

## New model update

The latest on new bikes due out this year and beyond

### MV AGUSTA BRUTALE AERO AMERICA

MV AGUSTA revealed this concept bike last week at the Tokyo Motorcycle show. Called the Brutale Aero America, it's a retro-styled version of the Brutale with a half fairing and a single end-can instead of the stock bike's stacked twin exhausts. Designed for the retro-mad Japanese market, if it's popular it could reach production or a conversion kit may be offered to Brutale owners.



BRUTALE Aero America is aimed at the Japanese market

### VOXAN CHARADE RACING

FRENCH firm Voxan has put its 100bhp 1000cc Charade Racing into production. In France the bike costs £13,250, but at the moment there's no UK Voxan importer.



CHARADE uses 1000cc V-twin

### HONDA FORZA

GOT six gears on your bike? Honda reckons that's not enough, so it has given its latest Forza scooter a seven-speed gearbox. The bike, launched in Japan recently, is actually a twist-and-go, but its clever transmission can simulate a manual, with bar-mounted push buttons to snick through its seven speeds. As the gears are defined by the bike's on-board computer, it will only take a bit of re-programming to add even more gears!



FORZA has a seven-speed semi-auto gearbox

## MCN INVESTIGATES

# NOW ANSWER OUR QUESTIONS MR DARLING

**MCN INVESTIGATION**  
**HAVE YOU BEEN WRONGLY CONVICTED?**  
THESE GATSO PICTURES SAY THE RIDER IS DOING 46MPH  
THE CAMERA PARTNERSHIP ADMIT HE'S DOING 23MPH  
THEY CLAIM THE SIGNAL HAS 'BOUNCED OFF THE BUS'

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AVOID MAYBE FOOD RIP-OFF?

**NEWS**  
MCN INVESTIGATION  
**THE PROOF SPEED TRAPS GET IT WRONG**  
Our tests prove the speed detectors police use against bikes can give wildly distorted readings

**STATIONARY SPEED TRAPS**  
A bike fit for McQueen  
New model update

**THE LASER GUNS WE TESTED**

**Our bike premiums just got lower!**  
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ROADSURE

OUR stories have proved speed camera readings on bikes can't be trusted

MP Lembit Opik is taking MCN's speed camera campaign to the House of Commons. He will ask:

- Why aren't speed cameras tested for accuracy on bikes?
- What's being done to stop innocent riders being accused of speeding?

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## AROUND THE WORLD



OPIK supports MCN's findings

BY STEVE FARRELL

**M**CN has joined forces with a Lib Dem MP to demand a response to our findings on inaccurate speed camera evidence from transport secretary Alistair Darling.

Over the last 12 months MCN has exposed a string of scandals about speed cameras and their mismanagement, from rule-bending and false accusations against riders to the fact that no cameras have ever been tested for accuracy on motorcycles.

Bike-riding MP Lembit Opik has closely followed our campaign, and now he has submitted a series of probing questions to Darling based on our findings.

Because Opik is an MP, Darling will have to answer. In the same week the Government approved more than 200 extra speed camera sites across the country, Darling has been challenged to address our concerns over the inaccuracy of cameras and the injustice of a fixed penalty system which presumes riders are guilty.

The questions also came in the same week that it was announced more traffic offences are to be dealt with in a similar way to speeding. Lord Falconer,

secretary of state for constitutional affairs, said large numbers of "low-level motoring-related offences" will be removed from the courts and dealt with through "summary justice". That's another way of saying fixed penalties, and an issue Opik has very strong opinions on.

Opik, MP for Montgomeryshire in Wales, said: "What MCN's campaign proves is that the British judicial system is shifting away from innocent until proven guilty to a situation where the state can blame you for things you can't prove you haven't done, even if you are innocent."

"It's the general trend of this Government to assume the state has the right to look on its citizens as bad people to be kept control of. The naive and dangerous assumption of ministers is that they can never get it wrong, but MCN has highlighted that riders can be accused of things they are innocent of."

"Not only are we endlessly being spied on, but our opportunity to defend ourselves has been taken away as well. These are the early stages of a totalitarian state. I've been saying this for years and now it's starting to happen and it's getting worse."



DARLING to be quizzed in Commons

**INDIA** - Bike-mounted raiders used chilli powder to rob a bank worker of £10,000 in Pune! Mandar Dilip Vankudre was asked directions by two men on a blue and white motorcycle before one of the riders threw chilli powder in his face and grabbed the bagful of money.

**MALAYSIA** - A ride-in massage centre has opened on the North-South Highway, with the aim of relaxing stressed-out bikers. Works minister Samy Vellu said motorcyclists had to realise the importance of "stopping to have a rest". The government says a second massage centre will open in a few months.

**USA** - Ryan Grothe held up traffic for two hours after crashing his bike into a car when he pulled a wheelie on a Pennsylvania highway. Police said: "We know he passed a witness doing a wheelie, but we're not sure if he was still on the bike when he hit the car. We found his helmet strapped to his motorcycle."

**USA** - A car driver opened fire on a group of Hells Angels on a Connecticut highway last week, killing one and injuring another. Roger Mariani, 61, was shot in the chest and later died in hospital. Paul Carrol, 37, who was grazed by a bullet, was treated and released. Police believe road rage to have been the motive and are now searching for a pick-up truck with Florida numberplates.

**NEW ZEALAND** - A couple on their way to an insurance appointment relating to the theft of their Honda VTR250 spotted their stolen bike at a set of traffic lights. Allan and Vicky Luckman dragged the rider off the bike, but he escaped on foot.

## THE SPEED CAMERA SCANDALS MCN HAS UNCOVERED

HERE are our key findings, together with the questions that MP Lembit Opik will pose to transport secretary Alistair Darling to answer within the next two weeks. For each question, Darling has been asked to give a statement of opinion as well as a factual answer so we should know what the Transport Secretary really feels about the plight of the modern motorcyclist.

**'In all cases it is more likely that an inaccurate speed will be recorded for a bike than a car'**

**DR MICHAEL CLARK, CHAIRMAN OF THE EUROPEAN STANDARDS COMMITTEE ON VEHICLE DETECTORS**

### 1. INACCURACY: MCN'S FINDINGS

**OCTOBER 26, 2005:** The Home Office admits that none of its speed detection equipment was ever tested on motorcycles: "No tests were done on motorcycles as there is no reason to believe they present new challenges to other vehicles." Dr Michael Clark, chairman of the European Standards Committee on Vehicle Detectors, disagrees: "In all cases it's more likely an inaccurate speed will be recorded for a bike than for a car." To date, the Home Office has failed to produce any scientific proof of their claim.

**DECEMBER 21, 2005:** Reader Bryn Carlyon turns to us for help in his fight against a speeding fine. By calculating his speed from the photo evidence provided to him we show he was doing around 20mph - not the 46mph alleged. Mid and South Wales camera partnership drops the case.

**MARCH 8, 2006:** MCN proves that laser speed detectors that have never been tested on bikes are inaccurate on bikes. We test a device similar to that used in speed camera vans, the LTI20.20. When targeting a stationary bike, both the LTI20.20 and a handheld ProLaser II also tested register the speed of a nearby moving car instead! To date, the camera manufacturers have not responded to our findings.

**MARCH 22, 2006:** A leaflet sent out with speeding notices by Greater Manchester Police warns people against challenging the charges in court: "The Magistrate may give you a higher fine and more points." Bike solicitor Andrew Dalton calls the claim misleading, as everyone is entitled to have justice dispensed by a court without being penalised.

### 2. INJUSTICE: MCN'S FINDINGS

**FEBRUARY 15, 2006:** MCN was only able to prove reader Bryn Carlyon's innocence because the Gatso photos provided to him could be used to calculate his real speed. Yet weeks later we reveal that newer cameras, called Redspeed, produce images that don't allow riders to do this. Steve Callaghan, camera manager for Cumbria, tells us it's tough luck, saying: "They don't have to check their speed. They tell us that in court." We later reveal that other camera partnerships, such as Lincolnshire, only issue a single Gatso photograph to riders during the Fixed Penalty stage, when two are necessary for speed calculations. The partnership's only justification for not sending both images is that it doesn't have to.

**MARCH 1, 2006:** As well as bringing false accusations against our reader,

Bryn Carlyon, Mid and South Wales camera partnership also failed to submit evidence to Carlyon before his court appearance, in breach of Section 9 of the 1967 Criminal Justice Act and Section 20 of the 1988 Road Traffic Offenders Act. We asked the next two biggest partnerships in the UK, Thames Valley and London, whether they usually submit evidence to defendants seven days before a trial and are told that they don't. This means that the country's three biggest camera partnerships have potentially been bringing prosecutions based on inadmissible evidence. On publication of MCN's investigation, the partnerships retract their admissions. The Association of Chief Police Officers then goes on to call our report misleading, only to back down after learning that the admissions are on tape.

#### OPIK'S QUESTIONS TO ALISTAIR DARLING

1. How has the secretary of state for transport assessed the possibility of error in measuring motorcycle speeds with speed cameras?
2. On average, do individuals who receive either a fixed penalty or Notice of Intended Prosecution for speeding offences face higher fines and more points if they request that their case appear before a court?
3. Given that evidence from the South Wales safety camera partnership has shown that motorcyclists can be wrongly accused of speeding, what action does the secretary intend to take to reduce the chances of innocent riders being pursued on the basis of inaccurate evidence?

#### OPIK'S QUESTIONS TO ALISTAIR DARLING

1. What information are defendants entitled to receive by post when they are deciding whether to challenge Fixed Penalties, or Notices of Intended Prosecution, in court?
2. Is it mandatory for the police, when issuing Fixed Penalties or NIPs for speeding, to include sufficient details of the alleged offence to enable the defendant to make a time-over-distance calculation of their speed?
3. Is it mandatory for speed camera partnerships to corroborate their cameras' radar measurements of speed with the cameras' photographic evidence before sending out a NIP to accused speeders?

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