



ACT Lane Filtering Trial

Questions and Answers

What is motorcycle lane filtering?

Motorcycle lane filtering is when a motorcyclist moves alongside vehicles that have either stopped or are moving slowly, less than 30km/h. Lane filtering is illegal in Australia, with the exception of NSW.

What is the difference between lane filtering and lane splitting?

Lane splitting involves higher speeds, which increases the unpredictability of motorcyclist movements for other road users. This increases the crash risk for motorcyclists and other road users, especially pedestrians and cyclists. In crashes resulting from lane splitting, there is a higher risk of casualties, especially for motorcyclists. Lane splitting will not be considered as part of the ACT trial.

Why is motorcycle lane filtering being trialled?

Lane filtering allows motorcyclists to move quickly and safely away from congested areas of traffic. This provides motorcyclists with an opportunity to have the front position in a lane – away from other traffic. While it is not currently allowed, it is not uncommon to see motorcyclists lane filtering and lane splitting. This trial will place conditions on the practice to reduce the risk to all road users.

As of 1 July 2014, lane filtering is allowed in NSW under certain circumstances, following results of a trial held between 1 March 2013 and 30 April 2013. The results of that trial, released on 26 February 2014, showed that lane filtering is a relatively low risk riding activity for motorcyclists when done in lower risk/low speed traffic situations (30km/h and under).

The Standing Committee on Planning, Environment and Territory and Municipal Services tabled its report on the Inquiry into Vulnerable Road Users on 5 June 2014. The report includes a recommendation that the government conduct a trial of motorcycle lane filtering by March 2015.

In May 2014, the QLD Minister for Transport and Main Roads released the *Motorcycle Discussion Paper* for public consultation. The paper proposes to allow conditional lane filtering in QLD, similar to the NSW rules.

What is the purpose of the trial?

The purpose of the trial is to investigate the road safety impact and benefits of allowing motorcyclists to lane filter in safe circumstances. The impact of lane filtering on traffic congestion will not be measured, due to the lower level of ACT traffic in general compared to Sydney (the location of the NSW trial), and the fact NSW found that lane filtering had minimal impact on reducing traffic congestion.

How was the trial developed?

A working group has been set up for the development of trial conditions and media campaigns. The conditions of the trial are intended to maintain safety for motorcyclists and protect all other road users.

The working group consists of members from the Justice and Community Safety Directorate, ACT Policing, the Territory and Municipal Services Directorate, NRMA Motoring and Insurance, the ACT Motorcycle Riders Association, Pedal Power and other road user representative groups.

When will the trial commence and for how long?

The trial will be conducted across the whole of the ACT for a period of two years commencing from 1 February 2015.

What are the conditions of the trial?

For the purpose of the trial, lane filtering will:

- only be allowed when safe to do so;
- not be allowed at a speed greater than 30km/h;
- only be allowed by fully licensed motorcyclists (ie. motorcyclists on their Ls or Ps will not be allowed to lane filter);
- not be allowed on kerbside next to a footpath or in bicycle lanes or breakdown lanes;
- not be allowed in school zones during school zone hours; and
- not be allowed past heavy vehicles and buses.

What is the relevance of the 30km/h restriction?

Research has shown that the probability of death in a crash between a motor vehicle and a pedestrian is 10% at an impact speed of 30km/h. This is considered to be a safe speed for

lane filtering, when taking into account braking distance and reaction time (both of which are considerably less at 30km/h than at higher speeds) and means that the impact speed of any crash would be significantly less than 30km/h.

Are there risks with introducing lane filtering?

There can be risks associated with any activity and interaction between road users. To mitigate any risks of the lane filtering trial, a range of conditions will apply which are intended to maintain safety for motorcyclists and protect all other road users. In addition, there will be an education and awareness campaign that will be launched prior to the commencement of the trial. This campaign will reinforce the conditions of the trial and will include specific messages for all road user groups

What are some of the safety tips that will be promoted?

Pedestrians should remember to cross safely at designated crossings, and watch closely for motorcycles that may be lane filtering.

Motorists should check for motorcyclists lane filtering before changing lanes during congested traffic. Motorists should not block the path of motorcyclists, and should allow the motorcyclist to take off in front of the traffic rather than competing with them for the front position.

Motorcyclists should recognise that lane filtering will not be suitable on all roads – considering road width, environment, adjacent land use, and the presence of vulnerable road users. Motorcyclists should use good judgment when lane filtering to ensure that safety is not compromised for themselves or for other road users. Motorcyclists should ensure they comply with all conditions of the trial including not filtering on the kerbside and staying out of bicycle and emergency lanes.

The conditions that apply to lane filtering have been developed to help minimise these potential risks.

What is the purpose of the awareness campaign?

The media awareness campaign will be aimed at making all road users aware of the conditions of lane filtering and how to lane filter safely. Road users will be reminded to look out for motorcyclists that may be lane filtering around them when the trial commences on 1 February 2015.

The awareness campaign will ensure that the changes to the law, and their benefits and risks, are understood by all road users. All road users are reminded to demonstrate understanding and compromise in order to achieve the desired 'share the road' culture on our roads.

Can motorcyclists be charged if they do not lane filter safely?

Motorcyclists who do not comply with the conditions of the trial will be faced with potential fines and loss of demerit points.

Police can charge motorcyclists with a number of road traffic offences if lane filtering is not done in accordance with the conditions of the trial or is otherwise undertaken in a negligent or dangerous manner.

How will the trial be evaluated?

The trial will be evaluated based on a before and after study of crashes and awareness of the rules relating to lane filtering. As lane filtering and lane splitting is not specifically coded in crash data, the evaluation of the impact of the trial on crash rates will be based on data relating to same direction, lane change and side swipe manoeuvres which can indicate lane filtering and splitting. A pre and post trial survey will be used to evaluate awareness of the rule relating to lane filtering.

Will forward stop boxes be implemented as part of the trial?

While supportive of lane filtering arrangements that include forward-stop boxes, as recommended by the vulnerable road user inquiry, to implement these would require modifications to existing traffic signal vehicle detection equipment. Funding for such modifications is not currently available but will be considered together with other competing priorities.