

CRASH TALLY SOARS

Carlisle moots ban on weaving for bikers

Barbara Maregele

MOTORCYCLISTS could be prohibited from weaving between lanes to overtake if a regulation that Transport and Public Works MEC Robin Carlisle is “contemplating” is introduced.

This follows the release of the end-of-year road death toll statistics that showed motorcyclists were the only group where the number of accidents increased last year, from 33 percent to 84 percent.

“Cyclists, pedestrians and motorcyclists are the most soft targets for poorly trained drivers on the roads,” Carlisle said.

“Motorbike drivers are not exercising safe driving. I’m contemplating introducing a regulation that would require motorcyclists to overtake like cars and prohibit them from driving in the space between lanes.”

Carlisle added he knew the regulation – which he said was law in some countries, including Canada and Australia – would be widely disputed and difficult to monitor.

If an accident occurred, drivers would have to prove that a motorcyclist had been contravening the law by driving between lanes.

“The law would be there for people to respect,” said Carlisle.

Provincial traffic chief Kenny Africa said that before the Easter weekend motorbike associations would be involved in safety campaigns.

Traffic officials were visiting high schools to educate teenage motorcyclists on safety.

Carlisle is to release details today of the proposed

increases in motor vehicle licence and registration fees for the Western Cape.

Fees in the Western Cape have been frozen since 2005, when they were on average higher than those charged by other provinces.

Africa said drivers and passengers accounted for 51 percent of all road deaths and pedestrians for 41 percent.

He said that over the festive season, 34 384 drivers were stopped, with 315 drivers of them being arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol. The highest blood-alcohol reading had been 1.66mg/ml, which was seven times over the legal limit.

“There were 53 635 prosecutions for speed over the festive season,” he said.

There were 79 road deaths last month compared with 104 in January last year and 109 in the same month in 2011.

“This has been the lowest figure since we launched our Safely Home campaign in 2009,” said Africa.

“There was a clear indication that there were more vehicles on the roads over this festive season.

“We have 13 interprovincial operations, such as roadblocks with our counterparts in the Eastern Cape, Northern Cape and Free State, which help to keep drivers alert.”

Carlisle said provincial, metro and municipal traffic officers would clamp down on seat belt violations, drunk driving and speeding. The second phase of the Average Speed Over Distance camera enforcement network had detected 60 “excessive” speeding offences. The highest speed recorded was 213km/h.

barbara.maregele@inl.co.za