

Talking Myself Out of a **Bad Decision**

By Ens. Steven Howard,
VFA-122

Pensacola drivers are not the best drivers in the world. I always figured they were out there to kill me every day as I headed to the squadron to fly.

As if my daily commute by car wasn't dangerous enough, I recently bought a motorcycle. And although

Navy photo by MC2 Eric J. Rowley



Not having attended a motorcycle-training class like this is one of several reasons the author of this story decided to wait for better conditions before taking his new bike for a spin.

I have only minimal riding experience, I was anxious to break in my new bike.

One Wednesday night, after I had finished studying, I decided to take the bike on its maiden spin. A few days earlier, I had washed and polished my new “toy,” so it was looking good—like it was ready to take to the road. I felt prepared for the next day's flight, so I figured I could afford to kill some time and take the bike around the neighborhood.

While putting on jeans and boots, I applied some ORM to what I was about to do, considering the risks and benefits involved. The new helmet and motorcycle jacket I had ordered the week before weren't supposed to arrive for another day. My thoughts then turned to the kids in my neighborhood, whom I knew ride their skateboards and bikes in the street almost any time of the day or evening. They usually move out of the way of vehicles at their own leisure.

By this time, it already was dusk, and remembering I didn't have a reflective vest and hadn't yet taken the Motorcycle Safety Foundation course, I decided not to ride that night. I would wait until I met all the requirements outlined in the Navy's Traffic Safety Program (OpNavInst 5100.12G). The risks far outweighed the benefits of my going out that night. I hope other novice riders will read my story and do likewise. **S**

The author was assigned to VT-4 when he wrote this story.

Resources:

- Operational Risk Management (ORM), <http://www.safetycenter.navy.mil/orm/default.htm>
- Operational Risk Management Training, <http://safetycenter.navy.mil/orm/articlesormtraining.htm>
- Safety Advice for Novice Motorcycle Riders, <http://www.motorcyclecruiser.com/novices/>.