



1/3 Edgecombe Court
Moorabbin Vic 3189
GPO Box 2374
Melbourne Victoria 3001
Telephone (03) 9555 0133
Facsimile (03) 9555 1230
www.aomc.asn.au
email: secretary@aomc.asn.au
ABN 90 979 750 693

Fergus McDonald
Registration and Licensing Policy
VicRoads
1st Floor
60 Denmark Street Kew Vic 3101

23rd November 2005

Dear Fergus,

Thank you for the opportunity to consider the Club Permit Scheme Discussion paper dated September 2005. In general, the Association is in agreement with the aims of the proposed review of the Club Permit Scheme and is pleased to be invited to assist. We wish to make a number of comments and suggestions as part of the review process as follows.

As an introductory observation, we believe that although some major changes to the present scheme are envisaged it is important that its fundamental nature as a club-based scheme permitting use of older vehicles under special conditions be retained and emphasised. Clubs should remain the key to participation in the scheme by way of club membership by owners and club authorisation of vehicles. We also believe that clubs could have an important role in the operation of the scheme as is explained later. We therefore believe that even though the introduction of log books may dispense with club authorisation of each use of a vehicle, the vehicle's use will still be by way of a club's imprimatur and that therefore it remains a Club Permit Scheme.

As a further general comment we also note that when discussing log books it appears that some rules have been adopted from similar rules involving transport vehicles, which has lead to some unsuitable wording and phrasing.

Item 1 Number plates

Number Plate Fees.

The Association believes that the proposed number plate fee should not be made retrospective to vehicles already operating on CPS plates.

Re issue of Club Permit Plates.

It is assumed that with the installation of the new data base Club plates will be able to be transferred between owners and vehicles as is currently available within the general vehicle registration number system.

New Series of Number Plates

Agree with the proposals

Slim Line Number Plates

Whilst comments regarding the technical difficulties regarding production of slimline plates is acknowledged it is felt that due to the popularity of the slimline plates consideration should be given to their continued availability.

Collectable Club Permit Plates

Agree with the proposal

Item 2 Log Books

In general terms the Association agrees with the proposal to introduce log books to record all use of club-permitted vehicles. This proposal would see the discontinuation of special use permits and remove the "grey area" in respect of preparation of vehicles,

The following comments on the log book scheme are made

(i) We believe there is scope for log books to be developed, printed and distributed by the Association, in conjunction with VicRoads, and a fee charged by the Association.

We would propose that upon VicRoads issuing a document such as the current Club Permit, this would be presented to the authorising club by its member and the club would supply a log book (endorsed by club officers, recording the car and owner's details and the book's valid period) to the member.

This method would relieve VicRoads of an additional administrative burden and avoid any need for a common annual cycle for all log books. It would also deal with the significant current problem of ensuring that any Permit holder is indeed operating within the scheme's requirement to be a bone fide member of an authorised club and operating under the club's auspices. The integrity of the scheme would thereby be enhanced and the core role of clubs in the operation of the scheme would be reinforced.

(ii) It is assumed that at implementation an interim period of 12 months when both special use permits and log books are acceptable will be mandated.

(iii) We are aware of situations where vehicles are kept in street frontage garages and the mere act of shuffling cars in the same garage, or moving a car out of the garage to wash it, for example, can mean being on a road even if only for a very brief time. Is it possible for an exemption to be made from recording a day's use in the case of, say, encroachment onto the road within fifty metres of the owners recorded address?

Information Recorded

We generally agree with size of logbook proposed and general format, and offer the following comments in relation to the detailed proposals.

(i) We have identified some difficulties with the use of the term "responsible operator" which we understand to be relevant to commercial vehicle regulations but which may be less meaningful here. As we perceive the proposed scheme there are two entities relevant to the log book. They are the *owner* of the vehicle, ie. the person (or company etc.) who is granted Club Permit Scheme use of the vehicle and to whom the book is issued. The other entity is the *driver* of the vehicle on any given day of use.

The details recorded on the log book should be those of the owner and, as outlined earlier, we would propose that the authorising club be responsible for completing details of the owner's name/address, car details, CPS plate number etc. (these to be derived from a VicRoads document sent to the owner. The club should endorse this data (by its authorised CPS officer and another official such as President or Secretary) and club stamp. In passing, we would suggest that the owner's license number is not relevant.

(ii) The daily trip section should, we believe, be the responsibility of the driver to complete and sign –whether or not this is the owner. This is the entity responsible for the use of the vehicle under the Scheme.

(iii) As proposed, the detail required to be recorded seems to owe more to commercial vehicle operation than may be required for CPS. As the scheme would allow a day's use at a time (up to 90 in a year) the basic data required would appear to be date, start time, club event attending (if that is the case) or purpose of another trip, together with driver's name, license number and signature. To require more detail of multiple trips within a day suggests a more regulated and scheduled use (such as that for a truck being used for business purposes) than maybe feasible for recreational use of a car. For example, the end point of a trip may not be known at its outset. The key point would seem to be that sufficient information be required for it to be recorded at the start, rather than hastily added if required at some time during a day's use. We would be happy to work with VicRoads in developing these concepts.

Code of Practice

The Association believes that a code of practice to cover the use of vehicles under the scheme be drawn up, to cover the way in which clubs, owners and drivers need to operate.

This would include general guidelines that would still exist, such as commercial use for heavy vehicles and hire for passenger vehicles, conditions for left hand drive vehicles, Western Australia entry, penalties for infringements, log book replacement etc.

Log Book Infringements

The Association concurs with the proposal but questions as to who the demerit points apply to; the owner or driver? In our view it should perhaps be the driver, but acknowledge that some penalty may well be appropriate for the owner to be penalised also. Perhaps a demerit points fine penalty for the former and a fine for the latter.

Log Book Fees

The Association suggests that a proposed log book fee be included within the permit fee, but this matter needs further consideration in light of our proposals for the Association to have a role in production of books. We would be available to work up these concepts with VicRoads as required.

Item 3 Clubs Ability to Monitor Membership of the Scheme

The Association supports the proposal to include a statement regarding VicRoads' ability to provide permit details to the club under which that membership was approved.

Further, it is believed that by supporting log book distribution by clubs the need for the above action will be much reduced. The Association agrees that penalties should be included to cover inappropriate renewals under the scheme. We also believe that penalties should be in place for both owners and clubs abusing the scheme.

Item 4 Replica Vehicles

Definition 1

The discussion paper refers to the need for a formal definition of replicas so that improper vehicles can be excluded. Examples of vehicles not considered suitable are quoted as the modern VW Beetle and BMW Mini., but we believe would also encompass the CPS-plated Porsche 356 "replica" based on Subaru WRX mechanicals. We are concerned to preserve the historic context of the CPS, but recognise that there are vehicles which have been created to be, to all intents and purposes, the same as actual historic vehicles and which it would be reasonable to treat as CPS eligible. The proposed definition appears sound as it would cater for

most cars we see as eligible It's effectiveness depends on the interpretation of "identical". Too strict an interpretation would unfairly discriminate and too loose an application of the concept would leave the scheme open to the very vehicles thought to be inappropriate. Further work on this definition is required and we would be pleased to work with VicRoads to refine this.

In respect of the definition of "modified replicas" we see a significant problem, in that the necessary broader definitions would not exclude the very vehicles that are stated above to be ineligible. Further work is required on this section, but since the issue is how to include legitimate Street Rods while excluding the type of vehicle cited, we would defer to the ASRF in refining the definition.

Item 5 Distinction between Classes

The discussion paper proposes that current informal arrangements -whereby modified vehicles, if not approved for CPS by an authorised club, are passed to ASRF for Street Rod Scheme (whether or not modified beyond VS16)- be formalised by change to the business rules. Procedures are suggested for the interaction between the applicant's club which has rejected the vehicle and ASRF.

This proposal is supported in as much as it formalises the current situation, with authorised clubs having the option to decide if ASRF should have jurisdiction of a vehicle.

The discussion paper goes on to canvass the possibility of removing the discretion of Veteran, Vintage or Classic and Historic clubs to determine whether or not to approve modified vehicles. This would lead to all modified vehicles being pushed into the Street Rod scheme.

This proposal is not supported.

We believe that the discretion should remain with clubs to decide if they wish to approve modified vehicles. Some clubs may decide they do not wish to sanction modifications, in which case the vehicle may pass to ASRF jurisdiction for consideration. Clubs that so choose may do so because the modifications take the vehicle in question into a category they do not seek to take responsibility for, or they may feel that they do not have people with sufficient technical knowledge to make an informed judgement.

However, there will be many cases where a club does have access to appropriate expertise and technical knowledge to assess the safety of a modified vehicle. These situations should continue to be handled by those clubs in the present manner.

This approach would allow for many categories of modification to be considered within a more appropriate framework than an arbitrary and wholesale transfer to the Street Rod scheme.

- Modifications may be of relatively minor nature and within clear parameters that make safety evaluation straightforward.
- Many modifications have been developed and proven over a long period (perhaps many decades) and the safety implications are clearly understood by the relevant club, where the accumulated knowledge-base exists.
- In some cases the modifications date from a time and/or were made in a context that they have in themselves become an element of the vehicle's historic character. The SR scheme cannot be appropriately aware of these issues.
- For those vehicles in the older age groups (especially Veteran, Vintage and up to circa 1950) the design and engineering framework of their time are quite markedly different from those applying to motor vehicle manufacture of more recent times. Consideration of modifications to such vehicles needs to be made with reference to those different factors. The SR scheme processes would not have access to the relevant background, as its basis is the transplantation of major components from dramatically different motor cars with very divergent design parameters. The method of assessing a vehicle that comprises insertion of a 5-litre modern V8 into a basic 4 cylinder, low power chassis of fifty or more years earlier manufacture, combined with major alteration of brakes, suspension etc., will necessarily be quite different from the appropriate criteria for a evaluating safety issues for a change from one engine type from within the manufacturer's model range to another, involving perhaps no more than a change of half a litre of capacity or 15 bhp.
- Modifications to vehicles in the older and more historic categories are not as radical or as potentially compromising of vehicle structural or dynamic integrity as the normal run of Street Rod modifications. There is a risk of irrelevant or inappropriate criteria being applied. The clubs that cater for a particular category of vehicle are best equipped to decide if they have the capacity to assess the safety implications of modifications, whilst always having the option to opt out and pass over to ASRF in cases where they believe the modifications go beyond their area of expertise.
- It is historically anomalous for Veteran, Vintage, Historic vehicles to be treated as Street Rods. One of the purposes of the CPS is to support the community-based activity of preserving motoring heritage. To blur this by shifting vehicles into a dramatically different scheme than their nature suggests compromises one of the core values of the scheme. The Street Rod scheme, on the other hand, should be the preserve of Street Rods and should not become a default scheme for many cars whose character is not that of hot rod.

It is stressed that the AOMC position is for clubs to retain their current discretion. This is held to be particularly important for vehicles in the pre-1960 categories.

In relation to modified vehicles the Association would be prepared to issue guidelines to assist CPS Clubs to understand the issues impacting on their decision whether or not to exercise such discretion. Those vehicles clearly modified to an extreme degree, such as would redefine them from "historic vehicle" to "hot rod", would and should still be open to transfer across to the SR system.

In conclusion, we affirm that the Association is supportive of any modifications to the scheme that will benefit the members of our constituent clubs and the historic vehicle movement in general.

The Association believes that it will be necessary during the review process and prior to the introduction of any new scheme to have sufficient scope for effective liaison with representatives of our member clubs

Any enquiries on the above should be addressed to the undersigned.

Iain Ross
Hon Secretary