

Submission: Victorian Scooter Licence

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About VACC

The Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce (VACC) is Victoria's peak automotive industry association, representing the interests of more than 5,300 members in over 20 retail automotive sectors that employ over 50,000 Victorians.

VACC members range from new and used vehicle dealers (passenger, truck, commercial, motorcycles, recreational and farm machinery), repairers (mechanical, electrical, body and repair specialists, i.e. radiators and engines), vehicle servicing (service stations, vehicle washing, rental, windscreens), parts and component wholesale/retail and distribution and aftermarket manufacture (i.e. specialist vehicle, parts or component modification and/or manufacture), and automotive dismantlers and recyclers.

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Background

The Motorcycle Industry Division (MID) is a key constituent of the Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce (VACC). The MID is comprised of 130 retail motorcycle business members, that account for 82% of the total motorcycle retail industry in Victoria.

Apart from representing the interests of its members, VACC is charged with the responsibility of communicating to government where practices and policy adversely affects operations within industry, as well as community safety and wellbeing.

Increased transport efficiency, reduced traffic congestion and low-cost personal mobility are issues that resonate with both commuters and VACC. To this extent, VACC believes that a greater facilitation and uptake of low powered scooters amongst commuters (less than 125cc) can help achieve these key objectives.

Accordingly, this submission outlines the case for a condensed licence test for holders of a motor vehicle licence, when applying for a sub-125cc scooter licence.

Key issues

Low-powered scooters (less than 125cc) and homologated electric mopeds, represent a credible and low cost option for reducing transport congestion and vehicle emissions within cities. Scooters feature prominently as a key form of personal mobility in countless cities around the world, yet their uptake in Victoria however, is disappointingly low.

The benefits of these scooters and electric mopeds are many. These include:

- A low-entry cost and economical form of personal mobility
- Easy and safer to ride than bicycles
- Have significant advantages in moving people around congested inner city areas
- Take up minimal parking and storage space
- Allow reasonable carrying capacity for personal goods
- Are environmentally friendly with low carbon emissions
- Low noise (decibels) operation

Both low-powered scooters and homologated electric mopeds have the potential to directly replace passenger cars and SUVs when driving to work. By taking up only a fraction of the on-road footprint and parking space of a car or SUV, their potential to reduce traffic congestion and raise productivity is considerable.



Industry position and recommendation

Consultations between VACC and business members reveal that the key reason that low-powered scooters and electric mopeds are not embraced by the Victorian community, relates to the requirement to attain a full motorcycle licence for such low-powered transport vehicles.

VACC considers this requirement to be a major disincentive to the uptake of scooters and electric mopeds, given the time, cost and complexity of training that is involved in undertaking a full motorcycle licence.

VACC believes that there is a considerable point of difference between riding a high powered motorcycle to that of riding a low-powered moped that has a capped speed at 50 kilometres per hour. The direct consequence of this onerous regulatory requirement is that sales of low-powered scooters and mopeds are kept artificially low by government policy, to the detriment of industry retailers of these safer and greener transport alternatives.

Statistics show that very few accidents occur with sub 125cc low-powered scooters. This is also confirmed by VACC member reports that indicate a very low incidence of crash repair, service and parts turnover involving these vehicles.

VACC therefore recommends the following measures:

1. The creation of a condensed licence test for holders of a motor vehicle licence, applying for a licence for a sub 125cc scooter or moped licence
2. This condensed licence should involve a one day test at which applicants must:
 - a. Participate in a half day coaching course comprising an off-road review of braking, steering and low speed manoeuvring skills, and
 - b. Complete an on-road assessment covering observation skills, safe speed choice and lane positioning.

VACC believes that introduction of these initiatives will stimulate the retail market for sales of low-powered scooters and mopeds, that will in-turn have positive flow-on benefits for the community in terms of reduced traffic congestion, travel times, and significant improvement in overall economic productivity within Victoria.