



Hi Black Dog Rider,

Our Inaugural ride to the Top End is fast approaching! As we write this, we are looking at 300 Black Dog Riders meeting up in Katherine NT, converging together en masse to let celebrate the power of conversation in fostering a culture of mental health awareness around the nation.

Right now, your preparation should be mainly about yourself and your bike. We want you to think carefully about your own physical and mental preparation. These long-distance rides can be taxing on the body, the mind, and the bike, and it's vital you prepare all three.

This Rider Update will focus upon general housekeeping. Without further ado -

- Have you booked your accommodation yet? Please get booked in ASAP as many venues will only be holding spaces through to the end of July. Head over to Black Dog Ride's website to browse your region's accommodation options:
<http://www.blackdogride.com.au/view/topend2018>
- Are you planning on shipping your bike home? BikesOnly have put together great deals for Black Dog Riders with bikes being picked up from Darwin to all capital cities. Head to: <http://www.blackdogride.com.au/view/topend2018> Scroll to the bottom of the page to view the deals and get in touch with our friends at BikesOnly. Bikes can be dropped off at Darwin Motorcycles (Coconut Grove, Darwin) on the Saturday morning from 8am to 1pm, or will collect from your accommodation on the morning of Monday 20th August for pick up. Final bookings must be made ASAP!
- Speaking of Darwin Motorcycles, will your motorcycle need tyres or a service once you arrive in Darwin? Darwin Motorcycles services all brands except Victory and Indian, but you'll need to book services and tyre purchases in advance (tyres are shipped from Sydney and need at least a week's notice for purchases to arrive). Call Clive on (08) 8948 0995 to arrange it and let him know you're a Black Dog Rider.



- Have you thought about mobile coverage on the ride? Telstra has the best (although not perfect!) coverage in remote and regional areas of Australia. It's really important that your Ride Teams can contact you on the ride via phone or text. If you're with another carrier, we *highly* recommend you purchase a Telstra SIM card for the ride, then send an email to registrations@blackdogride.com.au to let us know your new phone number for the ride.
- Have you arranged comprehensive roadside assistance yet? Whilst our support crews will do the best they can to help you should you or your bike run into issues, we strongly recommend taking out comprehensive roadside assistance *plus* travel insurance, to ensure you and your bike are never caught short while you're out and about in regional Australia.
- Have you started your fundraising yet? 2018 has seen unprecedented funding levels coming into the sector at both State and Federal level. This is great news since it means our awareness raising works are having some tangible effect at Government levels... but there's still so much to do. Some of the organisations we've assisted in the past have been recipients of some pretty spectacular funding allocations, so in the coming months and years, Black Dog Ride will be turning its attention to assisting projects that are doing great works but are not on the Government's radar. The work we do on this ride directly affects our ability to support grassroots organisations like the LAMP youth mental health project, the Declan Crouch Fund, Behind the Seen amongst others. Black Dog Ride is in early discussions with a whole series of vital community based mental health projects around the country, and importantly, we're looking to lend tangible assistance to these projects. This directly saves thousands of lives, supports even more who are experiencing mental health crises, and helps to foster a culture of acceptance and inclusion for those experiencing mental illness. If you haven't already done so, you can contribute to the cause by setting up your own Give Easy Fundraising Page:
https://blackdogride.giveeasy.org/fundraising_event/topend2018/ Every dollar raised makes a vital difference to the wellbeing of our communities.



- If you have any ride specific queries, your first point of contact should be your Ride Coordinator:

NSW Leg: Wayne Amor e: nsw@blackdogride.com.au

NT Leg: Jon Benham e: nt@blackdogride.com.au

QLD Leg: Michael Young e: qld@blackdogride.com.au

SA Leg: Merv Storton e: sa@blackdogride.com.au

TAS & VIC Leg: Richard Brown e: vic@blackdogride.com.au

WA Leg: Laree Walker e: wa@blackdogride.com.au

- If you're on Facebook, Black Dog Ride has private groups for each region which are designed for peer support, to get to know your fellow Black Dog Riders before departure, and ask questions of experienced riders. If you'd like to join, please email your Ride Coordinator and ask for an invite.
- It can be intimidating joining a group ride. Black Dog Ride is an inclusive family and all riders of all ages, genders, bikes and abilities are welcome. If you need a riding buddy, please get in touch with your Ride Coordinator or have a chat to the Ride Team before departure. If you are joining us with a group of friends, keep your eyes open for new or solo riders and welcome them to the Black Dog Ride family.

Black Dog Rides are a time for like-minded riders to enjoy the mutual support and camaraderie of people who have travelled similar journeys with their or their loved one's mental health, an opportunity to start conversations in communities to foster acceptance and encouragement of those living with mental illness, and celebrate the power of hundreds of Black Dog Riders coming together to beat the black dog. In all your planning and preparation for the Top End 2018, remember you are part of something truly special, a national volunteer led movement which impacts the very grassroots of Aussie communities.

In coming updates, you'll receive more information about your Rider Kits which are being sent out shortly; what to expect on the ride; all about your support crews; what to expect at community engagement stops along the way; and so on, but for now... focus your attention on yourself and your bike.

CEO David Peach

Black Dog Ride Australia Ltd

3rd July 2018