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AMC Position Statement – Daytime Running Lights

It is currently being proposed that the Australian Design Rules (ADRs) be changed so all new cars are fitted with Daytime Running Lights (DRL).

Priority:- Medium

Where we are now:

The proposal to change the Australian Design Rules so cars are fitted with Daytime Running Lights follows similar proposals in Europe. The benefits of such a proposal are based on research that has been conducted in Europe and the USA where lighting conditions are not as bright as they are in Australia.

As a result of the brighter conditions in Australia, the expected benefits of DRLs for cars may not be realised. This view is supported by the experience with automatic 'headlights on' for motorcycles. ADR 19 was changed in 1992 so new motorcycles were fitted with automatic 'headlights on' but this requirement was made optional in 1997 after research was not able to establish that there was a benefit.

If no benefit could be established for automatic 'headlights on' for motorcycles, similarly there may be no benefit in having DRLs for cars.

There is some concern that if cars are fitted with DRLs that motorcycles will be lost in a 'sea of lights' increasing the number of Sorry Mate I Didn't See You (SMIDSY) crashes where drivers miss seeing a motorcycle.

Where we want to be:

That any introduction of DRLs for cars has no adverse effect on motorcycle safety.

That DRL's are not introduced for motorcycles unless significant evidence is provided of motorcycle safety benefits.

How to get there:

Keep a watching brief on developments of DRLs. Appropriate research needs to be undertaken to substantiate the claims for them.