



U.S. ARMY COMBAT READINESS/SAFETY CENTER

4905 Ruf Ave. Fort Rucker, AL 36362-5363
Comm. (334) 255-3770 Fax (334) 255-2266
<https://safety.army.mil>

Leadership involvement key to motorcycle safety

Art Powell
Directorate of Communication and Public Affairs
U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center

With Army motorcycle fatalities down 15 percent last year from fiscal 2012, it's obvious something is making a difference. While there's no single answer as to what or why, engaged leaders have undoubtedly had a positive impact on Soldier safety.

"If a Soldier rides a motorcycle, they must complete mandatory safety training," said Brig. Gen. Timothy J. Edens, director of Army Safety and commanding general, U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center. "The Army invests millions of dollars yearly to maintain the program, and we've seen good results from our investment thanks to — among other things — great leadership involvement."

While the courses are mandatory, leader involvement across the chain of command enhances their effectiveness.

"I ride a motorcycle and was required to complete the safety training," Edens said. "I saw how important it is to produce a standardized safety program, and I encourage leaders at all levels to recognize the role they play in making it successful and helping reduce the number of motorcycle accidents and fatalities involving Soldiers."

Army motorcycle safety training is built upon programs designed by the Motorcycle Safety Foundation, which are now being updated based on \$2.4 million in research that began in 2010. Approximately 400,000 motorcyclists, both military and civilian, enroll in MSF courses each year.

"We continue to increase our understanding of rider and other roadway user behaviors to direct improvements in our curricula that lead to improved student outcomes and a safer riding environment," said Dr. Ray Ochs, vice president of training systems for MSF. "We've just completed a significant update to our most popular course, the Basic RiderCourse, with new classroom content focused on rider behavior, risk awareness and risk management. And, we've added new range exercises that focus on earlier acquisition of fundamental skills, with an emphasis on traffic situations students will encounter on the road."

The updated courses include approximately 40 percent more content on rider perception and escape paths, 30 percent more instruction on negotiating curves and cornering, and 15 percent more practice time for swerving and other crash avoidance skills.

With the arrival of warmer weather, motorcycles that have been parked in garages for winter are being made ready for the summer riding season. Besides mechanical checks, riders also need to review their safety practices and take refresher courses, if necessary, to enjoy a safe season.

For more information on motorcycle safety, visit <https://safety.army.mil>.