

# Ohio

# Motorcycle Safety Strategic Plan

Prepared by

**Ohio Department of Public Safety  
Governor's Highway Safety Office**

# Ohio Motorcycle Safety Strategic Plan

Motorcycle crashes in Ohio have risen from 3,479 in 2000 to 4,155 in 2004. There were 124 motorcyclist fatalities in 2000, 672 motorcyclists have died since 2000 and Ohio's motorcycle fatalities are year-to-date 30 over the same time last year. Clearly, we must do something different than in the past to reverse this deadly trend.

Ohio, like the rest of NHTSA's Great Lake Region states, began investigating the rise in motorcycle crashes in 2004. In fall of 2004, Miami University conducted a telephone survey of Ohio motorcyclists to determine their view on a number of key safety issues. Motorcycle crash statistics have been analyzed to identify issues and crucial demographics that need to be addressed. Two meetings were convened with key stakeholders and a meeting with motorcycle dealer representatives in 2005 to provide input into the development of a plan that it is believed will impact the number and severity of motorcycle crashes in the State.

This plan is data-driven and will take place over a three year period. Federal funds will be the primary funding source for the plan, although several of the stakeholders have indicated that they will also commit resources to assist in the plan's implementation.

## Section 1 - Impaired Riding

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**Objective: Reduce crashes in which motorcyclists are impaired by alcohol or other drugs.**

**Strategy 1: Communications – Create and disseminate effective communications to riders on how alcohol and other drugs affect motorcycle operator skills.**

### **Action steps:**

- The Governor's Highway Safety Office (GHSO) will collaborate with key stakeholders to create messages and materials that motorcyclists will understand and believe.
- GHSO will collaborate with rider group leadership to develop strategies and campaigns for alcohol and drug awareness and promote positive advocacy from within individual rider groups and organizations.
- GHSO will distribute communications through rider groups, rider and local media, motorcycle dealers, motorcycle friendly businesses, and law enforcement media.
- Motorcycle Ohio (MO) staff, Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP) motorcycle officers and liaisons, and MO instructors/Speaker's Bureau members will deliver impaired riding messages to motorcyclists.
- GHSO, rider groups and others will work with motorcycle friendly businesses that serve alcohol to create awareness of server training issues and encourage safe ride home options.

**Strategy 2: Enforcement – Include motorcyclists in effective and well-publicized impaired driving enforcement activities.**

**Action steps:**

- MO will distribute NHTSA's *Detecting DWI Motorcyclists* guide and motorcycle specific law pocket cards to law enforcement agencies.
- GHSO will conduct training sessions on *Detecting DWI Motorcyclists* guide for OVI task forces.
- GHSO law enforcement liaisons will meet with law enforcement agencies in motorcycle crash "hot spots" to encourage an emphasis on officer education, motorcycle enforcement planning, and encourage implementation of available countermeasures.
- GHSO will work with OSHP to offer regional meetings with law enforcement officers focusing on behavioral cues of alcohol-impaired motorcyclists, unlicensed operators, "Failure to Control" OH-1 designation and fake helmet video.
- GHSO will work with law enforcement and rider groups to pilot test a highly visible law enforcement presence at rider events.
- Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS) will develop and disseminate an appropriate amount of motorcyclist-relevant publicity within overall impaired driving publicity.

**Strategy 3: Rider groups – Encourage rider groups to conduct alcohol- and drug-free events.**

**Action steps:**

- GHSO will work with rider group state organizations to seek endorsement and adoption of alcohol- and drug-free events.
- GHSO will encourage local rider groups adopt and abide by alcohol- and drug-free event policy.
- GHSO will encourage rider groups to establish relationships with businesses other than bars for organized rides.

## **Section 2 - Personal Protective Equipment**

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**Objective: Increase the number of motorcyclists who choose to wear helmets and other personal protective equipment.**

**Strategy 1: Education – Educate motorcyclists about the benefits of protective equipment.**

**Action steps:**

- GHSO will collaborate with key stakeholders to develop campaigns and messages that motorcyclists will understand and believe.

- GHSO will collaborate with rider group leadership to develop strategies and campaigns to increase awareness about the benefits of personal protective equipment and promote positive advocacy from within individual rider groups and organizations.
- GHSO will distribute communications through rider groups, rider and local media, motorcycle dealers, motorcycle friendly businesses, local news, and other means.

**Strategy 2: Acceptability – Promote the acceptability of wearing protective equipment through rider groups, motorcycle organizations, and motorcycle dealers.**

**Action steps:**

- MO will work with rider groups to endorse the acceptability of proper protective gear and encourage members to choose to wear proper gear.
- MO will work with motorcycle dealers to promote the use of proper protective gear.

**Strategy 3: Fake helmets – Increase the use of FMVSS 218 compliant helmets through education and promotion.**

**Action steps:**

- MO will communicate the benefits of FMVSS 218 compliant helmets and how they can be identified.
- MO will distribute NHTSA’s fake helmets video to enforcement agencies for use during roll call

## **Section 3 - Training and Education**

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**Objective: Provide motorcycle operator training to all who need or seek it; increase motorcyclists’ knowledge of methods to increase their safety on the road, including awareness of hazards, motorcycle operating techniques, and conspicuity.**

**Strategy 1: Training availability – Expand or reorganize state operator training so that capacity is available to meet demand in a timely manner.**

**Action steps:**

- MO will seek to increase annual appropriations to support increases in training capacity.
- MO will open one new permanent training site annually to increase training capacity.
- MO will continue to work with eligible entities seeking approval as a private provider to expand operator training capacity.

- GHSO will continue to identify and seek to secure other stable dedicated funding sources for MO training.
- GHSO will continue to identify federal funding sources to support motorcyclist education and training.

**Strategy 2: Training promotion – Promote state training classes and availability through dealers, manufacturers, rider groups, rider media, the internet, and other appropriate methods.**

**Action steps:**

- MO will work with rider groups to encourage members to be trained and licensed; and to encourage advanced training.
- MO will encourage motorcycle dealers to promote proper training and licensing at point of sale.
- GHSO will work with the Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) to provide training information when customers are obtaining motorcycle operator learner permits and motorcycle registration plates.

**Strategy 3: Communications – Create and disseminate effective communications campaigns to educate motorcyclists about key issues.**

**Action steps:**

- GHSO will collaborate with key stakeholders to create messages and materials that motorcyclists will understand and believe.
- GHSO will collaborate with rider group leadership to develop strategies and campaigns to increase awareness about the benefits of training for all skill levels and promote positive advocacy from within individual rider groups and organizations.
- GHSO will distribute communications through rider groups, rider and local media, motorcycle dealers, motorcycle friendly businesses, local news, and other means.
- Develop a media kit and speaking points for use by campaign partners during project implementation, for communications with media and rider groups and as material for MO courses.
- MO staff, OSHP motorcycle officers and liaisons, and/or MO instructors/Speaker's Bureau members will attend rider group meetings, functions, and rallies to inform riders of key issues.

## **Section 4 - Licensing**

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**Objective: Ensure that all motorcycle operators riding on public roads are properly licensed.**

**Strategy 1: Promotion – Promote proper licensing to motorcyclists.**

**Action steps:**

- GHSO will promote the advantages of proper licensing through MO staff, OSHP motorcycle officers and liaisons, and/or MO instructors/Speaker's Bureau members, motorcycle dealers, rider groups, rider media, and other appropriate methods.
- MO staff, OSHP motorcycle officers and liaisons, and/or MO instructors/Speaker's Bureau members will promote the potential consequences of operating a motorcycle without a proper license.
- GHSO will work with the BMV to develop a notification letter that will be sent to all non-endorsed motorcycle owners encouraging them to become properly licensed.

**Strategy 2: Enforcement – Actively enforce penalties for operating a motorcycle without a proper license.**

**Action step:**

- GHSO Law Enforcement Liaisons will meet with law enforcement agencies to encourage zero tolerance of improperly licensed motorcyclists.

## **Section 5 - Motorist Education**

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**Objective: Increase motorists' awareness of the presence of motorcycles on the road.**

**Strategy 1: Communications – Educate motorists to be more aware of the presence of motorcyclists.**

**Action steps:**

- GHSO will create and disseminate effective communications to all drivers on motorcyclist awareness.
- GHSO will work with other state agencies that conduct business with the motoring public to encourage the creation and dissemination of effective communications to all drivers on motorcyclist awareness.
- GHSO will work with businesses with fleet drivers to create and disseminate effective communications to employees on motorcyclist awareness.

## **Section 6 - Highway and Environment**

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**Objective: Accommodate the safety needs of motorcyclists in road design, construction, and maintenance.**

**Strategy 1: Signage – Post specific warnings for motorcycle operators where hazardous conditions exist.**

If hazardous permanent roadway features cannot be modified, motorcyclists should be warned of them through appropriate roadside signage.

**Action steps:**

- Inventory potentially hazardous sites and erect appropriate signage.
- Establish and promote communication channels for public to report hazardous sites.

**Strategy 2: Maintenance – Reduce roadway debris; remove slippery sealants and road repair substances.**

Roadway debris can be hazardous to all vehicles but can be especially dangerous to motorcycles. Similarly, slippery repair substances and roadway markings can be dangerous.

**Action steps:**

- Consider motorcyclists' needs in all decisions on roadway maintenance, repair, and construction.
- Establish and promote communication channels for public to report hazardous conditions.

**Strategy 3: Education – Educate road design and maintenance personnel about conditions that pose hazards to motorcycle operators.**

**Action steps:**

- Meet with rider groups to discuss issues of concern.
- Incorporate motorcycle safety as standard component of all training and operations, including routine roadway inspections, hazardous location studies, and traffic control and signage reviews.
- Include county engineers and local road department personnel in discussions and training relating to road design and maintenance conditions that pose hazards to motorcycle operators.
- Develop speaking points to address motorcycle-related issues when designing, constructing and maintaining roadways and provide information to traffic engineers at all levels.

## Section 7 – Partnerships

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**Objective:** Expand partnerships within the motorcycling and traffic safety community to gain support for motorcycle safety programming and initiatives.

**Strategy 1: Cooperative activities – Include the broad motorcycle safety community (rider groups, dealers, law enforcement, motorcycle-friendly businesses) in motorcycle safety planning and implementation activities as appropriate.**

**Action steps:**

- Involve the broad motorcycle safety community to make recommendations on activities and assist with implementation of campaigns and initiatives.
- Include motorcycle safety as an element of the State’s Comprehensive Highway Safety Plan.
- Include motorcycle safety as a topic in a broader range of traffic safety meetings to increase awareness and share issues, programs, strategies, and lessons learned.
- Include motorcycle safety as a topic for a broad range of traffic safety partners in each Ohio LifeSavers conference agenda.
- Seek sponsors to assist with funding and distribution of campaign components.