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2021 WV Motorcycle Safety Program Legislative Report

Updated, January 19, 2022

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, and program promotions, through education.

The Motorcycle Safety Program has a Board of Directors comprised of 8 individuals from state agencies, law enforcement, and other highway safety programs and advocacy groups. This make up is established in accordance with West Virginia Code §17B-1D-8.

Additionally, the West Virginia Motorcycle Safety Program has a single training 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 \$100 out of pocket for WV resident riders. 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 re-awarded to MSF in 2018 through the state bid process. After the purchasing bid process was complete, MSF was awarded the training contract on an annual renewable basis for the next three years. 2021 was the last year of the renewable contract, so a new contract will go out for bid in 2022.

Analyzing several years of West Virginia motorcycle crash data revealed that as many as 75% motorcycle operators did not have a motorcycle endorsement in fatal crashes. In 2021 there were 29 fatal motorcycle crashes in WV. Recognizing that professional motorcycle training is key in motorcycle crash avoidance and survival, the Motorcycle Safety Board voted to approve out of state class completions for courses outside of the Motorcycle Safety Foundation curriculum as long as that state used an acceptable introductory rider curriculum that was compliant with provisions in Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. Additionally, the state must have had a National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) approved 405(f) grant application. This compliant public meeting was held on April 10, 2019, with a quorum met.

Motorcycle Safety Foundation

There are currently 55 Certified RiderCoaches in West Virginia eligible to teach the Basic Rider Course (BRC) with 31 of those 55 who teach on a regular basis. Seven of the Certified RiderCoaches are Site Coordinators, one for each of the seven sites around the state. Seven (7) Military RiderCoaches provide the Basic Rider Course (BRC) and Experienced Rider Course (ERC) Training to military personnel.

WVMSP Numbers at a Glance

Due to COVID-19, motorcycle registrations were down for FY 2021 for a total of 32,147. The Training Program had a 98.43% pass rate in the Beginning Rider Course, 100% pass rate in the Experienced Rider Course, and a 100% pass rate in the 3 Wheel Course. RiderCoaches have trained over 20,000 students since 2001. There are more than 129,000 drivers in the state with an "F" (motorcycle) endorsement. Training classes are also offered for the state's rural areas of Romney and Franklin and taught out of the program's mobile unit. The mobile unit also had a pass rate of 100%.

2021 Highlights

The WVMSP participated in multiple motorcycle-related events and rallies this past

year. In June, the Capitol City FOP Bike & Car Show, In July, the McKee 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 Rod Run and Doo Wop was held in October on the Kanawha Boulevard with a great turnout. The Dagger's Toy Run was held in December at an outside venue due to COVID-19; there was a great turnout of motorcyclist to help support the Salvation Army to collect toys for children who are in need. The Program also sponsors other regional automotive or motorcycle themed events such as Donel C. Kinnard Memorial Run and the Capitol stop of the Run for the Wall events, that were cancelled due to COVID-19. For the first time, in September, we sponsored the regional Rider Education Training System (rRETS) MSF Training in Morgantown for all the MSF RiderCoaches in WV and made the training available to surrounding states. By allowing surrounding states to attend, we were able to obtain extra MSF RiderCoaches from VA, PA, and MD to agree to teach in WV in our border classes. In FY 2022, the WVMSP will continue its participation or sponsorship of these events, as well as other regional events across the state, as approved by the board to improve its exposure and safety influence on the riding community.

Additionally, in May, Federal 405f funds in the amount of \$39,973.50 were spent on "Share the Road" messaging focused in areas where motorcycles frequently travel in West Virginia, but the primary focus of this message was to keep it fresh in driver's minds that motorcycles are present and to share the space on the road. Paid media categories used were billboards, Spotify, Radio, Connected TV (CTV), Twitter, and Facebook. From July 1 through September 30, 2021, \$27,230.45 was spent on a campaign with a variety of messages such as "Ride Straight" and "Wear a Helmet". The buys Included Connected TV, Facebook, and Twitter. The campaign yielded 5,682,887 total Impressions.

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 federal 405(f) funds to operate its programs.