



Research In Progress

The Effect of Entry-Level Motorcycle Rider Training on Motorcycle Crashes

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Research evidence is mixed with regard to the impact that motorcycle training has on crash avoidance skills. In April 2008, NHTSA held an expert panel with researchers and experts in motorcycle training to determine the feasibility of conducting a study to evaluate motorcycle rider training. A majority of the discussions centered on defining a safe rider so that the appropriate measures can be used to evaluate any effect motorcycle rider training has on crashes. The panel reached a consensus that safe riders conduct aggressive visual searches, have fewer crashes and injuries, wear personal protective gear, successfully manage space and time, minimize impairments, and have proficient operational skills.

The goal of this project is to develop and implement a research plan to investigate the relationship between entry-level rider training, safe riding behavior, and rider crashes. A variety of methods for measuring each characteristic of a safe rider were evaluated in Phase I of the project. Two studies will be conducted to evaluate rider training during Phase II. In a first study, trained and untrained riders will be observed as they ride on an on-road course. Their riding skills will be rated by the observers twice over a 6 month period. In a second study, the State of Maryland's centralized database of motorcycle riders' training, endorsement, violations, crashes, and injuries will be analyzed.

Start Date:	September 21, 2009
End Date:	March, 2015
Contractor:	Cambridge Systematics, Incorporated
Contract Number:	DTNH22-09-C-00124
Total Contract Cost:	\$1,107,767

Last Updated: January 2012