



Coroner Spanos
Coroners Court of Victoria
65 Kavanagh Street
Southbank VIC 3006

Eastern Region
120 Kay Street
Traralgon Victoria 3844
PO Box 158 Traralgon Victoria 3844

vicroads.vic.gov.au

Dear Coroner Spanos

Re: Court Reference No. COR 2015 1119 – Great Alpine Road, Ensay

I refer to your Findings and Recommendations dated 21 May 2018, addressed to Ms Karen Macdonald, VicRoads Manager Legal Services, regarding the finding without inquest into the death of Mark Cameron Rodgers and Jodi Michelle Walsham.

The recommendations from the Coroner as per section 72(2) of the Coroners Act 2008 was as follows:

- 1. That VicRoads enhances the training of its own inspectors and also requires contractors to enhance the training of its inspectors to be more mindful of the needs of motorcycle riders and their increased vulnerability to road imperfections when undertaking inspections*
- 2. That VicRoads further promotes the use of its hotline amongst the motorcycling community and encourages motorcycle riders to use the hotline to report any road hazards, defects or imperfections that may endanger motorcycle riders in particular.*

The first recommendation is accepted.

VicRoads is currently developing a 'toolbox session' training package in response to the first recommendation, aimed at front line road inspectors and road workers. The training will focus on helping maintenance staff understand the risk and vulnerabilities of motorcycle riders, to develop an understanding of infrastructure defects that may result in an increased risk to motorcycle riders, and to provide guidance and discussion points for delivering recommended routine maintenance treatments specifically for motorcyclists, where needed most. The toolbox training for road inspectors and roadworkers will be delivered in early 2019 by leaders within the road maintenance depots across regions of VicRoads with VicRoads maintenance staff, and following consultation and agreement across regions with Contractors undertaking road maintenance activities.

The second recommendation is accepted.

In response to the second recommendation, VicRoads is in the process of developing a suite of communication tools that will be used and distributed broadly, that will encourage motorcycle riders to phone in a hazard. The package will use social media, print, information cards, and key rings with hazard reporting phone numbers that will be distributed at motorcycling events throughout the year. The suite of communication will be developed for distribution beginning in

the current 2018/19 financial year.

Further to the Coroners recommendations I advise that VicRoads has prepared a proposal for a two-year trial of enhanced and targeted maintenance motorcycle preferred road. This targeted maintenance would see hazards and defects particularly affecting motorcycle stability being addressed sooner than they would be rectified under VicRoads normal maintenance regime. The road proposed in this trial is Bonang Road, which has been selected due to it being a road with very low traffic volume and a high number of motorcycle crashes.

VicRoads considers that the proposal will have a greater impact on this road, compared with roads like Great Alpine Road. The Great Alpine Road has a much higher traffic volume, and therefore risk to roads users, VicRoads maintenance approach sees this road inspected at a greater frequency, and hazards rectified faster.

This trial study, including any other available intelligence, would enable the benefits of the enhanced maintenance regime to be validated, with a view to developing a business case for a statewide enhanced motorcycle maintenance strategy. The trial however is dependant on funding and the outcome of the funding application will be known by April 2019.

Should you require any further information, Ms Rebecca Chase, Acting Manager Operations, Eastern Victoria (Mob: 0436 677 991), would be pleased to assist.

Yours sincerely,



SCOTT LAWRENCE

REGIONAL DIRECTOR

17 '8'18