

## **Long distance riding preparation:**

### **Bike Preparation:**

If you haven't already done so, it's time to start getting your bike ready for the Ride. The main areas to check are: Servicing & maintenance up to date, new or near new tyres, chain and sprockets in top condition. **Unless you're an expert in this area I highly recommend you have a professional check the bike over for you and advise you on expected life of these items under fully laden long distance riding.** Good preparation is a great investment in a trouble free ride.

**Important:** Your bike is your "home" for the duration of the Ride. You must be self-sufficient and carry everything you need (including spare fuel) with you.

**Fuel:** The distance between fuel stops can be up to 254kms so it's important that you know the fuel range of your fully laden bike. If your range is marginal for these longer stretches you will need to carry extra fuel. Strong head or cross winds can increase fuel consumption dramatically so be conscious of this and ride accordingly. It's no fun sitting on the side of the road waiting for a support vehicle. The support vehicle carries a limited amount of fuel for emergencies only.

Premium fuel may not be available in some remote areas so it is recommended you talk with your Service Advisor about the effect this may have on your bike's performance.

**Tyres:** Tyre wear on a ride of this nature could be very different to what you may normally experience. Your bike will be heavily loaded, many of the road surfaces will be coarse and the tyres will be running hotter than usual. All of this can lead to a rear tyre lasting considerably less kms than you may be used to.

### **Rider Preparation:**

If you are new to long distance riding it's a great idea to do some **practice runs** of about 600-700km (in a day), fully laden, just to make sure everything works properly and also to check your fuel range (see point 3 below). Remember you're going to be doing this day after day for two weeks and you don't want find out on Day1 that your windscreen (highly recommended for this ride) is at the wrong height and buffets your helmet giving you a headache after a few hours. Other things you'll be paying particular attention to are:

1. Can you suitably attach all of your gear so it stays safely balanced and secure all day on bumpy roads and in strong cross winds. Swags and other larger items are heavy. If not really well secured they can move, become loose and potentially cause a hazard to you or riders following behind.
2. Is your riding gear up to the job? Travelling to the centre of our vast country will bring you in contact with all types of weather. It's advisable to bring appropriate riding gear to cater for all extremes. A correctly fitted and approved full face helmet is also strongly recommended. The sun, rain, rocks, large insects and small birds can all hurt the unshielded face.
3. How far can you go on a tank of fuel? On your practice run, reset your trip meter, take some spare fuel with you and actually run your full tank until it's empty, then you know your range. Alternatively have someone follow you with spare fuel. Be mindful of the prevailing

conditions when you do this test ie. Head wind or tail wind etc and use that test as your benchmark in those conditions. A strong headwind can reduce your economy by up to 25%.

4. The wind noise created on most bikes is significant and can cause headaches, fatigue and even long term harm to your ears. Many riders use earplugs to reduce the problem and/or specialised products like Earmolds which can also pipe your favourite music straight to your ears.
5. Ride at a speed and in a manner which is safe for YOU. Whilst you will be riding with others you and only you are responsible for your own safety, so give yourself some space and don't do anything which is going to put yourself or other riders in danger.
6. We will be travelling in remote areas with some significant distances between stops. Although we are planning to stay together as a group and sticking to the major roads it is prudent to carry some drinking water with you at all times in case you are delayed for some unforeseen reason.
7. If you are going to depart from the route or group for any reason let someone (preferably one of the group leaders) know first. Looking or waiting for someone who is not lost or delayed is both time consuming and potentially hazardous for the rest of the group.