



## **Road Safety Forum Friday 10/04/2015**

### **Key presentation points**

#### Issues to consider

- Road crashes are not “accidents”, they are the resultant effect of bad decisions.
- What is the average vehicle operator’s ability and do they understand their limits?
- What message reinforcements or enforcement actions work?

#### Actions to take now and into the future

##### Better decisions

- Bad decision making can be attributed as the main cause of all crashes/incidents even when a secondary cause such as excessive speed, not applying the road rules or vehicle failure is involved or is allocated as the cause. Someone made a bad decision which effected the end result.

There is a need to make operators understand the requirement to take the best decision for any given situation that will result in correct and sustainable actions and results.

##### Understanding ability

- Does the average vehicle operator understand their ability? The answer to this question is most likely no.  
Most ability improvement is not taught, it is gained by experience including by making mistakes.  
Education initiatives need to be put in place to encourage operators to understand the need to more accurately gauge they own ability and learn from their mistakes which after reasonable self-acknowledge of ability will hopefully be less than catastrophic.

### Message implementation

- Two message types can be used, these being either positive or negative reinforcement.

To date the negative type has been the mainstay of message output either by punitive law enforcement or by concentration on the negative effects of road trauma.

While these messages do have they place it would also be advantageous to engage operators in a manner that is less likely to be seen by the recipient as castigation of their competence. Most have an inflated belief of their ability and by configuring some messages that attempt to make operators consider their ability and previous experiences in such a way as they believe that they have made the decisions to make behaviour modification most will more readily accept the message.

Additionally, law enforcement should be more visible and be target at behaviour modification and not just penalty implementation.

Punitive actions that are not immediately identified such as covert or near covert speeding detection are near worthless until such time as the consequence becomes known to the offender. If an offender does not know that they have been apprehended for an infringement then that causal behaviour will continue until such time as they are aware.

Visible policing is much more effective for immediate behaviour modification and in fact can be seen as more effective for safety outcomes if it results in less need for infringement enforcement.

Presented on behalf of The Motorcycle Riders Association of Queensland by Chris Mearns, President.

*The Motorcycle Rider's Association of Queensland is the representative body for  
Motorcycle & Scooter riders in Queens*