

Monday 7 January 2008

## **TRAIL BIKER RIDERS URGED TO BE CAREFUL**

With the holiday season upon us, trail bike riders are urged to take extra special care in choosing suitable riding locations, wearing protective clothing and obeying the road rules.

Department of Sustainability and Environment Trail Bike Project Manager, Roger Pitt reminded parents that motorcycle riding is a high risk activity, particularly for young riders with limited experience.

“Many parents have bought their children mini-bikes as Christmas presents this year and these inexperienced riders are especially at risk of injury, often losing control on corners, running into trees or fences or just falling off while riding on uneven ground”.

“It is absolutely essential that all trail bike riders have properly fitted protective equipment and clothing”.

“Beginner riders of any age will learn fundamental riding skills much more quickly and safely by attending a training course or getting instruction from a qualified coach at a Motorcycling Victoria affiliated club”.

“Finding a suitable riding location is also an important safety and legal consideration and parents should be aware that unlicensed riders are only permitted to ride on private property or at motorcycle club venues”.

“Normal road rules apply to riding in State forests and unlicensed riders are not permitted to ride on the roads and tracks or in the camping areas of State forests and parks”.

“Inexperienced riders and unlicensed riders put themselves at serious risk when they illegally ride in State forests,” Mr Pitt said.

Licensed trail bike riders are able to use the 36,000 kilometres of forest road in Victoria’s State forests and parks.

Mr Pitt said that Victoria’s State forests provide us with many sporting and recreational opportunities including trail bike riding.

“It is important that trail bike riders use the forest in a way that is considerate of the forest’s environmental values as well as the needs of other forest visitors.

“For example, no one is permitted to ride or drive off designated tracks as trail bikes and other recreational vehicles cause extensive damage to forests through vegetation loss, erosion and stream sedimentation”.

“Excessive noise also disrupts rural tranquillity and the experience of other forest users,” Mr Pitt said.

Compliance operations focused on unlicensed and unregistered motorcycle use will be conducted by DSE Forest Officers and Victoria Police throughout the summer.

For more information on trail bike riding, visit: [www.dse.vic.gov.au/trailbikes](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/trailbikes).