



CONCEPT PLAN

SCOOTARBOR CHALLENGE

"Longevity is a public health achievement, not a social or economic liability. On this International Day of Older Persons, let us pledge to ensure the well-being of older persons and to enlist their meaningful participation in society so we can all benefit from their knowledge and ability."

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moo

PROPOSAL

The proposal is for a group of Australian older persons, aged 65 years and over, to ride 50cc motor scooters east to west across the Nullarbor via the Eyre Highway, from Port Augusta to Norseman, and then continue on to Perth. The event will be financed through sponsorship and donations and marketed, with media support, to promote public awareness and acceptance that older persons are indeed an asset in today's modern society. It is a desire that a flow-on benefit from this event will be that older persons regain a sense of adventure, which is a necessary part of life for all ages. All net proceeds from the event will be donated to a charity dedicated to enhancing the mental wellbeing of older persons.

RATIONALE FOR PROPOSAL

Australians are now retiring from the workforce earlier and living longer. Increasing longevity is one of humanity's greatest achievements. People live longer because of improved nutrition, sanitation, medical advances, health care, education and economic wellbeing. Some sources suggest that the world needs to take urgent action to cope with the impact of a rapidly ageing population. It is estimated that the number of people over 60 will surpass one billion within a decade. These growing numbers of the elderly presents significant challenges to welfare, pension and health care systems. This bemoans the fact that the skills and knowledge that older people have acquired are going to waste in society rather than being used to their full. Many of them are under employed, underactive and become a drain on a nation's resources. Successive governments tend to indulge in hand wringing about the cost of caring for the elderly, rather than exploiting what they have to offer.

Many have skills that would be immensely useful in the volunteer sector but have been hardly tapped on a mass scale. Now is the time to seek opportunities to turn that around so that aging becomes a longevity dividend to a nation.

The concept for this event is the brainchild of Ian Jacobsen, a 70 plus something Queenslander. Ian had a varied and challenging life in both military and civil aviation, and as an Antarctic expeditioner. He has met far too many older persons who openly admit they are merely filling in time until they die. He now wants to help, in this small way, to change that thinking.

This proposed event is entirely about capturing the imagination of Australian seniors all around the country to try and get back some form of the adventure of their youth and make them feel useful. To make them laugh more often and make others laugh.

TIMING OF THE EVENT

It is proposed that this event should be conducted during September 2014. Subject to dates clashing with other events during that month, the departure date from Port Augusta would be Tuesday 9 September and arrival in Perth just under two weeks later during the morning of Sunday 21 September 2014.

EVENT ITINERARY

The Eyre Highway is a 1668 km long linking Port Augusta in South Australia and Norseman in Western Australia via the Nullarbor Plains. Signposted as National Highway 1/A1, it forms part of Highway 1 and the Australian National Highway network linking Adelaide and Perth. The additional distance from Norseman to Perth is 723 km increasing the total distance for the scooter ride to 2391 km. 50cc motor scooters are normally speed limited to 50 kph which means, for planning purposes, an average distance covered each travelling hour would be somewhere around 40 km. Six hours of travel each day equates to 240 km per day. This calculates out to 9 to 10 days of travel time between Port Augusta and Perth. Inserting 3 to 4 rest days into the journey conveniently makes the whole journey around two weeks. 240 km per day has to be thought of as being a ball park figure as the actual distance travelled each day will need to be adjusted to match up with suitable locations for overnight stops.

This event is not a time trial. Sitting on a 50cc motor scooter for long periods is not exactly a comfortable place for anyone to be, let alone anyone over sixty-five years of age. The same riders cannot be expected to ride a scooter for the entire day. There will need to be a rotation of riders. It is suggested that each rider be limited to a maximum of 90 minutes in the saddle (approximately 60 km) before handing over to a relief rider. The following outlines a possible daily routine.

TIMES	EVENT
8:30AM to 10:00AM	On the road with first scooter riding group
10:00AM to 10:30AM	Roadside morning tea
10:30 to 12 midday	On the road with relief scooter riding group
12:00 midday to 12:30PM	Roadside lunch
12:30PM to 2:00PM	On the road with first scooter riding group
2:00PM to 2:30PM	Roadside afternoon tea
2:30PM to 4:00PM	On the road with relief scooter group
4:00PM to next morning	Overnight

Given that the daily routine is achievable, the following is a possible itinerary for the entire event.

Saturday 6 September to Monday 8 September		Arrival at Port Augusta and make final preparations for event.		
DAY	FROM	TO	DISTANCE (km)	PROGRESSIVE (km)
Tuesday 9 September	Port Augusta	Wudinna	256	256

Wednesday 10 September	Wudinna	Ceduna	210	466
Thursday 11 September	Ceduna	Nullabor Roadhouse	297	763
Friday 12 September	Nullabor Roadhouse	Eucla	196	959

Saturday 13 September – REST DAY EUCLA

Sunday 14 September	Eucla	Cocklebiddy	272	1231
Monday 15 September	Cocklebiddy	Balladonia	246	1477
Tuesday 16 September	Balladonia	Norseman	191	1668

Wednesday 17 September – REST DAY NORSEMAN

Thursday 18 September	Norseman	Southern Cross	354	2022
Friday 19 September	Southern Cross	Northam	271	2293

Saturday 20 September – REST DAY NORTHAM

Sunday 21 September	Northam	Perth	98	2391
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Monday 22 September to Wednesday 24 September	Finalise all operational matters for the event including vehicle and other assets
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See separate documentation for the detailed day-by-day itinerary indicating possible rest area sites for morning/afternoon teas and lunch. This will need further fine-tuning.

RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

TECHNICAL RESOURCES

The following technical resources, which may not be a complete, will be required:

<p>50cc Motor Scooters</p> 	<p>Practically, the number of slow moving scooters travelling in a group on the open highway would need to be limited to about twenty. Twenty seems like a good figure to use for initial planning purposes. The original brainchild idea for this event envisaged the scooter make as being Vespas. However, the final decision will come down to achieving the best sponsorship arrangement.</p>
<p>Lead Escort Vehicle</p> 	<p>A mini bus capable of carrying a minimum of twenty-five people, and towing a trailer, will be needed as the lead escort vehicle travelling in front of the scooter formation. This bus will carry the relief scooter riders for the day's travel as well as such things as lunch, morning and afternoon teas, cold drinks and fruit for up to forty-five people. Personal luggage would need to be transported with this vehicle either in built-in baggage bay or trailer. It will need to be equipped with hazard lighting.</p>
<p>Following Escort Vehicle</p> 	<p>An enclosed van will be needed to travel in close company behind the group of scooter riders. This vehicle needs to be enclosed for the security and weather protection of equipment inside. Two people, the mechanic and the paramedic, would travel in that van sharing the driving. The van to be loaded with all the necessary first aid and maintenance equipment required for the entire journey. It must also have the free space to take on board one scooter, which may have become unserviceable to ride. It will also need to be fitted with appropriate hazard lighting.</p>
<p>Advance Party Vehicles</p> 	<p>It is estimated at least two enclosed vans will be required for transporting the advance party, catering supplies and overnight camping needs. One of these vans will be required to carry up to six people and some of the overnight equipment.</p>
<p>Vehicle & Spare Parts</p>	<p>All essential spares, including fuel and oil, assessed as being required by the mechanic.</p>
<p>Maintenance Tools</p>	<p>All essential mechanical tools assessed as being required by the mechanic.</p>
<p>First Aid Kit</p>	<p>All essential first aid equipment as assessed as being required by the paramedic.</p>
<p>Scooter Rider Protective Equipment/Clothing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Light weight helmets, preferably with sun visor • Light weight gloves • Long sleeve light weight shirts <p>Riders will also be expected to wear long trousers and sturdy enclosed footwear.</p>

Event Uniforms	All volunteers actively involved with the event should be issued with distinctively coloured and embroidered uniforms to advertise their involvement with the event. The suggested items needed include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brimmed hats and caps • "T" shirt for evening • Long sleeve shirt for day • Lightweight spray jacket??
Navigation (Maps/GPS)	All vehicles should have maps and GPS showing planned stops and features along the way.
Communications	Research will be required to determine communications needs. These could be a combination of mobile phones (where there is coverage), two-way radios and satellite telephone. The two escort vehicles accompanying the scooter riders must be in radio contact. There should also be contact between escort vehicles and the advance party and there must be some means of communicating with emergency services should the unfortunate need arise.
Catering needs	Research will be required to determine the catering requirements to feed breakfast, lunches and dinner for all volunteers actively involved in the event.
Camping needs	Research will be required to determine the overnight accommodation requirements for all volunteers actively involved in the event.
Give Away Gifts	It would be a nice touch to have a supply of novelty gifts, such as lollies, caps, balloons and the like to hand out to children and others at overnight locations. This could bring a little joy to the lives of children living in remote locations. This is also an excellent means for sponsors to promote their business.

HUMAN RESOURCES

It is a requirement that all personnel actively involved with the event are volunteers. Several people with specific skills will be required during the detailed planning phase. Ideally, these people would be recently retired, or semi-retired, and still have the knowledge and contacts in their specialist field. They may or may not wish to participate in the actual event. Everyone must be committed to make this event a success. All those actively involved during the event itself will be older persons, over sixty-five years of age. However, they would be quite welcome to have close family accompany them should they wish to participate. It must not be forgotten though that this event is about older persons and what they can achieve.

SPECIALIST SKILLS REQUIRED

People with the following specialist skills would be needed during the planning phase.

Event Management	An Event Manager will be required to oversee all aspects of the planning phase. This person would need project and operational management skills and be available for the entirety of the event. It is envisaged that this person will
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	also travel with the scooters to manage the conduct of the actual event.
Finance Administration	There will be a definite need for a suitably qualified person to establish bank accounts and control all money transactions relating to the event.
Website Management	An event website is vital. A qualified person will be required to set up the website and maintain it.
Insurance	The event must be fully insured. An insurance advisor will be needed to advise on the types of insurance required and seek out the best deal for that insurance coverage. An insurance company, such as the appropriately named "Australian Seniors Insurance Agency" may be interested becoming involved with sponsorship.
Media/Marketing	To be successful, this event will need good media coverage. A qualified person will be needed to seek out and exploit media opportunities including having a senior citizen celebrity being associated with the event. An original caricature of an oldie on a scooter as the event emblem would be appropriate.
Government Liaison	Someone who has knowledge of the workings of government departments will be needed to liaise with both State and Federal Governments on matters relating to the conduct of the event. There is also the possibility of obtaining grants. The Australian Government Department of Human Services, with Senator the Hon Kim Carr as the current Minister, is the department responsible for the welfare of Australia seniors. This department should be approached to determine any assistance it can give towards this event.
Community Liaison	Someone will be needed during all phases of the event, to liaise with local community councils and groups along the route to be travelled, particularly at the overnight and rest day locations. Local communities could use the event as an excuse to have a social activity such as fete, market, sing-along or whatever. It will be important to seek out local knowledge advice and assistance for overnight stops.
Communications	An electronics specialist will be needed to advise on communications needs and obtain, through loan or sponsorship, the necessary hardware.
Paramedic	A suitably experienced paramedic will be required to travel with the scooter group in the following direct support vehicle. This person would also advise on first aid supplies.
Mechanic	A mechanic with the knowledge of the scooters and vehicles being used will be required to travel with the paramedic in a support vehicle. This person would also secure the necessary tools and spares.
Caterer	A person will be required to manage all catering aspects of the event including provisioning, menus and food preparation at a campsite situation. This person would travel in one of the forward support vehicles. A roster

	system involving everyone else, would be set up to provide assistance with the food preparation and cleaning up afterwards.
Charity	All excess monies at the end of the event will be donated to a charity, or charities, which has the aim of building the esteem of older persons. A person with knowledge of the charity industry would be an asset.
Entertainer	A very important person to have along during an event like this would be a multi talented entertainer to develop a party atmosphere for overnight stops. Someone who can play an instrument, tell a joke, recite a poem and lead a sing-along. Overnight stop communities could benefit from the entertainment.

EVENT ORGANISATION COMMITTEE

This event cannot be brought together without a small central committee to organize and coordinate the event. With the advantages modern communications, this committee does not need to be at the same location. It can all be achieved using electronic communications.

The committee would consist of around six people including the Event Manager, a secretary, the finance specialist and the sponsorship specialist.

BUDGET/COSTINGS

A budget for the entire event will need to be prepared as planning progresses.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The following are some of the items, which need to be considered during the planning phase:

Safety

The welfare and safety of participants is paramount throughout this event. Although all involved will be volunteers, there is an absolute duty of care obligation by the organisers. There are certain risks associated with a group of slow moving scooter riders travelling on an open highway with fast and long road trains using the same highway. The trucks do not like being slowed down. Quite apart from the obvious, there is the slipstream effect on the scooters as the large trucks pass.



The organizing committee will need to address all potential safety hazards. Some basic safety requirements are:

- No travelling in the night,
- No travelling during rain,
- All riders must wear all safety equipment at all times whilst riding a scooter,
- Support vehicles to be fitted with hazard markings and flashing amber lights to warn other traffic,
- All riders to attend a briefing on the operation of the motor scooter at Port Augusta prior to the start of the event.
- At an appropriate place like a football oval, all riders to practice riding the scooters before the event.

Weather

The average weather on the Nullabor during September is mostly mild during the day and cool at night. There is little rain. The following averages for September have been extracted from the Bureau of Meteorology website:

- Maximum temperature – 22.4 C
- Minimum Temperature – 7.9 C
- Mean monthly rainfall – 17.8mm
- Number of days with more than 1mm of rain – 2.1

Vehicle Licencing Requirements

All riders and drivers of vehicles must be appropriately licenced. Of note, holders of a provisional or full car licence may legally ride 50cc scooters in Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia and the Northern Territory.

Border Crossing Quarantine Regulations

Western Australia actively protects its agriculture, environment and lifestyle by conducting vehicle inspections for quarantine risk material at entry points for travellers arriving from interstate. The border checkpoint on the Eyre Highway is located at Eucla. This must be taken into consideration during catering planning.

Local Community Participation

It is important to gain the support of the local communities visited during the scooter ride. Local councils and community groups can offer assistance with overnight accommodation, and other facilities such as laundry, and should be encouraged to participate. In return, this event should give something back to communities in some form.

Port Augusta Departure Arrangements

Some of the needs for Port Augusta are:

- A building of suitable size to store pre departure supplies

- An area, like a football oval, suitable for scooter driver training – ***the Chinnery Park Oval, just up Gardiner Avenue, is quite close to the Tourist Park and appears to ideal for this purpose.***
- Suitable accommodation and catering – ***The Shoreline Top Tourist Park in Gardiner Avenue appears to be an excellent site for what is needed at Port Augusta. They will need to be contacted to determine what they can offer. It has easy access to Eyre Highway.***
- A suitable area for gathering the road party prior to departure. A civic departure from this area with some type of media hype to set riders on their way. ***Chinnery Park would also be most suitable as it is large enough and it has good access to Eyre Highway.***
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Perth Arrival Celebrations

Some considerations for a party atmosphere arrival in Perth are:

- Police escort requirements
- Some form of informal civic reception at a location like Langley Park
- Perth mayor in attendance
- Macca with an “Australia All Over” ABC program in attendance
- Federal Member for Human Services in attendance

CONCLUSION

This event has the potential to be bigger than Ben Hur or be a total and utter fizzer. To make it a success, it needs to capture the attention of all levels of government, the media, the aged and the public at large. More importantly, it needs the voluntary expertise, and commitment, of many people with the desire to make the event succeed.

This event is unique. It is not about the young, muscular, overpaid and beautiful superstars. Nor is it about celebrities walking the red carpet. It is about slow, wrinkled, stooped, not so wealthy people with a different style of beauty. These people are not attempting to break records; they just want to capture a little adventure and feel as though they actively belong.