

**Joint Press Conference with Four Japanese Motorcycle Manufacturers
~ Gearing up for Improvements in the Motorcycle Use
Environment to Expand Utilization ~**



Representatives of four Japanese manufacturers meet the press

On September 16, 2009, the Japan Automobile Manufacturers Association (JAMA) held a press conference featuring representatives of the four Japanese manufacturers of motorcycles at the JAMA Headquarters in Tokyo.

The event began with a greeting from Mr. Tsuneji Togami, Chairman of the JAMA Motorcycle Committee (and Chairman and Director of Yamaha Motor Co., Ltd.). Chairman Togami explained the underlying purpose of putting on the press conference – namely, the desire to gain the cooperation of the mass media and other parties in resolving the problems currently faced by Japanese motorcycle manufacturers, through advancing enhanced understanding of those issues.

Global Production and Sales

The next speaker was Mr. Sosuke Kinouchi, Vice Chairman of the Motorcycle Committee and Executive Officer at Kawasaki Heavy Industries, Ltd. Mr. Kinouchi addressed the topic of the production and sales conditions globally and in Japan.

According to the statistics presented, worldwide motorcycle unit production in 2008 was approximately 53 million units, an increase of 7.9% compared to 2007. Of this total, 90% of the vehicles were produced in Asia. While the main focus of this production in Asia is China, growth in motorcycle output increases is also being recorded in India and Indonesia. In other countries as well, annual production now exceeds the one-million-unit level in Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam.

Turning to sales, global motorcycle sales during 2008 were tracked at 39 million units, a gain of 5% over the previous year. As was the case with production, results were down in Europe and North America,



**Chairman Togami of the JAMA
Motorcycle Committee
(Chairman and Director of
Yamaha Motor)**



**Vice Chairman Kinouchi of the
JAMA Motorcycle Committee
(Executive Officer of Kawasaki
Heavy Industries)**

while gains were charted in Asia and South America. The growth in South American sales was particularly conspicuous, which at 3.74 million units was more than double the 1.72 million-unit total recorded just three years prior to that in 2005.

Japan Production and Sales

Japan's domestic motorcycle production in 2008 was 1,227,000 units, a drop of 28.8% compared to 2007. The decline in exports to Europe and North America had a major impact on these results. Domestic sales finished at 556,000 units, down 21.6% from the previous year. In addition to the slump in consumer demand linked to the worsened economic environment, vehicle prices have also risen due to tightened emissions regulations. As a reflection of this, sales were particularly flat for motorcycles in the "under 50cc" class. For the current year, meanwhile, projections are that sales will fall short of 500,000 units.

As noted, the Japanese motorcycle industry currently finds itself in extremely harsh straits, with various different approaches being advanced in order to revitalize the market. In his talk, Vice Chairman Kinouchi mentioned the following overseas-based initiatives.

Overseas Initiatives: Counterfeit Motorcycle Problem in South America

Motorcycle sales are increasing in South America, and especially in Argentina (where sales have expanded nearly four-fold from 2005 to 2008). Annual unit sales in Argentina are now over 700,000 units, significantly above the scale of the Japanese market. Along with this market expansion, however, sales of counterfeit motorcycles are also showing noticeable growth.

It is true that the scale of the problem of bogus motorcycles is still small in South America. The JAMA stance, however, is that action is necessary before the situation there becomes serious, with approaches having been launched to target this issue from the previous fiscal year. The plans for the current fiscal year, meanwhile, include conducting a local fact-finding survey.

Japan-Based Initiatives: New Means of Expanding Motorcycle Use

Committee Chairman Togami also explained the initiatives to be advanced domestically in Japan. To explore new means of expanding the use of motorcycles, JAMA has brought together academics and other



JAMA Executive Vice President
Nakayama



Vice Chairman Oyama of the
JAMA Motorcycle Committee
(Managing Director of Honda)



Vice Chairman Tsugihiko of the
JAMA Motorcycle Committee
(President of Suzuki Motorcycle Sales
Inc.)

experts for surveys and studies, with the results of these efforts compiled and published as the report *Motorcycle Use Environment Design ~ Toward a More Efficient Traffic Society*.

This report lists the main findings of the JAMA survey as follows.

Finding 1:

Motorcycle users primarily purchase their vehicles on the strength of “Good fuel efficiency” and “Low maintenance costs.” This gives motorcycles high evaluations for their environmental performance and economy.

Finding 2:

Simulation was conducted on four congested routes in Tokyo by increasing the “motorcycle mix” (the percentage of motorcycles in the overall traffic volume on those roads). The results revealed an increase in the average speed on these routes for overall traffic, indicating the effectiveness of motorcycles in easing road congestion.

Finding 3:

Targeting three routes in Tokyo, calculations were made of travel speed when using motorcycles, passenger cars, bicycles, railways and buses, respectively. The results showed that motorcycles covered the routes with the greatest speed. Based on this, it was concluded that the motorcycle is the vehicle offering the best time efficiency for urban transport.

Proposals to Promote Greater Motorcycle Use

These findings illustrate that motorcycles are not only excellent means of transport in urban areas, but also provide an extremely effective solution for realizing an “Environmentally sustainable traffic society.” In fiscal year 2005, for example, the volume of carbon dioxide emissions from motorcycles was 570,000 tons. This was a mere 0.2% of the total CO₂ emissions of 256.78 million tons accounted for by Japan’s transportation sector that same fiscal year. In view of this, JAMA feels that the need exists to create an environment capable of encouraging people to make more active use of motorcycles. Toward that end, the report offers the following proposals.

Simplify the Process of Acquiring Motorcycle Driver’s Licenses

In Europe, there are numerous countries where holding a regular driver’s license makes it possible to operate motorcycles up to 125cc in displacement without a special motorcycle license¹. At the very least, in Japan it would be preferable to introduce a system in which licenses for operating motorcycles under 125cc can be obtained with a training program of just one to two days.

Secure Motorcycle Driving Space

JAMA supports increases in exclusive motorcycle lanes, as well as expanded bus and motorcycle exclusive transit zones to ensure safer and more comfortable motorcycle running performance.

Secure Motorcycle Parking Space

Steps should be taken to revise motorcycle-parking regulations, expand acceptance of



Vice Chairman Watabiki of the JAMA Motorcycle Committee (Managing Executive Officer and Representative Director of Yamaha)

¹ Seven countries belonging to the European Union (including the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Germany, etc.).

motorcycles (under 125cc in class) into bicycle parking lots, introduce curbside parking spaces and make other moves to expand motorcycle parking lots and spaces.

Social Systems to Promote Motorcycle Use

Japan's Ministry of the Environment has published a manual targeting regional public entities for the sake of reducing CO₂. JAMA believes that by following the tenets introduced in this manual and cutting down on CO₂, it will be possible for local government bodies to both focus in on and take advantage of the utility of motorcycles within the specific policies that they promote. Such efforts at the regional level should include improved motorcycle use environments for commuting to work and school, mobilization of motorcycles in disaster responses (use of the vehicles by rescue teams, etc.), the introduction of rental motorcycles (at tourist spots and other locations) and other pertinent efforts aimed at expanding and enhancing the use of motorcycles in everyday life.

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