

MEDIA RELEASE

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QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY WEEKEND TRAIL BIKE CRACKDOWN A SUCCESS

The Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) and the Victoria Police targeted illegal trail bike behaviour in the Cobaw and Wombat State Forests over the Queen's Birthday long weekend.

DSE Midlands Coordinator Peter Keppel said the focus of the joint operation by Authorised Forest Officers and Police on trail bike use in State Forest was a success.

"Unlicensed riders, unregistered bikes and off-road riding around popular camping and recreation sites were targeted in the operation," Mr Keppel said.

Victoria Police and DSE officers issued several infringements to riders over the course of the weekend operation. Of the 70 riders checked for licence and registration, 34 were unlicensed and 42 were unregistered.

"Riders that were unlicensed received a fine of over \$500," said Mr Keppel. "When the bike is also unregistered the total fine is close to \$900. Riding off road and on single lane tracks is subject to fines of \$110."

Sergeant Greg Falkiner from Trentham Police said the operation "offered valuable information, both verbally and via handouts to people enjoying leisure activities in the Wombat and Cobaw State Forests but sadly, many people were deliberately and knowingly breaking the law which resulted in a variety of official cautions and fines."

Sergeant Falkiner said the operation is an example of what's to come, with "DSE and the Victoria Police planning more coordinated trail bike operations to make State Forests a happy and safe place for all users."

Riders are only permitted to ride on roads and tracks on public land if they have a motorcycle licence and their bikes are registered. They are also reminded that normal road rules apply in State Forests. Significant environmental damage is caused by riders going off road.

The definition of "road" means a road open to the public formed for the passage of a motor vehicle with 4 or more wheels. Riding on single lane tracks is not allowed and will incur a fine.

Compliance operations focused on off road riding and unlicensed and unregistered motorcycle use will be conducted by DSE Officers and Victoria Police throughout the year as part of the State Government's \$5 million Trail Bike Project to improve the management of trail bikes on public land.

For more information on trail bike riding visit: www.dse.vic.gov.au/trailbikes