

**CAMPAIGN UPDATE**

# CAMERA VICTORY

## MCN wins fight to get accused riders full access to photo evidence that can clear them

BY STEVE FARRELL

**M**CN has forced a shake-up at a speed camera partnership after we proved that Gatsos can misread bikes' speeds.

Mid and South Wales Safety Camera Partnership has said that anyone accused of speeding will be allowed at any time to examine the picture evidence to be used against them, to prevent cock-ups like the one we exposed last month in which an innocent rider faced prosecution.

It means thousands will now be given the means to defend themselves against charges based on dodgy evidence as, according to the partnership, the policy is nationwide.

Gatsos take two photos which staff at camera partnerships are supposed to use to verify a separate radar speed measurement before sending speeding tickets out in the post. By counting how many lines in the road a bike has passed during the half-second interval between the photos, they can work out its real speed.

But the Mid and South Wales

Partnership admitted this wasn't always done after we used photo evidence to show that MCN reader Bryn Carlyon was clearly doing less than half the speed that the partnership had accused him of.

Up until now partnerships have made it notoriously difficult for riders to examine the photo evidence for themselves, often refusing to provide it until ordered to do so in court.

As a result many riders have just been assuming the equipment is accurate and have accepted fixed penalties rather than risk taking the matter to court. They will all have received points and a fine – even though no-one ever bothered to check the photo evidence to see whether they were actually speeding.

The Mid and South Wales partnership called Carlyon into its head office for emergency talks after we broke his story, which in the following days attracted attention from national newspapers, TV and radio.

Carlyon, a 47-year-old engineer from Mid-Glamorgan, said: "The manager of the central ticket office, James Moore, invited me over. I was there for an hour

**MCN report has led to change in policy**

and 53 minutes. Most of the time was spent with him apologising but he also explained what they can do to stop it happening again and promised to make changes."

Phillip Davies, partnership manager for Mid and South Wales, said that in the case of charges arising from mobile speed camera evidence: "People just need to contact us and we will arrange an appropriate time and location for them to see the images. We have a special room for viewing and the video will be shown as many times as they want, within reason, with or without their solicitors present."

Davies added: "Pictures taken by fixed

cameras, on the other hand, are sent out to individuals on request. There's absolutely no need for anyone to come into the office to view them – we will post them out."

Davies denied this "open door policy" was new. He did say, however, that new policies had been introduced as a result of our investigation, but refused to tell us precisely what they were.

He said: "It's a matter of reviewing procedures and making sure training is at an adequate standard. I'm not going to go through the issues."

Davies added: "This policy will be reflected across all of the camera partnerships."

**New model update**

The latest news on the bikes heading your way in 2006 – and beyond

**NEW V-MAX CAN MAKE 210BHP!****HANDS up who wants a 210bhp V-Max?**

YAMAHA is asking for your help to decide what specification its new V-Max should have – and has revealed that if you ask for it the bike could manage as much as 210bhp! The firm has launched a dedicated website at [www.next-vmax.com](http://www.next-vmax.com), where you can answer questions about your likes and dislikes of the V-Max prototype revealed at last year's Tokyo show. One of the questions revolves around power – you can select how much you'd like to see from the new V4 motor, with a minimum option of 140bhp, and a maximum of a whopping 210bhp.

**DUCATI 999 REVAMP FOR 2007**

LOVE it or hate it, the design of Ducati's 999 certainly gets everyone talking, and for 2007 it looks like the superbike will be revamped to make it more acceptable to fans of the 916 who hate the styling. No details of the restyle have been revealed, but insiders say the bike is being updated for 2007, as well as getting a sprinkling of mechanical changes. One of these could be the new 1200cc version of Ducati's V-twin engine, which has already been tested, although much depends on World Superbike organisers' decision as to the future capacity limit for twins in the series.

**WOULD you buy an electric superbike?****BATTERY-POWERED SUPERBIKE**

THE R-Moto electric superbike we showed you in July 2005 is getting closer to reality, with a clay model of the final design nearing completion at US designer Rob Brady's studio. The bike, built for electric bike pioneers Vertix, promises to be the first electric machine to offer the sort of performance that could attract riders of conventional petrol-powered bikes. It's still some way from production, though.

## Future fuel revealed: sand!

CANADIAN pioneers reckon that when the oil runs out that this black goo will be our saviour.

At the recent Association for the Study of Peak Oil (ASPO) conference in the US, scientists from around the world gathered to consider 'tar sand' as a solution to the predicted oil crisis of the near future.

'Tar sand' is a natural gooey black substance found in abundance in Alberta,

**TAR sand could be the future**

## Always check the small print

INSURANCE company Footman James is warning motorcyclists thinking of touring Europe to check the small print in their policies.

For example, those of us heading for a scratch in the Alps might not be covered in Switzerland because most policies will only cover EU member states.

Managing director Paul Matthews said: "A dream

tour could very quickly turn into a nightmare. It is important to check whether the country you are planning to travel to is classified as an EU country."

The continent is broken down into territories, with most firms only covering the most popular destinations. This means trips to the Czech Republic, Iceland and Norway won't be covered.

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