

MOTORCYCLE SAFETY FUND

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Position Paper

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In a position paper recently submitted to the NTSB Motorcycle Safety Forum, it was stated that “... the greatest single problem in the motorcycle safety arena today is the negligence, distraction and inattentive blindness of automobile drivers.” While it continues to be a valid assertion, we regret to report that the same may not be true about one statistic used to support it. Specifically, recent empirical observations as well as motorcycle crash and fatality statistics released by Colorado, Florida, Massachusetts, North Carolina, South Carolina, Washington state and others indicate that it may no longer be true that “... 50% of all motorcycle accidents are caused by the inattentive blindness of automobile drivers.”¹

In short, although careless, clueless and cell phone-impaired automobile drivers may continue to be the leading cause of motorcycle crashes and fatalities, responsibility for the majority of those accidents and deaths may now fall squarely on our saddles.

While it is apparent that automobile drivers continually state that they “did not see the motorcycle” after a crash, 31.21 percent of all crashes involving motorcycles in 2015 was a rear end crash based on the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) Motor Vehicle Crash Statistics.² Short of wearing a bright

¹ IronButtBruce. (2014). We are killing ourselves. Retrieved January 26, 2017, from http://ldrlongdistancerider.com/motorcyclists_rights/bikersrights0612.php

² ADOT. (2019). 2018 Crash Facts. Arizona Motor Vehicle Crash Facts 2018, 52-57

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neon orange bubble around the motorcyclist, this issue of being distracted enough not to even see a motorcyclist is to be addressed in another venue.

It is a growing epidemic that motorcycle riders in our state do not ride with a valid motorcycle endorsement. According to ADOT, 20-25 percent of all motorcycle fatalities between 2011 and 2015 either had no motorcycle endorsement or it was not valid.

With the lack of proper training, the ability to control a 700-pound motorcycle is a daunting task. In fact, over-steering is one of the leading causes to motorcycle crashes according to ADOT. It takes many hours of training and experience to navigate through the rush hour traffic in the Phoenix metropolitan area.

The working relationship between Arizona Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Foundation (AMSAF) and the Governor's Office of Highway Safety (GoHS) has been a huge opportunity to help educate the motorcycle community through the AMSAF motorcycle training scholarship. These scholarships funded partly by the Motorcycle Safety Fund are enabling motorcyclists in Arizona to be compliant with state laws regarding the proper licensure in order to ride their motorcycle legally on our roads.

In addition to the funds awarded to AMSAF, Motorcycle Safety Fund dollars distributed by the GOHS provides materials and motorcycle awareness training to educate all motorists to the safety concerns of the motorcycle community.³ The

³ https://gohs.az.gov/sites/default/files/media/FY2021_GOHS_Budget_0.pdf

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Governor's Office of Highway Safety utilized \$127,200 in FY2019 according to the GOHS budget. These are dollars well spent.

Education and awareness has been proven to be a factor in reducing the incidents between automobiles and motorcyclists.⁴ It has also been a proven factor in reducing rider errors in crashes as well. We, the motorcycle community, realize that self-education is imperative to keeping us safe on the roads in addition to educating the entire motoring population.

ARIZONA MOTORCYCLE SAFETY FUND HISTORY

In 1981, legislation was passed (SB1341), adding an additional \$1 to every motorcycle registration (ARS 28-205) which was placed into a Motorcycle Education Fund (currently ARS 28-2003). The 'director' (ADOT) was to use those monies to implement a motorcycle testing program and a voluntary motorcycle education program. The 'director' was allowed to use public and private agencies to implement the education program.

In the mid to late 1990's an ad-hoc Motorcycle Advisory Council was brought about by town hall meetings. This council was named State Motorcycle Safety Advisory Council (SMSAC), which was made up of representatives from the SMRO's, GoldWing Riders, Law Enforcement, Motorcycle Businesses and Rider Education third parties. The state MRO representatives met and worked with MVD

⁴ <https://www.nhtsa.gov/road-safety/motorcycle-safety>

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on a regular basis, to recommend various ways for MVD to spend that money in the promotion of Motorcycle Safety and Awareness. The council wrote vision statements and guidelines etc. The ad-hoc council continually questioned MVD as to how the approximately \$80,000 a year was and had been being used towards motorcycle safety and awareness. They could not account for one dime of it. Dedicated funds had since been eliminated, and it seemed the monies were lost in the MVD's general fund, and being used for who knows what. The council found that there was only possibly a few MVD sites that still did motorcycle training

In 2001, the motorcycle lobbyists introduced and passed legislation to re-establish a dedicated Motorcycle Safety Fund (MSF).

In 2002, MVD suggested the council 'hire' a MVD employee and pay them \$40,000 a year to watch over the other \$40,000. A few of our friendly legislators thought that was the dumbest idea they had ever heard. The motorcycle lobbyists at that time met with John Carlson (Governor's office) and State Representative Cooley, to draft, introduce and pass legislation to legislatively appropriate the \$80,000. The language was amended (ARS 28-2010) to move the newly dedicated motorcycle safety fund (2001) under the realm of the GOHS, and established a 5 person Governor appointed Arizona Motorcycle Safety Advisory Council (AMSAC). The original Motorcycle Safety Fund was capped at \$150,000, which was later removed through a Legislative Bill revising ARS. 28-2010.

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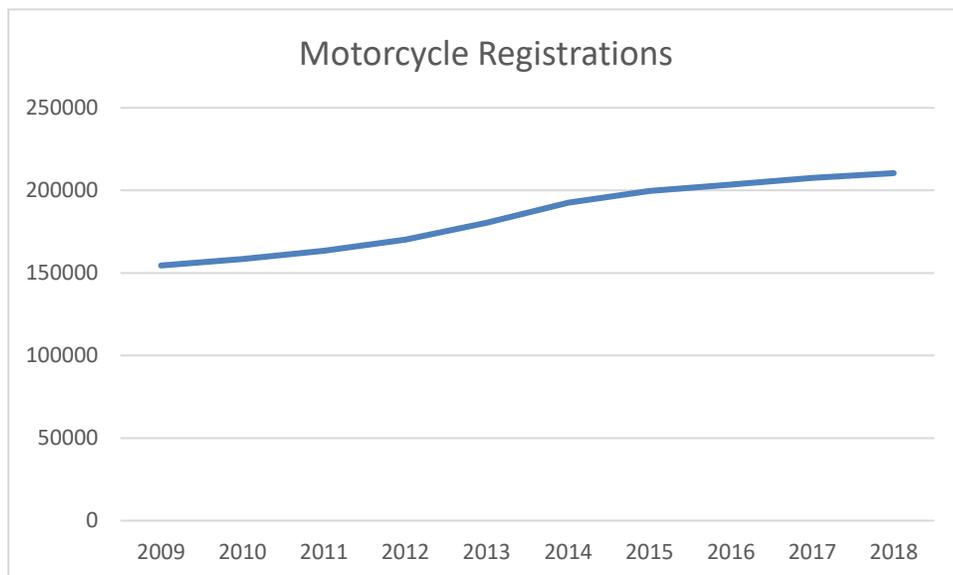
2007 – Bill passed to remove the \$150,000 Cap from Motorcycle Safety Fund.

2009 – Bill passed to extend the sunset of the Motorcycle Safety Fund and AMSAC to 2016.

2016 – Senator Fann introduced and championed the extension of the Motorcycle Safety Fund and the removal of AMSAC.

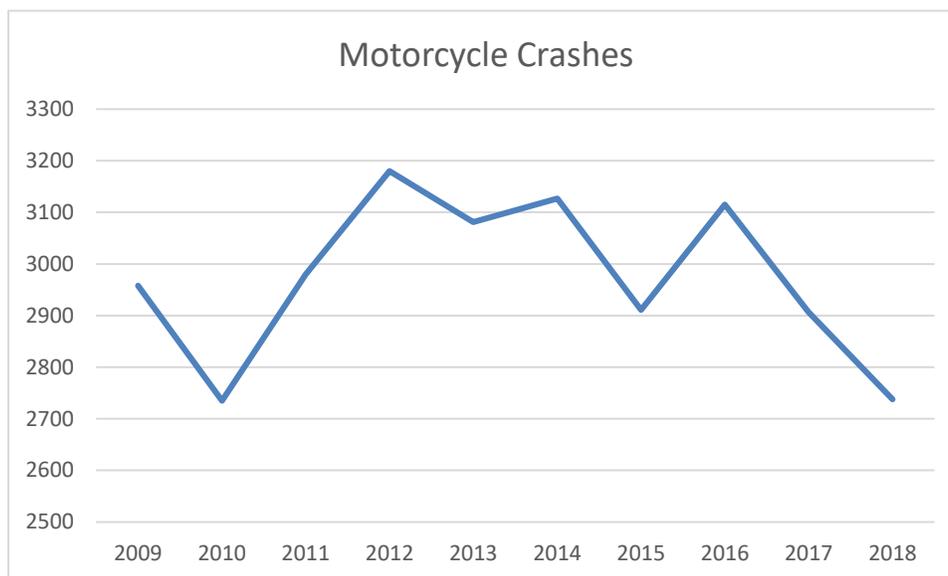
In 2009, Jan Brewer became Governor and with the extension of the fund in 2016, the fund has helped extraordinary in the safety and awareness aspect of motorcycling.

MOTORCYCLE REGISTRATIONS



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MOTORCYCLE CRASHES



As can be seen by the statistics from ADOT⁵, since the implementation of scholarships that are subsidized by the Motorcycle Safety Fund, motorcycle crashes have decreased while registrations have steadily increased. While this cannot be directly related to the scholarships and riding courses, we do believe that those along with the motorcycle safety projects from the Governor’s Office of Highway Safety have helped with the general awareness to “Share the Road” and “Look Twice for Motorcycles”.

The following two tables were retrieved from NHTSA and are just a quick snapshot of how the motorcycle safety fund dollars are utilized.

⁵ <https://azdot.gov/motor-vehicles/statistics/arizona-motor-vehicle-crash-facts>

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State of Arizona Highway Safety Annual Report FFY 2014

Table 3.13 FFY 2014 Motorcycle Safety Projects

Task Area	Project Number	Grantee	Related Performance Measure(s)	Funding Source(s)	Funds Spent (FFY 2014)	Task Status
Motorcycle Enforcement Overtime	2014-MC-001	Phoenix PD	Number of motorcycle fatalities. Number of unhelmeted motorcycle fatalities.	Sec. 402	\$16,703.96	Completed ●
Motorcycle Safety Training	2014-405f-001	Arizona Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Foundation	Number of motorcycle fatalities. Number of unhelmeted motorcycle fatalities.	Sec. 405	\$0.00	Cancelled ⊗
	2014-2010-001	Peoria PD		Sec. 2010	\$7,221.15	Completed ●
	2014-2010-002	Arizona Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Foundation		Sec. 2010	\$87,468.21	Completed ●
Motorcycle Safety Awareness	2014-2010-521	GOHS – Paid Media	Number of motorcycle fatalities. Number of unhelmeted motorcycle fatalities.	Sec. 2010	\$150,000.00	Completed ●
GOHS Annual Survey – Motorcycle Helmet Use	2014-MC-520	GOHS – Motorcycle Helmet Use Survey	Number of motorcycle fatalities. Number of unhelmeted motorcycle fatalities.	Sec. 402	\$0.00	Cancelled ⊗
Total Funds Spent (Motorcycle Safety)					\$261,393.32	

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Table 3.10 FFY 2017 Motorcycle Safety Projects

Related Performance Measure(s)

Number of motorcycle fatalities.
Number of unhelmeted motorcycle fatalities.

Task Area	Grantee	Project Number	Funding Source(s)	Funds Obligated	Funds Spent (FFY 2017)
Motorcycle Enforcement Overtime	Phoenix PD	2017-MC-003	Sec. 402	\$25,000.00	\$24,970.10
Motorcycle Safety Training and Awareness	Chandler PD	2017-MC-001	Sec. 402	\$16,500.00	16,057.02
	Peoria PD	2017-MC-002	Sec. 402	\$8,945.00	\$8,945.00
	AMSAF	2017-405f-001	Sec. 405f	\$100,000.00	\$0.00*
	GOHS Paid Media	2017-405f-500	Sec. 405f	\$102,000.00	\$91,842.98
	Total Funds Spent (Motorcycle Safety)				\$252,445.00

* Project 2017-405f-001 was not implemented nor awarded as it was paid for out of state funds.

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⁶ <https://www.nhtsa.gov/sites/nhtsa.dot.gov/files/az-fy2014ar.pdf>

⁷ https://www.nhtsa.gov/sites/nhtsa.dot.gov/files/documents/arizona_fy_2017_ar.pdf

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TALKING POINTS

- Safety and Education is the most effective means to reduce motorcycle crashes.
- Education and awareness has been proven to be a factor in reducing the incidents between automobiles and motorcyclists.
- Over 2000 Basic Rider Course scholarships have been awarded to Arizona motorcyclists in the past few years.
- Teen driver programs are given at local high schools teaching the need to be aware of motorcyclists
- All the funds from the Motorcycle Safety Fund go towards safety, awareness and education.

CONCLUSION

The Motorcycle Safety Fund has been a critical addition to the safety, awareness and education of motorists to help keep motorcyclists safer on Arizona roadways and should continue. We are asking for your yes vote when it comes to a floor vote.

On behalf of the 300,000 plus motorcyclists in Arizona, thank you.