



# 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, Black Dog Ride highly recommends you have a professional check the bike for you and advise you on expected life of these items under fully laden long distance riding. Good prep 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:** Depending on which State/Territory you are riding from, 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 vehicles carry 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 only 6-8,000 kms on some motorcycles. We recommend you make forward arrangements for tyre replacement and servicing.



## 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 below). Remember you're going to be doing this day after day for a perhaps a fortnight and you don't want find out on Day 1 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:

- *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 strongly secured they can move, become loose and potentially cause a hazard to you or other riders.
- *Is your riding gear up to the job?* Travelling the length and breadth 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.
- *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 how 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%. For longer legs on your ride itinerary, you may need to purchase a fuel bladder or a fuel container.
- *What about hearing protection?* 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.



- *What about rider fatigue?* Riding a motorcycle over 600 - 700 km in a day is tiring! There's no way around that and a long day in the saddle will make you a bit stiff and sore if you're not used to it. Link about 2 or 3 of those days together and by day 4 you can be getting a bit tetchy! In the lead up to the ride, it is worth getting started on an exercise and stretching regime to get you in shape, and a few long days in the saddle to toughen up your backside. For those who need it, investing in a fleece seat cover, or an [Airhawk](#) seat cover may be an option too.
- On the ride, make sure you stay hydrated. Long days out in the weather and the wind have a dehydrating effect on the skin and the body. If you're not drinking enough (water!) you may suffer from cramps, dizziness and confusion. Keep a drinking container filled with water on your bike, and take hydration breaks regularly.

### Some Useful Links To Browse:

Many of you are seasoned veterans of long-distance rides and know what you'll need. But for some, this may be the longest trip you've ever contemplated... For the latter, here's some useful links to get you started. A few of them are US sites, but they provide useful suggestions. Your more experienced ride-mates will be only too happy to provide advice also.

- ✓ Beating Fatigue: <https://goo.gl/uxpfC1>
- ✓ Staying Hydrated: <https://goo.gl/mWf2z5>
- ✓ Country Roads: <https://goo.gl/yRPCcm>
- ✓ There's any number of packing list websites for motorcycle touring .. here's a few suggestions: <https://goo.gl/YLT8TZ> or <https://goo.gl/k4yjBb> or <https://goo.gl/TZiiR3>
- ✓ Prepare your body for the ride: <https://goo.gl/LHD1Wr>
- ✓ Bike preparation: <https://goo.gl/nndibp>
- ✓ Suggestions from a lady rider: <https://goo.gl/3TfqVz>