



WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

**Division of Motor Vehicles**

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Earl Ray Tomblin  
Governor

Paul A. Mattox, Jr., P. E.  
Cabinet Secretary

January 21, 2016

The Honorable Clark Barnes, Clerk  
West Virginia Senate  
State Capitol, Room M-211  
1900 Kanawha Boulevard East  
Charleston, WV 25305

The Honorable Steve Harrison, Clerk  
West Virginia House of Delegates  
State Capitol, Room M-212  
1900 Kanawha Boulevard East  
Charleston, WV 25305

Dear Mr. Clerk,

In accordance with the provisions of West Virginia Code §17B-1D-8(b), I am providing a report on the activities related to the Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Program Board in 2015.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or my staff.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Pat Reed", written over a circular blue scribble.

Pat Reed  
Commissioner

/nh

West Virginia Department of Transportation  
Division of Motor Vehicles  
**Governor's Highway Safety Program**  
**Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Program**  
*Harry Anderson, Program Administrator*  
**2015 Report**

To minimize the risk and maximize the fun of motorcycling, the West Virginia Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Program (WVMSP) focuses its efforts on enhancing public motorcycle safety awareness, promoting alcohol and drug effect awareness for motorcyclists, rider improvement, licensing improvement, program promotions, and education.

The Program has a Board of Directors comprised of several individuals from state agencies, law enforcement, and other highway safety programs and advocacy groups.

Additionally, the West Virginia Motorcycle Safety Program has a single vendor, the Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF). The MSF provides motorcycle training, technical assistance, and all the required equipment and training materials to each of the seven training sites located throughout the state. The combination of efforts between the WVMSP and the MSF has reduced the cost of individual training to the lowest in the region and is very cost-effective to the program itself. This training is conducted by "RiderCoaches" that are nationally certified by the MSF. Representatives from the MSF wrote the curriculum that is taught in West Virginia. The motorcycle training contract was due for renewal in FY13. After the purchasing bid process was complete, MSF was awarded the training contract and recently accepted the final option year of the contract that ensured training would run through the FY16 training session.

### **Motorcycle Safety Foundation**

There are currently 61 certified RiderCoaches in West Virginia. Seven of the certified RiderCoaches are site coordinators; one for each of the seven sites around the state. Thirty-one Military RiderCoaches provide the Basic Rider Course (BRC) and Experienced Rider Course (ERC) Training to military personnel.

### **WVMSP Numbers at a Glance**

Motorcycle registrations for FY15 remained steady with just above 70,000 registrations. The Training Program had a 97% pass rate in the BRC and a 100% pass rate in the ERC. RiderCoaches have trained 19,223 students since 2001. There are more than 109,000 drivers in the state that have an "F" (motorcycle) endorsement.

### **Mobile Training Unit**

The total number of motorcyclists enrolled using the mobile training unit was 32. There were 26 individuals who passed mobile training, one who withdrew from the training, one who failed, and four who cancelled. Five classes were taught out of the Program's mobile unit this year in the Romney location. Additionally, the 3 Wheel Basic Rider Course (3WBRC) was



offered on a rider demand basis for the first time in West Virginia. This course was offered twice and a total of 12 students passed the 3WBRC.

If not for the mobile unit, these riders would have needed to travel to a permanent training site causing them to incur the cost of at least two nights in hotel, food, and other travel expenses. The mobile unit allowed these riders, who may not have been able to incur the cost, to become properly trained.

### **FY15 Highlights**

The WVMSP participated in a number of motorcycle-related events and rallies this past year. The McKee's Sky Ranch Vintage Motorcycle Rally in Terra Alta, WV provided an opportunity to project the motorcycle safety message to a unique group of riders who may not have been aware of the WVMSP mission. The event runs concurrently with the annual Mountain Fest Bike Rally, and its close proximity caught many spillover attendees. The McKee's Sky Ranch event included a 70-mile dual sport motorcycle ride that drew more than 50 riders culminating in a safety skills competition that was judged by one of the program's RiderCoaches. Top finishers in these events were awarded a specially designed WVMSP/McKee Sky Ranch challenge coin. The Program also sponsored other regional automotive and motorcycle-themed events such as "River Fest," "Rod Run and Doo Wop," "Dagger's Toy Run," Capitol City FOP , and the Donel C. Kinnard Memorial Run. In FY16, the WVMSP will continue its sponsorship of these events, as well as other regional events across the state to improve its exposure and safety influence on the riding community.

More than \$80,000 of state motorcycle safety funds were spent on radio media packages aired during a variety of the most popular sports programs and news slots heard on up to 20 local stations, throughout the riding season. Additionally, special messages were aired during the non-riding periods of the winter months that reminded riders to focus on bike maintenance so when warmer weather suddenly appears their motorcycles will be "road ready". The FY15 billboard campaign focused on the "Ride Straight" and "Ride with Us First" messages aimed towards motorcyclists, and "Look Once, Look Twice for Motorcycles" aimed towards vehicle motorists. The primary focus of the motorcyclist messages was the enforcement elements of helmet use and impaired-free riding, as well as efforts to encourage potential and future riders to obtain their motorcycle endorsement by taking the BRC prior to experiencing riding on our public roads. The WVMSP actively promotes program goals on the "Cycle Talk" radio program that is aired during the most active 20 weeks of motorcycle riding. This program uses local radio personalities, WVMSP Staff, and select motorcycle safety and technical experts to inform the public on a wide scope of motorcycle-related subjects.

During the month of May, Governor Earl Ray Tomblin issued a proclamation declaring the month of May as Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Month.

### **Program Budget**

The WVMSP is primarily funded as prescribed in WV Code §17B-1D-7, which creates a special designated fund, the "Motorcycle Safety Fund." The fund was established in 2001 and receives all monies from motorcycle endorsement fees, except for \$5.50 from instruction permit fees. It is a special revolving fund that is exempted as part of the state's general revenue fund. Additionally, the WVMSP utilizes residual federal funding from Section 2010 and federal 405(f) funds to operate its programs.

## **SMARTrainer Program**

During FY10, the WVMSP purchased 10 Honda/MSF SMARTrainers (“SMART” Safe Motorcyclist Awareness & Recognition Trainer) through federal funding provided by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Although not a true simulator, a SMARTrainer does create a virtual environment allowing the operator to negotiate road hazards in a safe manner while helping them learn valuable crash avoidance skills. A replay is provided of their riding scenario and gives tips on how they may have avoided hazards.

Novice riders, recent MSF BRC graduates, and experienced riders can all practice in realistic traffic situations that require the operator to evaluate and address traffic hazards in a controlled, risk-free environment using the same motorcycle control functions as on an actual motorcycle. Many users of the SMARTrainer system quickly reevaluate the level of their riding skills and make decisions to seek additional training before attempting some motorcycle riding tasks on their own. Motorists can also benefit from the situational awareness lessons provided by the SMARTrainer.

Used under the guidance of MSF-certified RiderCoaches, the SMARTrainer becomes a powerful teaching tool. Riders gain valuable feedback for the choices they make on the road, helping them identify areas where they can improve their decision-making abilities. This system was used at a variety of automotive, motorcycle and outdoor-themed events throughout the state, gaining the attention of many. During these events, its use and benefits were featured on many local TV news reports, in newspapers, and in one regional monthly motorcycle magazine.

The Program has put SMARTrainers to use in high school Driver’s Education programs, as well as at safety fairs throughout the state. The program will continue throughout FY16.

## **MSP Focus for FY16**

- 1.) Continue to expand training capabilities of the program by helping to recruit, develop, train, and certify additional RiderCoaches.
- 2.) Forge partnerships in rural areas in which additional locations are to be developed, providing additional motorcycle training.
- 3.) Continue to educate both the riding and general public through paid media ads and commercials on radio and television, billboards, handouts, bumper stickers, and sponsored safety events.
- 4.) Educate individual owners of motorcycles that they must have a motorcycle endorsement to legally operate a motorcycle. Additional emphasis will be placed on the motorcycle rider to “ride straight,” free of all intoxicants. The goal is to reduce the number of crashes and fatalities related to alcohol, illicit drugs, prescription, or over-the-counter medications.
- 5.) Be proactive with motorcycle clubs and organizations in developing alcohol-free venues and events.
- 6.) Evaluate and adopt, as required, new MSF Basic RiderCourse standards.

7.) Target motorcyclist awareness, certified helmet enforcement, and enforcement of unendorsed riders.

8.) Train and certify two additional RiderCoaches in the 3 Wheel Basic RiderCourse (3WBRC) and conduct at least three 3WBRC classes across the state based on rider demand.

9.) Produce a new Request for Proposal (RFP) for Motorcycle Training that includes 3WBRC training and keeps course out-of-pocket costs to the West Virginia resident at the \$100 level.