

Motor Vehicle Accidents

*Current Practices and Initiatives
In
Injury Prevention*

Motorcycle Safety, Motorcycle Safety Foundation & Navy Safety

Motorcycle Safety

MOTORCYCLE SAFETY FOUNDATION & NAVAL SAFETY
Norfolk, VA

Purpose: Awareness and educational course specifically for sport bike riders.

Background: In the summer of 2008, Navy and Marine Corps motorcycle fatalities (particularly involving new, high-powered, racing-style motorcycles called “sport bikes”) began to spike in an unprecedented and alarming manner. This drew high-level attention to the issue. Not only were many of the victims untrained, analysis of the existing motorcycle-rider training course revealed that the basic rider course didn’t meet the needs of sport bike riders. Furthermore, many of the victims hadn’t attended training of any kind. Working with the Motorcycle Safety Foundation, Naval Safety Center motorcycle experts developed a new course specifically for sport bike riders. Parallel to course development were such initiatives as a campaign to highlight the emerging issue, and an on-line “census” to guide commands in identifying their high-risk riders and track course completion.

The Motorcycle Safety Foundation, line commands and safety were all involved in the creation and implementation of the program. The population size was 18,080 with a 96/4 percent male to female ratio. The average rank was as follows, E-5 20%; E-6 18%; E-7 10%; E-4 8%; E-3 5%.

Discussion: The Navy had 33 motorcycle fatalities in FY08. Based on the 5-year upward trend, we projected between 17 and 32 FY09 fatalities unless some kind of intervention was made into the system. The Navy ended FY09 with just 14 motorcycle fatalities, denoting significant year-to-year improvement. Significant improvement requires a drastic change to the system, which was accomplished through greater command emphasis on motorcycle safety, and the new Military Sport bike Rider Course (MSRC) among other things.

The Marines had 25 motorcycle fatalities in FY08. The 5-year upward trend projected between 10 and 22 fatalities; due to the rapid rise in Marine fatalities, a more accurate projection might have been 29 fatalities for FY09. The Marines ended FY09 with 14 motorcycle fatalities. Although not significant based on the 5-year average, the year-to-year change was significant, indicating drastic change to the system, as described above.

Recommendation: No recommendation provided.

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