

Jon Wilmer, Vice Chair of MAG resigns - open letter 19<sup>th</sup> March 2014

OPEN LETTER. To The Board, National Committee and Members of The Motorcycle Action Group.

I first joined MAG in 1984 and formed a local branch, which I ran for 3 years. For the past ten years I have been actively involved in my local MAG group, especially in growing its annual fund raising event. During the period of my involvement, that rally has raised tens of thousands of pounds for MAG. I was proud to be part of supporting the premier riders' rights organisation in the UK. When I was elected to the role of regional rep, I was pleased to be still further involved, at national level, by contributing to shaping and directing the organisation on behalf of its membership.

For the past year, during my tenure as Vice Chair, I have witnessed the control of MAG progressively removed from the National Committee by the board. For the past year I have tried to use my position within the NC to prevent MAG making decisions and taking actions that seemed to have little to do with riders' rights and more to do with transferring control of the organisation from the hands of the members into the hands of a few individuals. Those individuals have made it increasingly difficult to hold meaningful and frank debate or in any way question their decisions and have used their influence to prevent what most would recognise as truly democratic process. Consequently I have been party to resolutions which I have found increasingly difficult to defend to the membership.

Due to circumstances beyond the control of the NC, three staff members quit their jobs last year. They have recently won their case for unfair dismissal. The tribunal judgement is a matter of public record. Its content is comprehensively damning of MAG (UK) Ltd and specifically the actions of two of its directors, Mr Pete Walker & Mr Neil Liversidge, as being particularly culpable.

Rather than expressing contrition, and a desire to move forward having learned a harsh lesson, MAG has issued a statement in which it claims to be happy with the morality of its position. It further states that MAG will appeal the judgement. A decision that was made by the board alone, without reference to the membership through its National Committee.

Rather than accept the judgement and face a potential compensation claim. MAG (UK) Ltd has transferred all assets to The Motorcycle Action Group Ltd, in an attempt to place those assets beyond the reach of the claimants. Still MAG maintains it is happy with the morality of its position.

Without reference to the membership through its National Committee, The Motorcycle Action Group Ltd have appointed Mr Liversidge as a director. The very same director of MAG (UK) Ltd that was so roundly criticised in the judgement in favour of its ex-employees. And still, MAG maintains it is happy with the morality of its position.

I am not happy with the morality of the position. I cannot, with a clear conscience, continue to support MAG either vocally or tacitly by continuing in the official role of Vice Chair. It is therefore with regret that I tender my resignation as Vice Chairman of MAG, effective immediately.

The UK needs an active and effective Riders Rights organisation. I believed that organisation was MAG. I no longer believe that to be true. MAG claims to be a democratic, member-led organisation. I no longer believe that to be true. I feel MAG has surrendered the moral right to claim to be a representative and credible motorcyclists lobby while it continues under the current management regime.

Jon Wilmer

MAG Vice Chairman 2013-14.

## NFL Replies

### Neil F Liversidge Open Letter To All MAG Members

I write in response to Jon Wilmer resignation letter which basically amounts to attack on me and my colleagues.

The staff problems we experienced are well known. What is not generally known is that Jon Wilmer, without checking a single fact, or being based on any, provided Paddy Tyson with a diatribe that Tyson used to attack the Board when it was trying its best to sort out the staff problems that beset MAG.

Equally it is not known that Pete and I between us paid Jon's train fare to Yorkshire out of our own pockets – our money, not MAG's money - and we opened the books to him – sound files, emails, transcripts, everything. Having seen ALL the evidence he accepted our actions were right and necessary.

To say that the Board has taken control from the NC is a fantasy that insults the intelligence and integrity of all concerned. Perhaps Jon is just piqued that most people no longer take him seriously owing to his failure to manage his own region and his failure likewise to deliver the database, a task for which he was to have been paid.

Jon's description of the corporate actions concerning the old and new companies are incorrect and he should be careful about defaming those who have professional reputations worth defending and the ability to do the same. I do on both counts.

That Jon at this point in time seeks to launch a final stab in my back is no surprise to me at all. I estimated him as a coward and a weakling. He has proven my estimation correct on both counts. If he has a problem with me being a Director he has the opportunity to come to Blackpool and stand against me. He should put up or shut up

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