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## Training for the Enforcement of Motorcycle Laws

NHTSA Grant Project



**Project Administered by IADLEST**



## Training for the Enforcement of Motorcycle Laws



### Motorcycle Crashes

According to NHTSA, in 2006, 4,810 motorcyclists were killed – an increase of 5 percent over the 4,576 motorcyclists killed in 2005. There were 88,000 motorcyclists injured during 2006. In 2006, motorcyclists accounted for 11 percent of total traffic fatalities, 13 percent of all occupant fatalities, and 4 percent of all occupants injured.

In 2006, 2,537 (51%) of all motorcycles involved in fatal crashes collided with another type of motor vehicle in transport. In two-vehicle crashes, 79 percent of the motorcycles involved were impacted in the front. Only 5 percent were struck in the rear. Motorcycles are more likely to be involved in a fatal collision with a fixed object than are other vehicles. In 2006, 25 percent of the motorcycles involved in fatal crashes collided with fixed objects, compared to 18 percent for passenger cars, 12 percent for light trucks, and 3 percent for large trucks.

In 2006, there were 2,226 two-vehicle fatal crashes involving a motorcycle and another type of vehicle. In 40 percent (883) of these crashes the other vehicle was turning left while the motorcycle was going straight, passing, or overtaking the vehicle. Both vehicles were going straight in 582 crashes (26%).

In 2006, 37 percent of all motorcyclists involved in fatal crashes were speeding, compared to 23 percent for passenger car drivers, 19 percent for light-truck drivers, and 8 percent for large-truck drivers.

### Licensing

One out of four motorcycle operators (25%) involved in fatal crashes in 2006 were operating their vehicles with invalid licenses at the time of the collision.

### Alcohol

In fatal crashes in 2006 a higher percentage of motorcycle operators had blood alcohol concentrations (BAC) of .08 grams per deciliter (g/dL) or higher than any other type of motor vehicle driver. In 2006, 27 percent of all fatally injured motorcycle operators had BAC levels of .08 g/dL or higher. An additional 7 percent had lower alcohol levels (BAC .01 to .07 g/dL). Forty-one percent of the 2,007 motorcycle operators who died in single-vehicle crashes in 2006 had BAC levels of .08 g/dL or higher. Fifty-nine percent of those killed in single-vehicle crashes on weekend nights had BACs of .08 g/dL or higher. Motorcycle operators killed in traffic crashes at night were more than 3 times more likely to have BAC levels of .08 g/dL or higher than those killed during the day (43% and 12%, respectively).

The reported helmet use rate for motorcycle operators with BAC levels .08 g/dL or higher killed in traffic crashes was 45 percent, compared with 66 percent for those with no alcohol (BAC = .00 g/dL).

### Helmet Use and Effectiveness

NHTSA estimates that helmets saved the lives of 1,658 motorcyclists in 2006. If all motorcyclists had worn helmets, an additional 752 lives could have been saved. According to NHTSA's National Occupant Protection Use Survey, a nationally representative observational survey of motorcycle helmet use, helmet use declined by 20 percentage points over 5 years, from 71 percent in 2000 to 51 percent in 2006. This drop is statistically significant and corresponds to a striking 70-percent

increase in nonuse. Reported helmet use rates for fatally injured motorcyclists in 2006 were 59 percent for operators and 45 percent for passengers, compared with 58 percent and 50 percent, respectively, in 2005.

All motorcycle helmets sold in the United States are required to meet Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 218. In 2006, 20 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico required helmet use by all motorcycle operators and passengers. In another 26 States, only persons under a specific age, usually 18, were required to wear helmets. Four States had no laws requiring helmet use.

Information Source: NHTSA Traffic Safety Facts, 2006 Data  
[www.nhtsa.gov](http://www.nhtsa.gov)



This comprehensive law enforcement training program provides detailed information in the following critical areas:

- Impairment,
- Licensing,
- Helmets, and
- Motorcycle laws.

The training will look at situations unique to the enforcement of motorcycle laws such as the following:

- Detection of impaired motorcyclists
- Including motorcyclists in National Crack Down
- Detection of non-compliant helmets
- Strategies to avoid pursuit situations
- Strategies for traffic stops
- Equipment violations
- Latest on Enforcement & Public relations campaigns