**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF NSW SOUTHERN MOTORING CLUBS**

**HELD AT WAGGA WAGGA**

**SATURDAY, 8th NOVEMBER 2014**

**Meeting Opening.**

Phil Mudie opened the meeting at 10:00am and welcomed delegates from the 30 clubs represented. Phil Mudie was voted in to chair the meeting. Tony Stove (Sapphire Coast Historic Vehicle Club), was appointed Minute Secretary.

The purpose of the meeting being;

* Learn of and discuss all aspects of historic vehicle registration in Australia.
* Discuss possible changes to rules and regulations for historic vehicle registration and usage in NSW.
* Finding a way for our voices to be heard
* Maybe gaining a consensus on the “way ahead”.

**Guest Speaker**

Mark Saunders is President of the ACT Council of Motor Clubs (75 clubs). For many years he has been involved with drafting and negotiating legislation for many historic vehicle organisations in a number of states. He is very much an authority on the matters to be discussed today and will answer questions as the meeting progresses.

Phil Mudie led off the discussion by telling delegates that Conditional Registration in NSW is not only for historic vehicles on H plates. Other examples being road rollers, street rods, golf carts, rally cars etc. Each type is called a “Sheet”, and there are two Sheets for historic vehicles represented at this meeting: the H plate group, and Street Rods. If NSW accepts “M” plates, then there would be a third sheet for modified historic vehicles.

Mark Saunders then outlined his involvement with historic vehicles, primarily street rods and vintage motor cycles. For street rods he runs 28 registration schemes across Australia. He is a delegate to the ACMC.

Mark then moved on to talk about vehicle modification policy. For Street Rods it is simple; there is one set of standards across Australia. For historic vehicles throughout Australia it’s a “dog’s breakfast” with a different modification policy in every state. WA and SA are the most rigid with no modifications permitted. At the other end of the scale are the ACT and NT where you can modify just about everything providing it complies with the rules for full registration. The latter can cause tension between clubs; some don’t want modifications, others will accept modifications. The way around it in the ACT and NT is for clubs to amend their By-laws stating what is and what is not acceptable. For example, the ACT Morris Minor Club has a By-law allowing Datsun engines because the supply of Morris Minor engines has been depleted. The ACT Model A Ford Club amended their By-laws to accept a whole raft of modifications, including the fitment of overdrive.

**NSW H Plate Registration Scheme**

Historic vehicles (including trailers) must be **30 years of age or older** as from the year of manufacture. Historic vehicles must be as close to original condition as possible, with **no** alterations except for safety features such as seat belts and turn indicators or period accessories and options, if desired. Conversion to gas is also acceptable. Of course throughout NSW there are clubs who have placed their own “interpretations” on these guidelines.

**H Plate Usability**

Usability is restricted to events organised by recognised historic vehicle clubs or community organisations, provided an official invitation has been received and recorded by the club in the official minutes, or 'Day Book'. Historic vehicles can also be used on a road or road related area for:

* Servicing within a short distance from their place of garaging
* The inspection of the vehicle.

If a longer journey is necessary, the operator must notify the club and the details recorded by the club in the official minutes or 'Day Book'.

Mark Saunders summarized the most common formal/legal usage arrangements clubs are using for H plates vehicles. By formal it means within club By-laws. Firstly, a test and maintenance run within 30km of where the vehicle is garaged. Secondly, weekends designated as club run days where the owner of the vehicle advises the club registrar (even by SMS), that he intends to drive his vehicle for such and such.

Two delegates (Narrandera VR & CCC, and Allan Parker) then gave examples of how they minimize the need for formal approvals to drive their H plate vehicles for short outings, test runs etc as it is covered by By-laws. In response to a question from one of the Deniliquin clubs, Mark Saunders confirmed a club can have more than one day book registrar; two is acceptable.

Trevor Beckwith raised the liability for a club should a member have an accident on a club By-law sanctioned test/maintenance run causing serious injury/death. Mark Saunders responded by alerting clubs to be careful when drafting such By-laws. He keeps a file of test/maintenance run By-laws for all the clubs for the ACT, Street Rod clubs etc for which he represents. All of these have been “tested” by agreement with the government. If any club comes up with something new, he takes it to government to have it “tested” before allowing a club to adopt the By-law. Trevor Beckwith commented further that the Bush Council does not provide any similar service/advice to clubs. Delegates acknowledged there must be many clubs in NSW with By-laws that have not been “tested” with government and could have serious legal implications. Mick George (Culcairn Classic Car Club), pointed out the significance of having a club registered as an Incorporated body with the NSW Dept of Fair Trading. In the event of litigation, the club would be liable, not the member(s).

**Interstate Travel**

In response to a question about driving interstate on H or M plates and log books, Mark Saunders stated you can go to any state, though for WA you need to contact the relevant authority to notify your intentions, and even that seems to have been recently relaxed. Other states have reciprocity with NSW.

Two delegates commented on whether police in NSW and Victoria were aware of the respective state usage rules for historic vehicles; log books (Vic), and club authority (NSW). Delegates were unanimous in their support for a universal scheme Australia wide. Mark Saunders commented that a universal scheme may seem good, but there are advantages with retaining individual state schemes, namely the opportunity to negotiate separate and better conditions (the “leap frog” theory).

**H Plate Period Accessories**

John Morrison (Junee), sought advice on what are acceptable modifications, specifically what period accessories can be fitted to a vehicle. Mark Saunders advised that modifications are listed on the RMS website, and clubs can expand on modifications through their By-laws.

**Secondary Clubs.**

Mark Saunders offered a suggestion which most delegates were not aware of. When registering the vehicle annually, besides listing the Primary Club, list other clubs for which membership is held (Secondary Clubs), as that provides cover to participate in any event conducted by the Secondary club. You do not have to gain approval from your Primary club to use the vehicle to go on a Secondary club event. The Secondary clubs are printed on the RMS (RTA) Certificate of Approved Operations (purple/mauve form).

**M Plate Registration**

Phil Mudie moved the agenda on to pursuing the option for a M plate registration in NSW. In Victoria, VicRoads, the AOMC and clubs have worked on this for some time and M plates will be introduced on 1 February, 2015. In NSW the idea was floated about a year ago and there is ongoing discussion within government.

The Bush Council are opposed to M plates and have made a submission to the RMS along those lines without consulting clubs. Their objection pursues two avenues;

* The M plate does not sit comfortably/is incompatible with H plates.
* Fears the introduction of the M plate would lead to the 90 day log book scheme flowing on to the H plate conditional registration scheme.

Phil Mudie pointed out that should the M plate/90 day log book scheme come in use, many historic vehicle owners on H plates would switch to M plates to gain all the advantages of flexible use it provides.

Mark Saunders then briefed the meeting on negotiations and the three concessions being sought from government for a M plate scheme;

* Technical – acceptable modifications to a historic vehicle.
* Usage – Freedom to use a vehicle whenever/however for a total of 90 days a year.
* Price- Registration cost to be cheaper than full registration.

The original proposal was written three years ago, now up to the fourth draft and negotiations are proceeding with the government. This proposal was put forward bu ANSMA (street machines) and submitted to RMS by ACMC. Government has accepted the technical side, and Treasury is now looking at the pricing aspect. The ACMC is promoting the proposal. The modifications aspect of the proposal is basically whatever can be certified for full registration, and to shift the onus for inspection from clubs to a roadworthy inspection and maybe an engineer’s certificate. Vehicles would have to comply with VSB 14, the national guidelines for modifications. Also, with the implementation of M plates, individual clubs will be able to limit the degree of modifications acceptable, from within the official list, by simply approving a club By-law.

Tony Stove (SCHVC), asked Mark Saunders his view on VSI 33 (Vehicles Modifications for M Plates), which is about to be introduced in Victoria. His response was that it was a pretty good document.

Another delegate brought up a good point in support of need to for M plates. Firstly, he acknowledged the need to retain H plates because these older generation vehicles are generally the preserve of older motoring enthusiasts. However, it is the younger generation that clubs need to attract who will be the preservers of the historic vehicle movement in Australia. These younger people are the ones who are/will want to, beef up their historic vehicles within the M plate guidelines. Presently these younger enthusiasts with modified historic vehicles have no choice but to go for full registration. With the introduction of M plates many will take up that option and to do so will have to join a motoring club.

**Vehicle Inspections**

A delegate asked a question about the qualifications required of club roadworthy inspector. Mark Saunders responded: Under the existing H plate scheme no qualifications are required as the inspection is really for compliance, though it is preferable for inspectors have some mechanical experience. Under the M plate scheme vehicles will have to have a roadworthy inspection (pink slip), by a qualified inspector, and if a vehicle is heavily modified it will also require a engineer’s certificate. By way of clarification, with the H plate scheme a club inspector can decline to inspect a vehicle and recommend a “pink slip” roadworthy.

Keith Wheeler clarified the length of validity of vehicle inspections. If an inspection has been done by a club inspector the period is 42 days, and for a “pink slip” it is six months. The latter is a recent change.

To clarify the situation with H and M plates, Mark Saunders confirmed that in NSW the H plates will be retained for motoring enthusiasts who want to keep their vehicles “original”, and M plates will be for historic vehicles that have been modified within the guidelines to be determined by the government and which are currently subject to negotiation.

Some clubs represented at the meeting advised they had amended By-laws and done away with club inspectors. All club vehicles are required to have an annual “pink slip” roadworthy inspection. This has eliminated any antagonism and taken the pressure off club inspectors.

**Log Book Usage.**

Ross Davidson pointed out more advantages of the log book scheme. It allows a member freedom to use a vehicle whenever they wish, say on a Sunday, to drive into town for coffee, lunch etc, without having to gain approval from the club registrar. Further, it can attract younger, working people to join clubs so that they may use their/family historic vehicle whenever they can spare the time. As was found in Victoria, freedom of use attracted a lot of younger members to clubs.

A member of the Albury-Wodonga Car Club, with motor cycle endorsed Ross Davidson’s comment, in that he finds that if it’s a fine day and ideal for a ride on the bike, all he has to do is fill in the Log Book and go. Prior to the introduction of log books he would have to seek out the relevant club officer to gain the necessary approval. If that club officer(s) was/were not available he could not go.

Mark Saunders then commented on the reason why some clubs oppose the log book scheme. They want to regulate what members do to conform to the club program to assure member participation in club events. With the introduction of log book schemes in Tasmania, South Australia and the NT there has not been a downturn in member participation with club events.

John Alley from the Sun Country Historic Vehicle & Machinery Club (stretches along the border from Yarrawonga to Tocumwal), whist in favour of the log book scheme spoke of some of the downsides. Being a NSW border club, they have members living in Victoria and able to use the log book. Some of these members only show up once a year when it’s time to renew membership. Also, in Victoria under the current legislation, clubs can be formed with just five members and there has been an instance of a questionable club formed with all members of the same surname. The police in Victoria, using plate identification technology are cracking down on abuse, and excessive use of the system.

John Alley affirmed that the log book scheme is very convenient, he has the 45 day version and finds that ample for his usage. With events, about a third of their membership attend, though not necessarily the same members on each occasion and yes, there are many “new faces”. He summarised by stating the log book system is a big improvement and fully recommends its introduction in NSW.

A question was put where a person who lives in Victoria, is a member of a club in that state and is also a member of a NSW club. In response, Mark Saunders stated that if the vehicle is registered in Victoria and participating in a NSW club event, the Log Book must be filled out daily. Cannot ignore the Log Book and claim to be operating under NSW CRS rules because the event is that of a NSW club and being run in NSW. With the reverse of the foregoing, if that Victorian club member participates in an event run by a NSW club in Victoria, or any other state, and that member is a participant, the log book must be filled in each day, including travelling to and from the event. Also, if on an event and you are driving at night and extend beyond midnight, a new entry must be added once the clock passes midnight.

**Log Book Scheme-Membership Growth**

The meeting then heard comments about the big increase in club memberships following the introduction of log books in South Australia and Victoria; instances cited of 100% plus increase, changing the dynamics of clubs, and consequent extra administration. Mark Saunders was aware of this problem, however it can be addressed by inspecting log books at the end of a year and, in his club’s instance, where a member has attended less than 6 events they are put on a warning.

Allan Davidson spoke of how his club handled this problem; they a have a 3-3 rule in that a member must attend 3 meeting and 3 events a year. Non compliance results with non renewal of membership. Other options available to clubs to cull suspect members were also raised, but ultimately it rests with club registrars to determine who are the genuine historic motoring enthusiasts.

A delegate from a NSW/Vic border club with 80% members living in Victoria spoke of how their club dealt with the spike in membership applications with the introduction of the log book scheme. The club amended its By Laws and imposed a six month waiting period on membership applications. Consequently many applications were withdrawn. Another club came up with a novel but effective way to encourage club participation with the log book scheme in that the annual club subs are $10. However, if a member does not attend the mandatory minimum number of club events/meetings, the annual subscription jumps to $100.

David Schmidt of the Albury-Wodonga Car Club that has 300 members. Their club holds competition events and with the introduction of the log book scheme membership has also increased. His club is not fussed whether or not they see these new members on a regular basis, but it is happy to take their *MONEY* which has put the club on a sound financial footing. He also recommended club registrars have the ability to access the VicRoads and RMS websites to check the currency of club members. Such access would save considerable time for registrars. A problem with the Victorian scheme is the discontinuance of annual vehicle inspections, which should be retained with the introduction of a log book scheme in NSW. It was pointed out by Ross Davidson that club By-laws can overcome this issue by stating annual inspections are mandatory.

Graham Dennis from the Albury-Wodonga Antique Car Club sought clarification on what control would a club have over the likely flood of new applications for membership from people seeking “cheap registration” and not getting involved in club activities. Mark Saunders responded by advising club registrars to not sign the annual registration form if the club is dissatisfied with such members: just say *“No*”. The club remains in control of who is admitted as a member and as a consequence the registration of that member’s historic vehicle. However, the club does not have control over how that vehicle is used.

Another border club delegate stated that the log book scheme is “absolutely fantastic”. This club has overcome the non requirement for club roadworthy inspections, as per the VicRoad rules, with the 3-3 rule in their By-laws. Namely, attend 3 meetings and 3 club events per year, and on these occasions the club registrar takes the opportunity to progressively inspect vehicles

Keith Wheeler spoke of a club meeting recently attended in Victoria. As a visitor he sought permission to ask a question on the log book scheme. Namely, how many members preferred the log book scheme over the old club permit scheme. The result was 100% in favour. He alerted members present for the need to “tidy up” club constitutions when the log book scheme is introduced, citing the example of a one make club in Ballarat that also accepted other makes which of course was in violation of the club constitution.

**Log Book Scheme – Historic Vehicle Sales**

Keith Wheeler pointed out that it is much easier to complete a historic vehicle sale transaction through the log book scheme than the H plate CRS. Mark Saunders expanded on this by explaining that the H plate CRS is a permit scheme so the vehicle registration is not transferable, whereas the Victorian log book is a registration scheme, and the vehicle registration is transferable.

**Log Book Scheme – Club Administration**

A number of delegates raised the matter of increased administration for club registrars with the log book scheme, in that log books must be checked at the end of the year before signing the necessary documentation to renew registration. Some clubs inspect log books more frequently. For NSW H plate CRS, if club registrars are complying with the RMS guidelines they should maintain a register of all club vehicles. It is well known many clubs do not do this. So in fact with the introduction of a log book scheme in NSW, it will only be the clubs who do not presently maintain their vehicles register that will notice the effect of more administration.

**Log Book Scheme – NSW Considerations**

Mark Saunders moved on to summarise considerations for a log book scheme in NSW;

* It is possible that a majority of historic vehicle owners in NSW want the log book scheme, whereas a minority would prefer to retain the status quo.
* Log books will impose an additional administrative workload on clubs
* With the introduction of a log book scheme, it is important to not disadvantage the existing H plate users.
* Whilst the CMC and CHMC might not favour a log book scheme, anecdotal evidence suggest this is not the view of the majority of their affiliated clubs because very few clubs attend their respective meetings.
* In the ACT it is likely there will be two schemes in parallel. The current club arrangement ($100 fee), or a 90 day log book scheme ($250).
* In the NT, they retained the club based scheme, and provided an option for an annual 20 day log book scheme. This hybrid scheme may seem advantageous but in practice causes confusion with its policing.
* Younger people prefer the log book scheme because its convenience suits their lifestyle.
* A log book scheme provides freedom to vehicle owners to use their historic vehicle whenever and for whatever purpose they wish, and they will not have to seek club permission to use the vehicle.
* If a member opts for a 45 day log book and finds that is insufficient, there is the option to buy another 45 day log book within the year. Experience in Victoria has shown the 45 day log book suits well.

Phil Mudie commented that surely we can learn from the log book abuse experiences in Victoria, and should NSW introduce a similar scheme, draft legislation and rules to avoid a repeat. Mark Saunders added that most of the problems in Victoria were of VicRoads making and they are now addressing these problems.

A delegate pointed out that in Victoria it took seven years for clubs and VicRoads to come up with the log book scheme, and he urged all present to prompt other clubs and the RMS to get on with it. Phil Mudie endorsed the need to get some momentum for the introduction of a log book scheme, and maybe M plates in NSW. The way ahead would require our group to recruit more clubs to the cause then press for change through the two Councils, ACMC, government and whoever. It is important for our voice to be heard.

**Log Book Scheme – Registration Costs**

Tim Langley of the Riverina Vintage Machinery Club sought information about the registration cost of going to a log book scheme. Mark Saunders responded by saying this matter is usually the last to be determined during negotiations with any new scheme. The governement will estimate how many historic vehicles will switch from full registration to a log book scheme and then come up with fee to minimise the loss in revenue. For states that have introduced a log book scheme, the 90 day log book registration costs about double that of the former CRS. In Victoria, their 45 day log book cost is about the same as the former H plate CRS. As for insurance costs Phil Mudie informed the meeting that Shannons and the NRMA have stated there will be no difference to what is now paid. Phil Mudie also pointed out there will be a considerable saving for members who have their historic vehicles on full registration; using the Victorian scheme as a guide, around a 70% saving for a 90 day log book registration.

A delegate sought clarification on whether the log book scheme required continuous usage for 45/90 days. Phil Mudie and Mark Saunders responded. No, it is a total of 45 or 90 days in the year. Further if you have a 45 day log book and you happen to use all 45 days before the year is out, you can get another 45 days for the remainder of the year. Experience from Victoria is showing a 45 day log book will often suffice.

**The Process for Change to Motoring Registration Legislation in NSW.**

Mark Saunders then moved on to explain the process for negotiating changes to the registration scheme(s) for historic vehicles in NSW. Firstly, the government will not negotiate with individual clubs, only to peak representative bodies They being Councils to which clubs are affiliated, or Federations who have affiliated Councils. Federations negotiate on a national basis whereas Council negotiate on a state basis. In NSW there is the CHMC (Bush Council) and the CMC (generally Sydney based clubs). These two Councils have had the “ear” of the NSW state government for the past 20 or so years. There is another body, the Australian Council of Motor Clubs (ACMC), that has been the most effective in gaining changes to motoring legislation in recent years in that they have worked with the RMS (RTA), government and “*have the ear”* of the Minister.

Presently in NSW, the two Street Rod councils are negotiating a 90 day log book scheme with government, however the CHMC and CMC are having nothing to do with these negotiations.

In NSW there are about 800 clubs who use the H plate registration scheme. Only 258 clubs belong to the CMC or CHMC, most of which have never attended a meeting their affiliated Council. So what is happening in NSW, is that the CMC and CHMC are meeting with government on the basis of opinions from a very small number of clubs; probably only 40-50 clubs, and at the last Bush Council meeting insufficient clubs attended for a quorum. It was pointed out that Bush Council clubs are spread right across NSW, so because of the tyranny of distance, very few clubs attend their meetings.

The remaining 500 plus clubs in NSW do not belong to a peak body so have no representation at negotiations with government.

**Options for Initiating Changes to Historic Vehicle Usage and Registration in NSW**

How do we get our voice heard for change?

**First Option:** Clubs belonging to the CHMC (Bush Council) or CMC can step up their attendance at meetings of the respective Councils and bring on changes to the entrenched stance.

**Second Option:** Form a new Council to pick up all the clubs dissatisfied with the CHMC, CMC and clubs who are not affiliated with either of these. Mark Saunders cautioned that the ACMC may not want to see another Council formed in NSW.

If we do nothing it is quite likely we will be having the same discussion as of today in seven years time.

Phil Mudie asked, rather than form a new Council would the ACT Council of Motor Clubs accept our affiliation? Mark Saunders believed this would be most unlikely because the ACT CMC constitution only represents ACT clubs and NSW clubs within a 100km radius of the ACT.

Phil Mudie went on to brief the meeting on a discussion he had with Tony O’Donnell, President of the CMC and ACMC, just prior to today’s meeting. The CMC might welcome a group of clubs such as those meeting here today, as it means the CMC would have take note of the need for change which in due course would bolster the ACMC’s negotiations with government.

Keith Wheeler suggested another course of action: our group as a lobbying body through local NSW government members, or lobby in conjunction with the push for affiliation with a existing/new motoring Council. Mark Saunders added that he had achieved more through lobbying politicians than through negotiations with government bodies. He regularly meets with three Senators and two state ministers.

Mark Saunders told the meeting that the best organised motoring enthusiasts in Australia are the street rodders. A few years ago they could see their hobby being pushed off the road by governments, and in response they organised themselves, negotiated with governments and have since gained recognition and a lot of registration concessions. Similarly for the historic vehicle movement, back in the 1970s governments wanted to remove veteran and vintage vehicles from the road. They also organised themselves and gained concessional registration. Since then however, the historic vehicle movement has stagnated in pursuing further concessions, and NSW is unfortunately the worst example all because about 60% of clubs have no representation to negotiate with government.

Discussion turned back to what is our best option. Apart from trying to sway opinion in the CMC and CHMC, which could take a long time, Mark Saunders suggested formation of a new Council representing southern NSW motoring clubs, with affiliation to the ACMC.

**Do we want change?**

At this point a vote was taken to gain an indication of number of clubs that would like to see the introduction of the log book scheme and M plate registrations. All but one of the 49 delegates present voted in favour of change. It was acknowledged the vote was not binding because individual clubs would need to consider the options. The vote was taken to merely gauge the level of support.

**Lunch Adjournment**

Members agreed it was time for a lunch break not before Ross Davidson’s rendering of his carby and the horse joke! Chairman Phil Mudie adjourned the meeting at 12:30 pm for lunch.

**Resolutions**

Delegates agreed the morning session of the meeting had been a very interesting, informative and a positive experience. During the post lunch session the delegates took the opportunity to seek clarification on some matters raised earlier. No new business was introduced.

The agenda then moved on to adopt a course of action. The CRS operating in Victoria, with the 45/90 day usage log book scheme for H plates, and the “M” plate option for accepted modifications, also using the 45/90 log book arrangement, was accepted by delegates as the best model to pursue for the registration and usage of historic vehicles in NSW.

The following Resolutions were Moved by Ross Davidson and Seconded by Allan Parker:

1. “The delegates advocated the introduction of a “M” plate scheme with 90 day log books as currently proposed and the introduction of the 45/90 Log Book system to the Conditional Registration Scheme for historic vehicles in NSW”.
2. “It was resolved that an approach should be made to the CMC and ACMC investigating the possibility of creating a new chapter of the CMC or other suitable structure for the NSW Southern Region Motoring Clubs to provide a channel of communication for these resolutions and related matters”.
3. “Appointed Phil Mudie to lead any negotiations and meetings with relevant bodies in pursuit of the above Resolutions”.

All resolutions were supported unanimously.

**Meeting Closure**

Phil Mudie thanked delegates for their attendance and input to the meeting. The significant contribution by Mark Saunders was acknowledged by acclamation from all present.

The meeting was formally closed at 3:00pm.

**Next Meeting**

Delegates agreed to meet again in January 2015, at Wagga Wagga.

Tony Stove

**Secretary**