

Inquiry into the legislative arrangements to outlaw serious and organised crime groups

I believe that my comments relate directly to the terms of reference as noted below:

- a. international legislative arrangements developed to outlaw serious and organised crime groups and association to those groups, and the effectiveness of these arrangements;**
- b. the need in Australia to have legislation to outlaw specific groups known to undertake criminal activities, and membership of and association with those groups;
- c. Australian legislative arrangements developed to target consorting for criminal activity and to outlaw serious and organised crime groups, and membership of and association with those groups, and the effectiveness of these arrangements;**
- d. the impact and consequences of legislative attempts to outlaw serious and organised crime groups, and membership of and association with these groups on:**
 - i. society**
 - ii. criminal groups and their networks
 - iii. law enforcement agencies; and
 - iv. the judicial/legal system

As a member of a local Harley Owners Group, I have been aware of many of the issues surrounding those groups known as 'one percenters' or 'outlaw motorcycle' clubs, especially as affects the many social riding clubs of Queensland and Australia in regard to the wearing of 'colours' as defined by the outlaw clubs.

The Harley Owners Group (HOG) is a motorcycle organisation with over 1 million members world wide and it has chapters wherever there is an established licensed Harley Davidson Dealer. It is a non-political, family based social club focused on the lifestyle and benefits of owning and riding a Harley Davidson motorcycle,

While we here in Australia are able to partake in all of the events and activities supported and promoted by HOG Australia and America, we are unable to wear the international HOG emblem and chapter rocker (pictured below) due to the threats of retaliation by certain outlaw clubs and their members.

To the outlaw clubs colours are seen as having been earned, are worn with pride and are defended with fear and physical force.

While some other motorcycle groups such as Ulysses are able to wear similar 'back patches' without fear of retaliation or harm, for some unknown reason HOG has been singled out by the outlaw fraternity and are unable to wear HOG regalia. Many members have been threatened and their vests or patches torn off.

While many people refuse to discuss this, the unwritten rule is that the HOG back patch and Club rocker cannot be worn – as it is deemed safer and less confrontational. Dealers even refuse to make the large patches and rockers available here in Australia, with the result being that some people buy them directly from overseas. Those HOG members wearing of them in Australia are then banned from wearing them or riding with their friends on monthly club rides and events.

In a free democracy, this is of course illegal and unfair and should somehow be addressed.

[Further information on HOG, its mission and activities may be found at www.hog.com]

