reply approving the communication improvements together with any other comments you may have.

More than anything, if your committee feels alienated from this Committee, please say so at once so the problem can be resolved. This is your Association, and this Committee is trying to work on your behalf.

If you totally disagree with the contents of this letter we also want to know this. We must have some reply as soon as possible, ultimately in writing, but a telephone call will be appreciated in the short term.

This is your opportunity to bitch to us.
You are actively encouraged to do so.

This year has been difficult enough attempting to reduce the debt left by the previous administration, and with the political projects ahead (i.e. third party, dual licences etc.), we should not be spending time and money arguing amongst ourselves.

So please, if you have any problems with this Committee, let us know before the problem reaches the state of the 4B's in Melbourne.

Ride Safe.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'A. Farrelly'.

A. Farrelly,
Secretary,
Victorian State Committee.