

The Odin's Warriors Motorcycle Club (Australia) is not a criminal organisation. The Brisbane chapter was founded in 1971, primarily by military veterans who enjoyed riding motorcycles and having a party and a beer with like-minded people.

The purpose of the Odin's Warriors Motorcycle Club was and remains primarily that of a club, which also promotes the interests of safe and socially-responsible conduct by motorcycle enthusiasts.

As an organisation, the Odin's Warriors Motorcycle Club is not and has never been involved knowingly in criminal activity, although from time to time individual members have engaged in conduct that was outside the law. We admit that freely and also say that the club takes a dim view of illegal activities, because such conduct brings the club and motorcycling in general into disrepute. The club continues to be what it was created to be originally: a club for motorcycle enthusiasts.

Yes, we look different. Our hairstyles and the way that we dress are out of the ordinary and might even frighten some people who do not understand us. Because we look different, we look like 'the other', we can be an easy target by politicians who want to be seen to be doing something about crime. The fact is, that on official figures, members of all motorcycle clubs account for less than 1 per cent of criminal activity in Queensland. This puts the overall criminality of motorcycle club members in general, not just the Odin's Warriors, as not significantly different to that of the general community.

Despite this, we have been vilified in the Queensland Parliament and made the target of the Vicious Lawless Association Disestablishment Act (2013). It is our belief that motorcycle enthusiasts have been singled out to test this law because we look different, so it is easier for a politician to vilify us from the safety of the privilege of parliament.

One of the effects of the VLAD Act is that it has prevented the Odin's Warriors Motorcycle Club from being engaged in charitable fund raising, because it is now a criminal offence for more than two of us to be in the same place at the same time. A significant proportion of the membership of the Odin's Warriors Motorcycle Club are family men who, underneath all that leather and tattoos, are interested in the welfare of children.

By way of example, the Brisbane chapter of the Odin's Warriors Motorcycle Club has donated more than \$100,000 to various charitable causes since the club was formed, in particular the spinal unit of the Princess Alexandra Hospital; Spina Bifida Hydrocephalus Queensland; the Endeavour Foundation; Boystown; the Mater Children's Hospital; and the Australian Red Cross.

We would like to submit to the court a copy of a certificate from the Abused Child Trust, in recognition of support provided by the Odin's Warriors Motorcycle Club.

The best known of the fund-raising activities organised by the Brisbane chapter of the Odin's Warriors Motorcycle Club were the Purga Creek Rock Concert; the Brisbane Street and Custom Bike Show; and the Brisbane Tattoo Show.

The Purga Creek event stopped in 2001, after 20 years of providing entertainment and raising money for charity, because an increase in the cost of public liability insurance after 9/11 made the event unviable.

The Purga Creek Rock Concert also assisted charitable causes in the Purga area. The Harrisville Lions Club operated the catering, which grossed \$45,000 for the Lions Club one year. [REDACTED]).

Proceeds from the Purga Creek Rock Concert also helped to pay for the first fire trailer for the Aratula Rural Fire Brigade, road accident rescue equipment for the State Emergency Service and went toward the cost of building the Aratula fire station.

The Aratula State School raised money by cleaning the site and salvaging recyclable material after the event.

Businesses in the Purga Creek area also derived significant financial benefit from the patronage of people who attended the concert.

The Boonah Shire Council conducted a survey of how the Purga Creek Rock Concert benefited the community [REDACTED].

The other two major charitable fund-raising events organised by the Odin's Warriors Motorcycle Club were killed by the VLAD Act.

The final and 25th annual Brisbane Tattoo Show was held during July last year. The 27th and final Brisbane Street and Custom Bike Show was held during May of 2012.

Other Queensland chapters of the Odin's Warriors Motorcycle Club were also active in raising money for charity, until the VLAD Act made it a crime for them to help the needy.

For example, there was the annual 1770 Tattoo Show, the Townsville Custom Bike and Car Show and the North Queensland Dirt Drags, the final event of which was held in Sarina on 6 and 7 July last year.

The following is a description of the Dirt Drags events that have been organised and run by the Odin's Warriors Motorcycle Club for the past five years at Sarina on the Queensland central coast.

The event has been staged each July over two days from 2009 until 2013. It is held on the grounds of the Sarina Pony Club which is part of the Sarina Showgrounds. This event has been run under the banner of 'North Queensland Dirt Drags'.

Dirt Drags have been held in Western Australia and South Australia for many years, but the NQ Dirt Drags is the first time they have been run in Queensland. Dirt Drags is basically drag racing of motorcycles 2 at a time on a dirt strip, and at a shorter distance than the bitumen tracks.

The NQ Dirt Drags events have attracted many entrants from all over Australia and up to 200 bikes per event. These range from the purpose built V8 powered machines to the 65cc Pee Wee mini bikes. Mums and Dads from all over Queensland have attended with their children to enter, with ages ranging from 5 year olds up. The local children and teenagers on their dirt bikes are by far the biggest group of entrants. All junior contestants under 12 years receive a medallion upon entering.

The event has been made possible by great support from local sponsors, mostly local businesses who are happy to support a family friendly and safe form of motor sport.

This event has also put a fair amount of money and support back into the local Sarina and Mackay communities. Each year toilets, marquees, generators, PA systems, earthmoving machinery, scaffolding and much more is hired or rented from local businesses. Prizes and trophies are purchased locally. Advertising through local TV, radio stations and newspapers is a major outlay each year. Added to this is the purchase and printing of posters, stickers, hats and T-shirts. Leading up to the event the entrants purchase tyres and chains and support the local motorcycle parts retailers through tuning up their machines and buying safety equipment such as helmets, gloves and goggles.

When the Odin's Warriors first approached the Sarina Pony Club to use their land, the pony club was somewhat struggling financially. Both parties agreed to run the Drags and the Pony Club has been the food and drink supplier each year, feeding up to 2000 people over 2 days with burgers, soft drinks and coffee. This has been a major boost to their finances and they are now in a healthy financial position.

The Odin's Warriors also pay a \$3000.00 fee to the Sarina Show Society each year for the use of land and facilities.

This event has attracted entrants from Western Australia, Sydney, Brisbane and Mt Isa – most of whom pay for local accommodation and meals.

Plans were in place to try to run similar events in Townsville and Brisbane, and obviously this would have a similar run on effect to local communities and businesses once established.

All these events and the charitable donations made possible by them have been brought to a screeching halt by the VLAD Act.

In summary, we would like to say that while we are not angels, neither are we villains. We are mostly family men, many of whom have military backgrounds, who like motorcycles and whose fashion sense is something other than suits and ties during our private time. Ninety per cent of our club members have full-time employment or their own business, all of which are threatened by the VLAD Act, which makes it unlawful for people who have no criminal convictions to be engaged in areas of work that are lawful for other citizens. To be penalised by having one's livelihood taken away by the state, without evidence, is among the most extreme forms of tyranny. This and the other provisions of the VLAD Act are incompatible with a democratic society and violations of legal conventions that began with Magna Carta in 1215, which guaranteed freedom from arbitrary seizure of property or person, a presumption of innocence and imposed the need for a court-issued warrant before a property could be searched.