



# Motorcycle Notes

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## Motorcycle Signage

This is the eighth in a series of VicRoads MOTORCYCLE NOTES. The purpose of MOTORCYCLE NOTES is to provide regular practical advice on motorcycle-specific aspects of road design, maintenance and safety for VicRoads, Local Government, Government Agency and Consultant engineers and planners. MOTORCYCLE NOTES should be read in conjunction with: 'Guide to Traffic Engineering Practice Part 15 – Motorcycle Safety', (GTEP Part 15) Austroads, Sydney 1999.

### The need

One of the ways in which to influence road user behaviour is to place appropriate signs at key positions on the road system. These may be informative, prohibitory or permissive in their intent and serve a variety of purposes. Such signs may apply to some or all road users, but inform all that there is an issue that requires attention.

Motorcycles have several specialised requirements for parking, access control, movement management and motorcycle-specific special warnings.

Motorcycles, bicycles and cars are all defined as vehicles under the Australian Road Rules 1999. All of the standard vehicle control signs apply for speed limitation, turning and access. The only signs specifically covering motorcycles in the Australian Road Rules 1999 are text signs for high occupancy and transit lanes and parking provision.

While this limited set of signs is useful, there are a number of circumstances where a wider range of motorcycle-specific signage can be valuable.

### Significance of the issue

Motorcycles are especially sensitive to road surfaces, and some new trial warning signs have been produced by VicRoads to allow some of these motorcycle specific hazards to be signed effectively. Two of the areas of greatest rider concern are slippery surfaces and longitudinal grooving, and sample trial signs have been created to address these situations.



Advance warning is valuable, especially in the case of grooving as this road surface treatment is often applied in areas of heavy traffic and where special care is needed.

Another area of special hazard to motorcycles is the layer of loose gravel or stones from road maintenance and reconstruction works. Safety for motorcyclists, and other road users,

could benefit from the provision and use of a similar style of temporary warning sign, until such material is removed from the road surface.

Australian Standard 1742 covers motorcycle signs, but to date, few of these have been submitted for approval. The two road surface warning signs shown here will be forwarded to the AS Committee for consideration, and other proposed signs will be assessed by the Committee as specific cases are submitted.

## Surface warnings

Motorcyclists are affected by longitudinal grooves in the road surface. This is a common treatment at problem locations prior to resheeting, when the road surface friction has fallen due to polishing. Motorcycle instability can be induced by such grooving. As this treatment is used at locations where there is already a significant risk of crashes, a motorcycle-specific sign is desirable. An example of a proposed sign is shown below.



*Motorcycle-specific sign indicating longitudinal grooves in the road surface*

## Signs for designated lane use

The mixed use of transit lanes has been addressed in Australia by text informative signs. The Eastern Freeway example, which includes motorcycles, is shown below. These signs are supplemented by a large text informative sign designating permitted users.



*Transit Lane sign on Eastern Freeway, Melbourne*

## Other motorcycle specific signs

Bicycles are permitted in some bus lanes in Australia, and both bus and bicycle symbols are used to designate permitted users of some bus lanes in Melbourne. The Australian Road Rules 1999 do not currently provide for the use of equivalent motorcycle symbols for special-use lane signs or for other regulatory purposes such as parking control.

VicRoads has produced the trial warning signs shown in this brochure in consultation with motorcycling groups. The signs aim to provide more effective and instantly recognisable warning for motorcyclists. VicRoads will continue to consult motorcycling groups in considering any further proposals for symbol-based signs for the information of both motorcyclists and other road users.

### Information resources:

Standards Australia (1986) AS 1742, *Manual of uniform traffic control devices*. Sydney.

VicRoads (1999). *Road Rules - Victoria*  
[http://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/randl/national\\_rules](http://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/randl/national_rules)

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