

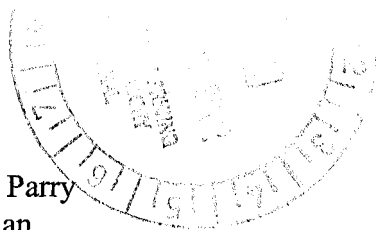
MOTORCYCLE COUNCIL
OF NEW SOUTH WALES
INCORPORATED



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Mr Thomas Parry
The Chairman
Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal
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January 31, 2002

Inquiry into the Undergrounding Electricity Cables in NSW

We would like to make a submission to the inquiry into the Undergrounding Electricity Cables in NSW with particular reference to items 4 and 5 of the Terms of Reference.

Item 4

Motorcyclists should be considered to be a distinct road user group when calculating the cost savings to the community of reducing the incidence of motor vehicles striking power poles. These costs should not only include the saving resulting from the removal of the poles themselves but also from the removal of the crash barriers which have been placed to reduce injuries to other road users but which increase the risk of injury to motorcyclists

None of the crash barriers currently used in NSW have been designed or tested with regard to impacts by motorcyclists or motorcycles. While placing a crash barrier in front of power poles reduces the risk of injury to most road users, they increase the risk of injury to motorcyclists.

If a motorcycle leaves the roadway where there is a row of power poles, being smaller than a passenger car there is a greater chance that the motorcycle will pass between power poles without collision, Whereas if a crash barrier has been placed in front of the power poles, the motorcycle is almost certain to strike the barrier and the motorcyclist injured.

There is therefore a cost benefit to the community by removing power poles and associated crash barriers.

Item 5

When considering the timing for the removal of power poles, high priority should be given to the removal of poles that are likely to be struck by motorcyclists. Poles most likely to be struck by motorcyclists are on the outside and inside of curves.

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Little consideration has been given to the placement of power poles close to the carriageway on the inside of curves. Whereas most vehicles are dual track and lean out in corners, motorcycles are single track and lean into a corner. Therefore, if a pole is located close to the carriageway on the inside of a curve a dual track vehicle will lean away from the pole, whereas a motorcyclist leans towards the pole increasing the risk of striking the pole. This problem is highlighted in the VicRoads Motorcycle Notes No 6, 'Designing for Motorcycle Clearances'.

In summary, we recommend that the inquiry should:

1/ consider motorcyclists as a distinct road user group when calculating the cost savings to the community of reducing the incidence of motor vehicles striking power poles. These costs should include the saving resulting not only from the removal of the poles themselves but also from the removal of the crash barriers which have been placed to reduce injuries to other road users but which increase the risk of injury to motorcyclists.

2/ when considering the timing of the removal of poles, those poles and barriers which are on the outside of curves as well as those located close to the carriageway on the inside of curves should be given high priority.

Yours faithfully



CHRISTINE GILBERT
The Secretary
Motorcycle Council of NSW

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