



U.S. ARMY COMBAT READINESS/SAFETY CENTER

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Resource Document Driving Safety *Indisciplined POM Riding*

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Narrative:

Indiscipline while riding motorcycles typically results in well over half the motorcycle fatalities and injuries Soldiers suffer each year. Often these are single-vehicle accidents where the Soldier's decision to violate risk management training, Army Regulations and state laws was the major contributing factor. Such indiscipline manifests itself in a number of ways. Speeding is the most common form, followed by alcohol impairment, failing to wear personal protective equipment, not getting the required motorcycle riding training and Soldiers riding beyond their skills. The latter is sometimes the result of a new rider purchasing a high-performance machine better suited to someone with greater skill and experience. Rather than developing their skills over time while owning/riding increasingly powerful machines, some Soldiers use the rationale that they would rather to start on the machine they want to end up on.

During fiscal 2011, safety offices reported 230 motorcycle accidents to the U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center. Of that number, 47 were Class A accidents, which resulted in the loss of 46 Soldiers while another was paralyzed. Ten Soldiers were crippled in Class B accidents and suffered amputations, broken bones, concussions and serious internal injuries to the kidneys and spleen. While Class A accidents brought loss to units and grief to families, Class B accidents reduced unit strength by rendering some Soldiers unavailable for deployment.

Leaders hold the key to reducing these accidents through creating a safe unit riding culture. Tools to accomplish that include encouraging Soldiers to participate in Motorcycle Mentorship Programs, where available. Where a MMP is not available, interested riders and leaders can find information on starting one online at <https://safety.army.mil/mmp/>. In addition, the U.S. Army Combat

Readiness/Safety Center has recently produced the Leader/Individual Motorcycle Operator Responsibilities card to promote a safe unit riding culture. This card and other tools are available online at <https://safety.army.mil/> under the Privately Owned Vehicle Safety Tab.

The foundation for safe riding practices is found in the Motorcycle Safety Foundation's Basic RiderCourse, followed up by the Experienced RiderCourse, Military Sportbike RiderCourse and Motorcycle Refresher training. These courses, provided at no cost to Soldiers, fulfill the Army's requirement Soldiers be properly trained before riding a privately owned motorcycle. Built into the training is the requirement Soldiers progress through the various courses to further hone their riding skills. According to Army Regulation 385-10, "The Army Progressive Motorcycle Program is designed to consistently keep motorcycle operator training current and sustain or enrich rider skills."

Key Messages:

- Indiscipline leads all other causes combined when it comes to motorcycle accidents.
- Encourage leaders to engage Soldiers in actively developing a safe unit riding culture to reduce the fatalities and injuries caused in motorcycle accidents.

Talking points:

- Off-duty motorcycle accidents needlessly kill and injure many Soldiers each year and the accident rate is rising in fiscal 2012. Although some accidents are the result of improper actions by other motorists, most Soldiers die because they chose to ride indisciplined.
- This problem is best addressed through the increased involvement of leadership and riders, both taking advantage of the safe riding tools/programs available to them.
- Leaders who also are riders have the advantage of setting the example by being leaders in MMPs. Riders can also play a supportive role by policing other riders to discourage indisciplined riding or, if necessary, alerting leaders to at-risk riders.

Tips:

According to the U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center, the following suggestions can help keep riders alive on the road.

- Wear Personal Protective Equipment to reduce impacts that can lead to injury or death.
- Taking Motorcycle Safety Foundation-based training can give novice and experienced riders enhanced skills for safely navigating streets, roads and highways.
- Take advantage of the experience offered by more seasoned riders by joining a Motorcycle Mentorship Program.
- Ensure your motorcycle is properly maintained.
- Always wear a Department of Transportation-approved helmet
- Wear PPE than meets Army standards, not T-shirts, shorts and tennis shoes that can leave you vulnerable to severe abrasion injuries.
- Use risk management to identify potential hazards and act appropriately to avoid being injured or killed.

Historical Reference:

<https://safety.army.mil/>

<http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/Pubs/810834.pdf> 109262

Statistics:

- A National Highway Traffic Safety Administration study published in 2007 showed the overwhelming majority (91 percent) of motorcycle fatalities in 2005 were on non-interstate

roadways. Of those fatalities, 51 percent happened at intersections. The study also found:

- Riders were nearly seven times more likely to be speeding than car operators.
- Nearly half of the riders who died had previous violations for speeding, DWI, suspended or revoked licenses (indisciplined behavior)
- Riders were almost 2 ½ times more likely to be under the influence of alcohol than the drivers of the motor vehicles involved in the deadly collision.

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