

I would like to start by saying the only good thing to come from these laws was an increase in police numbers. Increased police presence will always benefit law and order.

There are many aspects of the "VLAD" series of laws introduced by the Newman government that go far beyond what is acceptable in a modern civilized society. The following is a list of my own personal experiences, and the consequences for others that I am aware of.

I am not in an outlaw club, nor have I ever been convicted of any crime (I have never even been arrested) yet these laws have had a devastating impact on my life. I was a licenced security/body guard, but I have since lost the "right" to hold a security licence. I did not have it revoked, I did not receive a letter from Fair Trading informing me of any such decision – I only became aware of this situation when I realized my licence had lapsed and I had not received the paperwork to renew it, nor any of the reminders that can be expected. Upon realizing what had transpired, I contacted Fair Trading only to be informed that since my licence had expired (by a matter of a few days) I would be required to redo all of the qualifications to obtain my licence again. Having been made unemployed by my lack of licence, spending thousands of dollars to obtain my licence again was simply not possible. I originally assumed that the lack of notification of my licence expiring was a simple matter of things getting lost in the mail, however, I have since spoken to a manager of another security company and he has informed me that he knows of at least 6 people (who all ride motorcycles) that have lost their licence in the exact same manner.

Moving along to the fact that I am now unemployed due to these laws, clearly my name has made it onto a police or government list of people connected to "criminal gangs". I have no doubt that this is a direct result of the fact that I have been on several poker runs with several 1% clubs – everyone was aware of the fact the police were taking details and video recording licence plates, but bearing in mind that these rides were clearly police sanctioned (QPS often gave the group a "green corridor" to major roads to minimize impact on traffic flow) and the fact that there was no law against these rides, no one gave the police information gathering much concern. Considering the fact I am on a "list" and that being aware of the wording of the laws in question, I have no doubt that I meet the definition of a "participant" or "associate" – and as such I am at risk of arrest everytime I go out in public (if 2 other people that are on the list are at the same place at the same time, the 3 of us are going to jail for 6 months minimum). Obviously this would also mean that if I was employed and 2 others are employed at the same location (or are customers, or make a delivery etc) we would all be at risk of arrest – essentially making it illegal for myself to be employed anywhere other than a cottage industry (ie on private property). Having been forced into unemployment by the Queensland government, I am unable to legally meet the requirements to receive welfare from the federal government. For me to meet the federal government's requirements, I would need to break Queensland state law.

Do I risk breaking the law by being in a group of 3 in public? Or do I commit fraud and lie to the federal government about my job seeking activities? I refuse to be a criminal, so I have chosen neither of these and I simply explain (everytime I have dealings with centrelink) that state law does not allow me to seek employment. I am fully aware it is only a matter of time before the federal government decides that I am not complying with their regulations and the welfare will cease. I have absolutely no idea what I will do with zero income – I can barely afford to live on the welfare I am currently receiving.

I find it absolutely disgraceful that a government body can declare a group to be criminals without evidence, and without any sort of judicial process – what has become of the belief that people are innocent until proven guilty? How can it be allowed that people have to prove they are innocent against evidence they have no right to be aware of? How far has this country fallen that someone can be treated like a criminal because QPS believes they may know someone that they believe may be a criminal, despite the fact there is no evidence?

Why was the former Queensland government constantly releasing information to the public that was blatantly false? Everything from false crime statistics and lies about high court findings, to misleading video and statements? Since when has vilification and slander been legal? Do we live in a society that allows such pitiful propaganda to constantly flood the media in an attempt to justify laws that violate basic human rights?

How many times will people be arrested (with the media invited along for the arrest) with their names and personal details all through the media, only to have all charges dropped over a year later due to “no evidence”? Why is the current government allowing such harassment to continue? Why are these laws still be used while they are reviewed? Why were these laws even allowed to be created in the first place when they violate international agreements that this country is a signatory to?

The following paragraph relates to incidents before the VLAD laws. I have included it to show a negative attitude towards motorcycle clubs and riders...

A few years ago I purchased a helmet from one of the oldest motorcycle shops in this country, only to be falsely informed that the helmet was illegal, that there was an investigation into the helmets approval and QPS was going to start crushing them. I was also told there was only 3 “authorized compliancing companies” and any helmet without their trademarks was simply not legal. Clearly this is a blatant lie and I didn’t understand what the issue was with my helmet until I learned the company that imported and paid to have the helmets tested for compliance was a FORMER member of a 1% club. I sought all possible proof that the helmet was legal (copies of all compliance reports) and carried them with me for many months. I was repeatedly pulled over due to the helmet and received many different versions of why I should demand a refund for the helmet. It wasn’t until a gentleman in NSW went to court to dispute a helmet fine (obviously he was wearing a helmet identical to mine) and the helmets were indisputably proven to be legal that his harassment stopped. Despite the varied threats of helmet crushing, endless fines etc for wearing the helmet, I never received a fine – I believe this is indicative of the fact the QPS officers were aware the helmet was legal and were attempting to damage the importers reputation.

After the VLAD laws were introduced, I read in the media, the importer of my helmet had both his house and business premises raided. The media report claimed drugs and weapons were found. No charges were laid, proving the media claims were false – yet his children were ostracized at school because their father was a “criminal”. How is it right for someone to be vilified in the media and have his children suffer when he is a law abiding citizen?

I am a member of a social motorcycle club, and I proudly wear my club “colours” everywhere. This has

lead to numerous interceptions by QPS officers for “licence checks”. I honestly have no issue with a 30 second stop to be breathalyzed and to ensure I am licenced to operate the vehicle. However, the last time I was pulled over I was wrongfully issued with a speeding infringement. I could see the approaching QPS vehicle, I was travelling through a round-a-bout and ensuring I was travelling at the correct speed. This did not stop the officer from pulling me over and issuing me with an infringement notice for doing 23km/h over the speed limit. I have no doubt this incorrect infringement was only issued because I was wearing my leather vest with my club’s name on it. I have an upcoming court date to dispute the fine, unfortunately, I doubt the judge will be interested in hearing the facts and will base his judgement on the false claims of the QPS officer.

Further on the subject of how these laws have impacted on my life. I enjoyed riding on the poker runs of the various 1% clubs, and now that simply isn’t an option. I also have many friends that are to worried about riding in groups because of these laws. The simple fact is it is safer to ride in a group than as an individual, as car drivers are often unaware of individual riders.

The following is not something I have experienced or witnessed first hand, however, it is a logical progression of events. Assuming an Outlaw club has been renting their clubhouse, they were paying rent to their landlord. What if that landlord now cannot rent out the premises (this could be for various reasons.. constant police activity at the address, the current economic climate not facilitating a new business etc), the landlord is now suffering financially because of these laws. What if that landlord can no longer meet loan repayments and is forced into bankruptcy? I am aware this is a hypothetical situation, but it certainly isn’t impossible. The negative impact of these laws is affecting thousands of people. Anything that damages the economy is damaging this country. The sales of motorcycle and accessories etc has dropped – this means less cash flow in Queensland. These are the flow on affects that must be considered.

IF an individual is selling drugs or extorting someone – arrest them based on evidence. Don’t simply say “he looks like a criminal, so he must be one” – that sort of logic would have every priest arrested. I have no doubt there is a higher percentage of criminals in QPS and parliament than there are in bike clubs. If you were going to live a life of crime, you would want to blend into society, you wouldn’t want to stand out, you wouldn’t want to run around with clothing that identifies you...

There are so many reasons these laws are wrong, and how ignorant the logic behind them is. I will reiterate, in point form, exactly how these laws have negatively affected me..

- I have lost my job due to these laws
- I have become unemployable due to these laws
- If and when these laws are revoked, I will not be able to afford to return to my previous job
- I fear arrest everytime I leave my home due to these laws
- I suffer from police harassment due to these laws
- I become nervous in the presence of police officers
- I am being made to feel like a criminal, despite my lack of crimes

My views on how the law has affected others..

- The tattoo industry is now no longer financially viable to enter into

- Motorcycle shops have suffered massive drops in sales
- Country pubs and destinations have suffered financial losses
- Innocent people are being arrested and harassed – only to have charges dropped
- People with tattoos are being discriminated against at licenced venues
- People are being discriminated against based on their clothing
- People are being ostracized in the community
- The media is releasing blatantly false information
- Crime rates have increased
- Street gangs are being portrayed in the media as motorcycle clubs
- Any drug or violent crime is being linked to motorcycle clubs – even if there is no connection
- Anyone can be arrested and detained under the assumption they are “bikies”
- People are treated as guilty before their day in court
- Police “intelligence” incorrectly claims non-members are members
- People are having their bikes seized without any conviction

There are many other ways these laws have affected Queensland and its people, none of them in a positive manner. I hope I have supplied sufficient information to make my point that these laws need to be revoked in their entirety, and all of the ridiculous charges that have come from them need to be dropped.