

Media Release

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Monkey bikes under investigation

The Commissioner for Consumer Affairs today issued a strong warning to consumers about buying and riding monkey bikes.

The warning comes as the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (OCBA) and the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) began investigating the risks to users of the bikes, and as the ACCC published a warning notice in the Commonwealth Government Gazette. The consumer watchdogs are taking part in a national survey to review the construction and safety standards of many models of the miniature motorbikes.

Monkey bikes, also known as pocket rockets or mini-bikes, are miniature versions of motorcycles. They are scaled down replicas of standard road-going motorbikes and are usually powered by 50cc petrol engines. Some are capable of more than 70km/h.

Commissioner for Consumer Affairs, Mark Bodycoat explained the investigation would clarify the safety risks the miniature motorcycles posed.

“Nationally, all fair trading agencies and the ACCC are investigating monkey bikes to see if and how they will cause injury to anyone riding them. Sample bikes will be tested and a report will be prepared on the safety risks of the various monkey bikes available on the market. The report will provide a basis for the future control of their marketing and use.”

The investigation will focus on aspects such as design, quality of parts and the assembly of some bikes. Areas of particular concern include:

- The throttle sticking, preventing deceleration
- The brakes not being fitted properly and not providing sufficient stopping force
- Steering mechanisms exhibiting free play causing shaking and loss of control and
- Foot pegs not being capable of supporting the maximum capacity as recommended by the manufacturer.

The South Australian Police are also interested in the investigation. The bikes have not been designed, intended or marketed to be ridden on public roads and are dangerous to use on the road.

Sergeant Paul Friend from the South Australian Police says that the bikes are classified as motorised vehicles but cannot be registered to be used on public roads or areas because they do not comply with Vehicle Standards Regulations and Australian Design Rules.

“Motorised vehicles used on roads or in public places need to be registered by Transport SA and can only be ridden by licensed riders.”

Consumer Affairs Victoria has already taken regulatory action to prevent the supply of certain monkey bikes found on sale in Melbourne.



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While the investigation is continuing, consumers can still purchase the bikes to ride on private property. Consumers who have already purchased a monkey bike should check the brakes, release of the throttle and the strength of the footrests, and stop using them if they find any problem. Consumers thinking about purchasing a monkey bike should check the same things prior to making their purchase and inform themselves about the limitations on their use.

OCBA and SAPol both warned that people should wear the appropriate safety gear when riding all bikes including motorcycles.

Consumers should contact OCBA on 8234 2036 for more information on the risks of monkey bikes.