The Safety Corner

From the Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned

6 April 2007

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Motorcycle Safety

This issue of the Safety Corner is a follow-up based on numerous comments received concerning motorcycle personal protective equipment (PPE) and training.

From the Director: The MCCLL Safety Corner dated 2 March 2007, *Motorcycle Safety*, summarized the personal protective equipment (PPE) and training required to operate a motorcycle aboard DoD installations. Due to the volume of feedback we received, the following additional information on the official directives related to PPE is provided. The challenge is ensuring motorcyclists take the necessary training and that quality motorcycle training is accessible to all. There were a lot of questions on the other services' motorcycle PPE regulations so we have included those orders for your awareness. Remember, as Marines we are guided by MCO 5100.19E and other unit directives.

The many comments we received on the previous Safety Corner are evidence of the importance that Marines of all ranks place on the safety and well-being of their fellow Marines. **Remember**: Motorcycle education and training remain the centerpiece of a comprehensive motorcycle safety program!

Log on the www.mccll.usmc.mil to download previous editions of the Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned Safety Corner as well as our Monthly Newsletters, to learn about other safety issues that should be a concern for every Marine.

I look forward to your comments, observations, and concerns.

Semper Fidelis,

Col Monte Dunard, Director MCCLL
Email : monte.dunard@usmc.mil.
Telephone: 703.432.1286 DSN: 378-1286

Per MCO 5100.19E: The following PPE is mandatory for all people operating or riding as a passenger on a motorcycle on all DoD installations, and for all military personnel operating or riding on a motorcycle off installations, on and off road, in uniform or in civilian clothes:

Helmet: A properly fastened (under the chin) protective helmet which meets the standards of the Snell Memorial Foundation (SNELL), the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), or the Department of Transportation (DOT).
Goggles: Impact or shatter resistant goggles or full-face shield attached to the helmet. A windshield, eyeglasses or fairing alone is not considered proper eye protection.
Vest: A brightly colored outer upper garment during the day and a reflective upper garment at night or a commercially available mesh/fabric vest that is bright yellow, international orange or lime green with two 1 1/2" to 2" wide vertical or horizontal reflective strips front and back. The vest is authorized for wear by Marines in uniform, and should be removed as soon as the Marine gets off the motorcycle. The garment must not be covered or concealed, such as by a backpack.
Footwear: Hard-soled shoes with heels. The use of leather boots or over the ankle shoes is encouraged.
Jacket: Properly worn long-sleeved shirt or jacket.
Pants: Long trousers.
Gloves: Full-fingered gloves or mittens.
(2) The PPE for motorcycle operators during off-road operations should also include knee and shin guards or off-road Marine Corps boots and padded full-fingered gloves.
(3) Paragraph 2.c.(1) is punitive in nature. A Marine, a service member of any Service attached to a Marine Corps command, and a service member of any Service while aboard a U.S. Marine Corps installation, who violates the terms of this paragraph is subject to punitive action under the UCMJ for violation of this paragraph. Any such person who operates a motorcycle with a passenger who is not in compliance with the requirements of this paragraph is also subject to punishment for violation of this paragraph.

The observations and recommendations contained in The Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL) Safety Corner represent the considered judgment of Marines who have identified safety issues in their units. The purpose of this newsletter is to apprise other Marines of these safety recommendations and to encourage them to enter their own lessons into the Marine Corps Lessons Management System (LMS).

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Per US Coast Guard UNITNAMEINST 5100.**

Civil Requirements. Unit military personnel shall comply with all local driver licensing requirements, including special and endorsement requirements (e.g., motorcycles, mopeds), vehicle safety inspections, and registration and insurance requirements. All other Coast Guard personnel shall also comply with these requirements when on any military installation and while on official Coast Guard business.

Motorcycles. Unit personnel are required to comply with all Coast Guard and state regulations governing operation of a motorcycle, both on and off base.

(1) All unit personnel, civilian or military, that operate or park a motorcycle on any Coast Guard facility or DOD installation, shall complete a Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) or similar DOD or state approved motorcycle training course. Military personnel that operate a motorcycle (street legal) shall obtain this training regardless of whether the motorcycle is operated on or off base.

(2) All unit motorcycle operators, and passengers (military and civilian) shall wear the PPE indicated in this paragraph when onboard a Coast Guard facility.

All military motorcycle operators shall wear this equipment at all times regardless of where the motorcycle is operated: **a DOT- or Snell-approved motorcycle helmet with chinstrap securely fastened, impact or shatter resistant goggles or full-face shield (a windshield or fairing does not meet this requirement), over-the-ankle, sturdy footwear, full-fingered gloves, long-legged trousers, and a long-sleeved shirt or jacket. Brightly colored or white upper garments shall be worn during the day and high visibility reflective or retro-reflective vests, harnesses or strips on clothing at night or in periods of low visibility (fog and rain). Outer upper garments should be clearly visible and not covered.**

Note: The PPE indicated above is required for entry onto DoD installations, and retro-reflective vests or harnesses are required on DoD installations at all times.

(3) Motorcycle headlights shall be illuminated at all times while the motorcycle is in operation.

Per OPNAVINST 5100.12G

(1) Motorcycle and ATV operators shall ensure headlights are turned on at all times while the motorcycle is being operated on base except where prohibited by military mission or Status of Forces Agreements.

(2) Government or private motorcycles shall be equipped with a rear view mirror mounted on each side of the handlebars or the left and right side of the fairing.

(3) The following personal protective equipment (PPE) is mandatory for all persons described in paragraph 5a of this instruction while operating or riding as a passenger on a motorcycle:

Helmet: A properly fastened (under the chin) protective helmet certified to meet U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) standards. If the host nation does not have an equivalent helmet standard, the helmet will meet the U.S. DOT standard. Fake or novelty helmets are prohibited.

Goggles: Properly worn eye protective devices (impact or shatter resistant goggles or full-face shield properly attached to the helmet). A windshield, fairing or eyeglasses alone are not proper eye protection.

Jacket: Properly worn long-sleeved shirt or jacket.

Pants: Long trousers.

Gloves: Full-fingered gloves or mittens designed for use on a motorcycle.

Footwear: Sturdy footwear is mandatory. Leather boots or over the ankle shoes are strongly encouraged.

A brightly colored outer upper garment during the day and a reflective upper garment during the night. The outer upper garment shall be clearly visible and not covered. Military uniforms do not meet these criteria.

PPE for operators of government-owned motorcycles, ATVs and OHMs during off-road operations shall also include knee and shin guards and padded full-fingered gloves.

Parking Safely

•If parking in a parallel parking space next to a curb, position the motorcycle at an angle with the rear wheel to the curb.
•If using the side stand, turn the handlebars to the left for added stability; lock the forks for security.
•The feet on sides and center stands can sink into soft surfaces causing the motorcycle to fall. To prevent this, carry a flattened aluminum can or similar rigid object to put under the stand.
•Park the motorcycle in first gear for extra stability, particularly if on an incline.

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Per US Army DODI 6055.4
III. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)
High visibility PPE is required by the military and preferred in all cases. Information on proper fit and function of PPE can be found at the web sites listed below:

http://www.msfusa.org/index_new.cfm?spl=2&action=display&pagename=Library
http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/pedbimot/motorcycle/motosafety.html.

Helmet: Helmets are required by DODI 6055.4, para E3.2.7.1.1. and AR 385-55 Appendix B-3, d. must meet DOD standards at a minimum. Helmets are the single most important item of PPE.
Eye Protection Eye protection is required by DODI 6055.4 para E3.2.7.1.2. and Army Regulation 385-55, Appendix B-3,e.
The following clothing items are required for safe motorcycle operation. All items must meet the requirements listed below:
Jacket: A high-visibility upper garment is required by day and a retro-reflective garment is required at night IAW DODI 6055.4 para E3.2.7.1.5. and Army Regulation 385-55,Appendix B-3,e.
Pants: Pants are required to cover the entire leg IAW DODI 6055.4 para E3.2.7.1.4. and Army Regulation 385-55, Appendix B-3,e. Pants should provide the same protection against abrasion as jackets.
Gloves: Closed-finger gloves are required by DODI 6055.4 para E3.2.7.1.4. and Army Regulation 385-55, Appendix B-3,e. The intent is to protect the rider's fingers from strikes from flying objects. The Glove should be made for motorcycle use. Gloves that are not for motorcycle use provide less grip and protection.
Boots: Over-the-ankle footwear is required IAW DODI 6055.4 para E3.2.7.1.3. and Army Regulation 385-55, Appendix B-3,e. Footwear should be made of sturdy leather and have a good oil-resistant sole to reduce slipping hazards. Army boots meet the requirement.
Rain Suit: Rain suits **are not required** by the military, but

Per Air Force Instruction 91-207
Requirements for motorcycle, motor scooter, and moped operations on Air Force installations and for operation by military personnel off Air Force installations include the following:

• Only operators may ride mopeds--no passengers.
• Headlights must be on unless prohibited by the Status of Forces Agreement or local laws.
• Vehicle must have rear-view mirrors.
• Operator and any passenger must wear a protective helmet

Helmet: Note: Helmets must meet, as a minimum, Department of Transportation (DoT) standards and be properly worn and fastened. Helmets may also meet other standards such as the Snell Memorial Foundation or the American National Standards Institute. If stationed overseas, personnel may use host-nation certified, equivalent helmets.
• To increase visibility of riders, they are encouraged to affix reflective material to their helmets.
Goggles: Operator and any passenger must wear impact resistant goggles or a full-face shield on their helmet.
EXCEPTION: Goggles or a full-face shield are not required for the operator if the motorcycle is equipped with a windshield that is equal in height to or above the top of the helmet of the properly upright-seated operator.
Jacket: Brightly colored or contrasting vest or jacket as an outer upper garment during the day and reflective during the night. Outer upper garment will be clearly visible and not covered.
Long sleeved shirts or jackets
Full-fingered motorcycle gloves or mittens
Long trousers
Footwear: Leather boots or over-the ankle shoes are strongly encouraged.

Motorcycle Mishaps
29 Jan 07 AW2 traveling at excessive speed on motorcycle failed to negotiate turn.
21 Jan 07 SSGT was riding with a group of motorcyclists when he failed to negotiate a turn, struck a guard rail and was hit by the motorcyclist following him.
13 Jan 07 AO3 was killed in a motorcycle mishap.
08 Jan 07 HM2 riding motorcycle at high speed hit the back of an SUV resulting in fatal injuries.
26 Dec 06 Marine lost control of motorcycle, fatally injured.*
24 Dec 06 RP3 involved in a motorcycle accident resulting in a fatality
16 Dec 06 PFC on motorcycle was struck and killed by an SUV.
16 Dec 06 SGT lost control, rolled vehicle. Was ejected and killed.
09 Nov 06 SGT was killed in a single vehicle motorcycle mishap.
05 Nov 06 LT was unable to stop his motorcycle in time to miss stopped vehicle in front him. LT was thrown from motorcycle and hit by oncoming traffic.
04 Nov 06 AOAN riding motorcycle at high speed laid his motorcycle down when he was unable to make a turn resulting in fatal injuries.

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Feedback from GySgt Guy T. Galarza: I just want to say thanks for providing the information. I have 2 Marines who actively ride there motorcycles and I am glad I have this information to ensure they do not become complacent on the road.

Feedback from Freeman Ramey: I am 46 years old and I ride to work on my bike almost year round. I have served 22 years in the Marine Corps and 6 years as civil service. It is a requirement for us to take a motorcycle safety course to ride on base. The problem I have seen more than any other is that drivers in cars pull out in front of motorcycles and drive too close to them. I feel that the Base should have a safety course that all drivers need to attend that teaches motorcycle and car sharing road safety. It should also teach drivers how to be more alert and how to look for motorcycles. We drill motorcycle safety into the motorcycle rider, but not to the car drivers. I also feel that the punishment should be more severe if you are driving a car and you are at fault causing the accident with a motorcycle. I also feel that the punishment needs to be higher if you are caught driving recklessly on a motorcycle.

Feedback from G.W. 'Willie' Simmons: As a Retired Marine, an avid motorcyclist and a MSF Rider Coach I find the most recent article extremely interesting reading and I hope that all Marines take the time to note the important attributes and take always from this article. I would like to share an additional thought for the safety center and the main point is "Perishable Skills".

Throughout my Marine career, I was provided numerous training opportunities (i.e. BST) and not until later in my career did I realize that a great majority of those opportunities were due to the fact that because we do not, in many cases, use some of our developed skills on a daily basis [rifle, pistol, NBC, etc], we need "refresher" opportunities learner center focused to remind us of certain skills that we may have forgotten due to reduced daily use.

I have found from working and supporting motorcycle training over the years, that there too are certain motorcycle riding related skills that tend to perish when not used regularly. From my observations, there are two distinct distracters that I would suggest have as much to do with affecting our military members motorcycle riding skills and these are weather and deployments.

When our military members are not able to ride there motorcycles with some regularity, there are certain very important aspects to motorcycle riding and related skills [Search, Evaluate, Execute (SEE), quick stop and swerve, etc] that I would offer are important skills that require a little practice and reminder as to the importance before feeling truly confident. Although, PPE has proven to be very effective protection during motorcycle crashes, retraining or practicing certain motorcycle riding skills have a great deal of influence in helping riders avoid those instances where they may have rely on their PPE. Anything we can do to do educate and help our Marines is absolutely vital.

Feedback from Randall P Vargas: As a rider that was involved in a accident, I think that maybe a little more training could have prevented my accident; at the same time I couldn't get training until I had my motorcycle, so it was a vicious circle. While TAD in FT Gordon, I notice that the Army had a motorcycle trainer along with 15 or so motorcycles (Honda Rebel) that where provided to the students. They where not top of the line but provided the function. With that, soldiers that were even thinking about buying a motorcycle, could enroll in the class and get the training needed before rolling on the public streets or state highways on their own. Camp Lejeune is a major base for the Marine Corp, and there are several adjacent bases to it, same thing on Camp Pendleton a program similar to this Could get started, make it a monthly thing or depending on the demand from the students. With the issue of Marines not wearing PPE, It's simple, make it an NJP punishable offense, that's one way to make them listen. Make them put their signature on a Document saying that they will wear the P.P.E. required and adhere to the rules and regulations of the states D.M.V. while riding a motorcycle on duty and during liberty. Make it a prerequisite before attending the motorcycle course or when they check into their command. And the same time, we need commands to enforce this policy, if not this is not going to work.

Feedback from Jeremy Pierce: I'm trying to get off-road motorcycle training as it was required when I was assigned to 4th MAW. They had all motorcyclists sign a page 11 that stated if we were hurt without training the Marine Corps would restrict medical benefits and worst case - SGLI. I've scheduled repeatedly to get into a class here at MCAS Miramar only to have my classes cancelled. As a GySgt trying to do the right thing and get required training I am extremely frustrated. I can only imagine what a LCpl would do in my situation. It seems more emphasis is being put on street bike riders vice off roaders as they are larger in number and have more accidents.

Feedback from Gysgt Bounyadeth: Knowledge and training is the most important. Scenarios, scare videos, and a sincere instructor makes the training very effective. Riders don't need the "know it all" cocky instructors, just someone who is sincere about the safety of the riders. Some DoD motorcycle safety courses have those "know it all" cocky instructors, it just throws the passion for learning out the window, and causes the students to just want to get through the course; even if they do not learn anything.