

NZFOMC 22nd Annual Report

In the past year we made a deliberate decision to meet less frequently as the previous year had been one with more than the usual share of issues to deal with, especially the still pending changes to Incorporated Societies Act and the revised Health and Safety legislation, and had involved extra costs. But the work done regarding the Health and Safety Act was highly successful with positive changes made to the proposed legislation.

While there has been nothing as significant this year there have still been a number of submissions made to government agencies on a range of issues. It is interesting to note that when we are sitting in a politician's office being politely listened to as we explain our view on some particular government proposal, just how suddenly the attention leaps up when the penny drops that the FOMC represents the views of more than 75,000 members.

But the expenditure of our many thousands of members on their hobby and interests are only a relatively small aspect of just how valuable heritage motoring and vehicle preservation are to the overall New Zealand economy.

Early on in the past year we made what I believe was a very sound submission on the Incorporated Societies Bill, especially on the provisions which could prove too onerous for smaller organisations reliant on volunteer office holders if effective changes are not made to the wording of the draft. We can expect the revised draft to be forwarded to Parliament following the election and we shall be ready to ensure any potential adverse impacts on our 130 or so member clubs are addressed.

We made submissions on the ACC levy portion of the motor vehicle relicencing fees particularly noting that the petrol tax levy rather than the rego fee is a fairer means of apportioning costs. We noted the anomalies arising from the diesel vehicle situation, and once again stated our view that vehicles over 30 years old should qualify for the same discount rate as the 40 year plus vintage category instead of being subjected to the imposition of the highest rego fees of the entire New Zealand vehicle fleet. And our submission on government proposals to offer concessions and incentives to electric vehicle owners warned of the longer term possible consequences.

As usual the yearly list of Omnibus Amendments to our Land Transport Rules provided room for all sorts of changes which at first sight may appear boring and inconsequential, but often the devil is hiding in the detail. Our latest submission on Omnibus Amendments raised issues with revisions to rules relating to door retention systems, seat belts and anchorages, vehicle lighting disconnection and high mounted stop lamps. Not riveting stuff maybe, but it can become very problematic for individual owners if the result of the changes is that your vehicle is then deemed to be non-compliant.

Indeed compliance looks to be shaping up as an issue we will have increasing problems with on several levels. Vehicles entering the fleet after restoration or brought in from overseas are sometimes faced with what seems to the owners to be totally unreasonable requirements or hurdles. I've even heard "vandalism" being used to describe some of the inspection requirements inflicted on our heritage vehicles. Older vehicles going through the COF or WOF process are also, on occasions, expected to exceed standards they would have struggled to meet when new and are

well above what was previously acceptable. But sometimes inspectors just do not know what level of wear is permissible or what degree of clearance is required in kingpins, link pins, trunnions, steering mechanisms, transmissions, brakes etc as they are simply unfamiliar with older vehicle technology. It does seem that in cases of dispute we do need some wise arbiters in each area or province.

The contrast between the current requirement of six month warrants for older vehicles and 12 month for post 2000 is also shaping up to become something of a dichotomy especially when many newer vehicles are covering high annual mileages while exempt from frequent inspections. Yet conversely many classic vehicles only cover very modest mileages each year and are seldom used during the winter months. Clearly there is scope for further discussion and refining of the vehicle inspection process.

During the past year the FOMC also joined MITO, the Motor Industry Training Organisation. Clearly it is in the best interests of all heritage motorists that instruction in the craft and trade skills needed to preserve our vehicles is continued. Perhaps we may see the development of some special training programmes as this relationship grows.

In Europe there is now significant recognition of the economic importance of the restoration and servicing industries for classic, vintage and special interest vehicles. A thorough analysis of the importance to our economy and the jobs provided by our interest or hobby (some call it an affliction) is well overdue.

My sincere thanks to our long serving, extremely knowledgeable and capable secretary Roy Hughes and our executive members for all their efforts which has seen another good year of progress for the FOMC. I think the footnote on all our submissions is entirely appropriate and worth restating. "Representing the responsible special interest and heritage motoring enthusiast." Because that's what we do.

The Hon Harry Duynhoven

President NZFOMC