

MOTORCYCLE SAFETY

Garrison Safety Office

Motorcycles have been around since the 19th century; from the hand crank and steam-powered machines of the past to the rumbling power hogs of today. People are drawn to motorcycles because they are fuel and space efficient but, then there are riders who are drawn by speed and the freedom of cross country riding. No matter the reason it is important riders learn the danger associated with motorcycles.

According to the Combat Readiness Center (CRC) data, there were 34 motorcycle accident fatalities reported last Fiscal Year (FY09) from speeding, inexperienced riders, not wearing the proper protective equipments and lack of control of the motorcycle. These accidents could have been prevented through education and training. Army Regulation (AR) 385-10 chapter 11 and CG Policy Letter 13 states (On SharePoint at <https://rilec2doim002/sites/Garrison> under Safety Office in Public Folders), "Anyone who operates a motorcycle on an Army installation, to include Government-owned motorcycle, shall successfully complete an approved Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) course". It also states the following Personal Protective Equipments (PPE) must be worn while operating or riding as a passenger:

- **Helmet:** U.S Department of Transportation (DOT) approved helmet properly fastened under the chin.
- **Eye Protection:** Impact or shatter resistant goggles, wrap around glasses or full-face shield attached to the helmet that meets the American National Standard (ANSI) Safety Code.
- **Foot Protection:** Leather boots or sturdy over-the-ankle footwear that affords protection for the feet and ankles.
- **Protective Clothing:** Long-sleeved shirt or jacket, long trousers, and full fingered gloves or mittens. Motorcycle jackets and pants constructed of abrasion-resistant materials such as impact absorbing padding are strongly encouraged.
- **Visibility Garments:** For on-road operations, a brightly colored outer upper garment during the day and a reflective upper garment during the night. Military uniforms do not meet this criterion. The outer garment shall be clearly visible and not covered. Items may be worn on top of the outer garment, but they must meet the same visibility requirements of the outer upper garment.

Why do most motorcycle accidents happen? According to the Hurt Study (the most comprehensive motorcycle accident causation factors to date):

- "The failure of motorists to detect and recognize motorcycles in traffic is the predominating cause of motorcycle accidents. The driver of the other vehicle did

not see the motorcycle before the collision, or did not see the motorcycle until too late to avoid the collision."

- "In single vehicle accidents, motorcycle rider error was present as the accident precipitating factor in about two-thirds of the cases, with the typical error being a slide-out and fall due to over-braking or running wide on a curve due to excess speed or under-cornering."
- "More than half of the accident-involved motorcycle riders had less than 5 months experience, although the total street riding experience was almost 3 years."
- "Lack of attention to the driving task is a common factor for the motorcyclist in an accident."

The Fort Riley Garrison Safety Office (GSO) offers a Basic Riders Course (BRC), Experienced Rider Course (ERC) and Military Sport Bike training to all active duty personnel, DoD employees and reservist free of charge. For more information about enrollment, please contact (785) 239-3391 or (785) 239-2514.

Did you know? In Kansas, successful completion of an approved motorcycle rider's education course allows cyclists to waive the skills test when applying for a class "M" endorsement addition to a driver's license.