

## **Resource document:**

# **Motorcycle Mentorship Program and Motorcycle Training**

**Art Powell**

[Ira.a.powell.civ@mail.mil](mailto:Ira.a.powell.civ@mail.mil)

**334-255-9855**

**Strategic Communication Directorate**

**U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center**

**Fort Rucker, Ala.**

### **Narrative:**

Motorcycle accidents claimed the lives of 49 Soldiers in fiscal 2012, making it the leading cause of off-duty death in the Army. Forty five Soldiers died from off-duty motorcycle accidents in fiscal 2011.

MMP and required motorcycle training are designed to address the off-duty accidental deaths of Army personnel in motorcycle accidents.

Motorcycle riders who complete required motorcycle safety training are better prepared to safely operate a motorcycle.

Wearing Personal Protective Equipment increases the chance of avoiding serious injury if you are in a crash.

Experienced riders should “pair up” with less experienced riders and be a ‘battle buddy’ on the road.

### **Key messages:**

- Motorcycle accidents claimed the lives of 47 Soldiers in fiscal 2012, making it the leading cause of off-duty death in the Army. Forty five Soldiers died from off-duty motorcycle accidents in fiscal 2011.
- MMP was introduced in 2005 as an informal way for experienced riders to partner with inexperienced riders to combat the rise in fatalities.
- Collected accident data revealed that more than half of the motorcycle fatalities were the result of single vehicle accidents involving indiscipline.
- Acts of indiscipline include excessive speed, reckless driving, improper PPE and alcohol abuse.

- In 2011, the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army issued a memorandum focusing on the importance of establishing Motorcycle Mentorship Programs that have significantly increased the number of programs Army-wide.

**Talking points:**

Army wide, motorcycle accidents claimed the lives of 47 Soldiers in fiscal 2012, making it the leading cause of off-duty death in the Army. Forty five Soldiers died from off-duty motorcycle accidents in fiscal 2011.

To address motorcycle safety issues, the MMP and required motorcycle training were implemented to address the off-duty accidental deaths of Army personnel in motorcycle accidents.

Motorcycle riders who wear Personal Protective Equipment and finish required motorcycle safety training are better prepared to safely operate a motorcycle.

The 'battle buddy' mind set also applies to motorcycle safety. Riders should watch the performance of other riders and be a 'battle buddy' on the road.

Acts of indiscipline while operating a motorcycle are just as deadly and unforgiving as acts of indiscipline while on other vehicles or during other activities.

Leaders should be aware of safety training programs and riding associations in their local area and ensure riders utilize them.

All riders are required to take refresher safety training.

To raise safety awareness, the Motorcycle Safety Foundation encourages motorists to safely share the road with motorcyclists and be extra alert when they are nearby.

The MSF and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration urges motorists to safely "share the road" with motorcycles and be alert to help keep motorcyclists safe. Motorcyclists are reminded to make themselves visible to other motorists.

The agencies also report that statistics show the percentage of intoxicated motorcycle riders in fatal crashes is greater than the percentage of intoxicated drivers on our roads.

**Tips:**

Encourage motorcycle riders to participate in MMPs and encourage them to promote the program with other riders.

Make sure motorcycle riders are aware of required safety training and how to get information on local safety training activities.

Soldiers know how to be a 'battle buddy' while on duty, stress to them how easy it is to use the same mind-set while riding motorcycle with others.

All riders must understand the hazards they face when riding motorcycles and how it is the leading cause of off-duty death in our Army.

PPE is for a reason.

### **References:**

For additional MMP information call the following numbers at the USACR/Safety Center Driving Directorate:

334-255-3039            334-255-2892 (DSN—588-xxxx)

Additional motorcycle safety information is available at the Motorcycle Safety Foundation website, <http://www.msf-usa.org>.

Tools and best practices are integral to safe riding and successful MMPs and may be viewed at <https://safety.army.mil/mmp>.

Contact your unit/garrison safety office for details on course scheduling for required Army motorcycle safety training. Note: The MSF site lists civilian providers and may be used to locate a site for those riders that do not have contracted training at their installation/facility.

### *Quotes:*

“Army safety professionals have done a tremendous job of reducing fatalities Army wide, but motorcycle deaths remain our biggest problem,” said Brig. Gen. Timothy J. Edens, director of Army Safety and commanding general, U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center, Fort Rucker, Ala. “We provide riders with safety training that’s proven successful, but leaders and Soldiers need to understand how much indiscipline plays into accidents. Behavior such as alcohol use, disobeying traffic laws, not taking required safety training and not wearing protective gear can prove fatal,” he added.

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“We see Soldiers at the rank of sergeant and above showing indiscipline and being killed in motorcycle accidents,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Stidley, command sergeant major, USACR/Safety Center, Fort Rucker, Ala. “From the squad leader to the command sergeant major, we should all be engaged with and looking out for one another’s well being, ensuring the duties of leadership are fulfilled both on and off duty. It’s not an issue of rank; it’s about taking personal ownership of responsibilities as an NCO, and leaders looking out for leaders as fellow Soldiers.”

“The Army MMP differs from installation to installation with the general consensus being that mentorship is ensuring your troops know the MMP and follow the regulations,” said Craig "Colt" Colton, vice president, Green Knights International MMC. “The other services are very similar and vary based on command support and if any of the leadership rides there seems to be more of a focus. The Green Knight Military Motorcycle Club compliments any installations safety and mentorship program by conducting rides, safety meetings, community events and briefings. The problem is getting installation support.”