

Texas Motorcycle Safety Coalition Meeting Minutes November 14, 2019



Texas A&M Transportation Institute
TTI Headquarters Building, Room 2101
10:00 am - 3:00 pm

Highlights

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Opening Remarks and New Member Introduction

TMSC Board Chair Chris Beireis opened the meeting and invited everyone present to introduce themselves.

TxDOT Update

Mike Manser told the group that TxDOT has just released the request for proposals for next year's safety grants, including motorcycle safety efforts. If anyone has ideas for ways to improve motorcycle safety, feel free to apply for a grant. The information on applying is provided at the end of the minutes.

Motorcycle Training and TDLR Update

Mike Arismendez of TDLR provided an update on the Motorcycle/ATV Safety Advisory Board – they are currently accepting applications to be on the board, until the end of November. The first meeting of the Board is planned for late February or early March of 2020; more details will be finalized soon. The first task will be assigning work groups. Staff will be meeting with the work groups to establish the activities that need to happen first. Will move the program to TDLR by September 1, 2020 as-is; then will learn, collect data, understand the program before making any changes. Latest TDLR/DPS meeting on the transition recently took place.

TDLR.texas.gov – Advisory Board application can be found there. Homepage provides a place to sign up for TDLR updates (motorcycle listserv is not available yet, but will be available after the advisory board is selected).

Advisory Board – will meet in Austin. Nine position: three members representing a licensing/training school; one member representing dealers, one representing law enforcement; one TTI, one TEEEX, 2 who hold a valid class M license. Question: is there any way to add a representative of emergency services? Answer: that's a legislative change; advocacy for this must come from the TMSC. Information relating to the advisory board and program transfer is found in Senate Bill 616.

Training and Licensing Project Update

Paige Ericson-Graber presented an update of the TxDOT Safety Grant-sponsored project. The project was started to address the high percentage of unlicensed motorcycle rider fatalities. The project reached out to other states to see if there were similar injury/fatality rates with unlicensed riders.

A rider survey in Texas had over 700 responses, representing 110 counties in Texas including the top 30 most populated counties. The TMSC provided feedback on the survey questions. The survey was posted on LLL, and was also shared with motorcycle clubs through social media. The survey was anonymous. Highlights of the survey responses included the following:

- Almost 90% of those surveyed had a Class M endorsement.
- Almost 80% of the unlicensed respondents never had a Class M license.
- What would convince you to get a Class M?
 - Financial Aid – expensive to take the course
 - Training-related factors; scheduling of courses, other formats (e.g. classroom portion online), etc.
 - Education/outreach on reasons to get licensed
- Some misinformation out there, from survey comments, for example:
 - Don't need a license unless you ride without a helmet.
 - I have a class CDL and can operate anything street legal – don't need a Class M
- Most licensed riders responding to the survey were aware of the intermediate motorcycle course as an option to get a Class M endorsement; most unlicensed riders were unaware of the intermediate course.

Interviews with other states collected information on their own efforts to increase the number of licensed riders. These include public and targeted outreach efforts, legal penalties for unlicensed riders, and lower course costs.

This year's project will create a link between the TxDMV and TxDPS datasets to get a better idea of the total number of unlicensed riders, and send out postcards to unlicensed riders to encourage them to take the course. The proposed project (not yet approved/funded) for next year would evaluate the effects of the mailing campaign, and hopefully fund training for 50 riders who would then be interviewed about their experience.

Comments from the meeting attendees addressed issues like reluctance of old-time riders to be in a class with new riders, the advantage of taking the class for improving your safety (even for an experienced rider), and the added advantage of an insurance discount. Chris Beireis asked if the survey could be put back into the field to collect additional responses; Paige said that it's not in the field this year, but could potentially be put back into the field next year if this project happens to be funded again. A suggestion was received to use the potential funding of training as an incentive to take the survey, if another year of the project is funded. Another suggestion was to contact potential outreach recipients electronically rather than (or in addition to) by postcard. A longer-term study group of riders could also be a valuable source of data. Have you considered paying part of the training fee for more riders instead of paying the whole cost for a few? Sometimes when someone gets something completely free, they may not value it and may not show up; if they have some skin in the game, they're more likely to follow through (or, maybe they get a refund of their part of the fee after they complete the course).

Video Development Discussion

Gretchen Stoeltje of TTI introduced a set of topics for small group discussion – what types of outreach messages should we develop this year to address motorcycle safety issues?

Attendees split into small groups to discuss 13 potential messages and provide feedback to Gretchen and TTI for developing the outreach videos.

LLL Website Update

Mike Manser handed out a list of questions about the Look Learn Live website, for members to provide feedback on what should be included and considered in the upcoming redesign and update of the site. He asked that attendees fill out their answers to the questions and turn in the form at the end of the meeting.

Alcohol-Related Crashes – Statistics

Mike Manser presented a summary of some in-depth analysis of data about motorcycle crashes where alcohol was a contributing factor.

- From 2010-2018, fatalities and suspected serious injuries (SSI) among motorcyclists have remained very stable in number (about 500 fatalities per year; about 2000 SSI's per year). The number of MC passenger (as opposed to operator) fatalities has decreased somewhat recently.
- Motorcycle fatalities represent a high proportion of total traffic fatalities and SSIs (about 20%) in Texas.
- Per 100,000 population, MC Rider Fatality Rate has been between 1.42 and 1.89, compared to between 8.19 and 9.31 for automobile drivers.
- Per 100,000 population, MC Rider SSI Rate has been between 7.29 and 6.57, compared to between 48.47 and 39.30 for automobile drivers.
- Average BAC for motorcycle operators involved in fatal crashes has been between 0.131 and 0.158. For MC operators involved in SSI crashes, average BAC has been between 0.144 and 0.161. This does not include drug-impaired individuals. Some smaller counties and towns may

also be somewhat underreported, due to lack of resources for reporting test results (especially results that came in later). Fatalities are attributed to a crash in the data only if they happen within 30 days of the crash.

- Percent of MC and automobile drivers who were impaired at the time of the crash, 2010-2018:
 - Fatal MC – between 38 and 43%
 - Fatal automobile – between 12 and 16%

Mike reviewed some of the discussion from the last meeting, such as the idea of sending letters to dealerships encouraging them to offer alcohol-free events and promotions. Marcie Perez of TTI is continuing to add detail to this analysis and results will be reported at future meetings. Suggestions from the group included:

- Alcohol consumption seems to be pretty consistent between automobile drivers and motorcycle riders. Maybe look to other states to see if any have experienced a decrease in DUI crashes and injuries and if so, what helped to drive that?
- How does Texas rate as compared to other states? Answer: Texas ranks as a mid-tier state for alcohol-related traffic injuries. There are some states that are moving in the right direction; many are smaller states. It's hard to see a major change in behavior, because there are so many factors involved. Might be some reductions in local areas due to the availability of Uber/Lyft-type services.
- If we can find a state that has achieved even a small reduction, would be good to see what they tried.
- Has anyone looked at the involvement of habitual DUI drivers in these crashes, versus drivers who do not have a previous DUI in their record?
- Has anyone looked at demographic factors in DUI crashes among motorcycle riders?
- Numbers versus population is showing a downward trend, even though population is rising, so that may be something interesting to look at.
- Have you figured out what times of year the automobile vs. motorcycle deaths are occurring? Yes, this was looked at in the previous crash analysis on LLL, at least for motorcycles.
- Have you looked at crashes/injuries around big motorcycle events like Lone Star, Rot Rally, etc. Yes, there tends to be a slight increase in the local area around those events. Response: might still be a good localized place to concentrate a little outreach while the event is going on. Can we determine where the rider was coming from? (Answer: very difficult to find any info on this, or on experience/history of the rider.)
- Any breakdown by type of bike? Answer: can get some bike type info from crash reports, for deeper analyses can get information from VIN. Cruisers #1, Sport Bike #2 in crash representation. But even the descriptions of the bikes can sometimes overlap.
- Mike summarized how TTI gets some of the data types:
 - CRIS (statewide) or FARS (national) crash report data- basics are coded, more details in narrative about the crash itself, but not a lot of history of the rider.
 - Survey data can get at some more information about who's riding what type of bike, demographics, etc., but that can't be matched with crash data

- Is there a way to go through crash fatalities and match them to training data? Answer: TTI did this on an exploratory level a few years ago; had three years of training data and six years of crash data, but it was difficult to line up the two data sets and there was limited time to do it. Can be done, with time and access to training data. This access is difficult to get for political/institutional reasons.

2020 Forum Planning

Mike announced that the Forum will be held on February 22 in Kerrville, Texas. The announcement will be out soon; please share it with people you know and on your social media (if any) to get the word out!

We should have the registration page up during the next few days. Registration is free! We have a special rate at the YO Ranch in Kerrville of \$79 per night for the night before and the night of the event.

Lee Parks will be one of the keynote speakers. We are moving away from the more scientific presentations this year and toward more practical information for riders. Alcohol has been an important topic for the TMSC and will be the topic a couple of breakout sessions; curve safety and hazard perception are other session topics that are tentatively planned. Breakout sessions will have a short time for a speaker, followed by discussion time.

Lots of interactive sessions are planned for the afternoon. EMS and crash site management will again be a topic this year, along with vision and its role in riding. We are also planning some demonstrations with motorcycle trainers – let us know if there are motorcycle handling topics you'd like to have included in the demonstrations.

The day will finish with updates and announcements from TDLR, TxDOT, and others.

Comments:

- Like the interactive approach.
- "Ride Like a Pro" course from Sugarland – might be willing to help out with the demos
- Would there be vendors/booths? We would like to have some vendors there, but because of the rules around state-funded events is that they can't sell their merchandise at the event, but they can provide information, sign people up for a raffle, etc.; nonprofits are also welcome. Any help from TMSC members in getting vendors would be appreciated!
- If you're looking to increase participation by riders, this is the right approach. A demonstration similar to "SMIDSY" might be good: this is a British program called "Sorry, mate, I didn't see you! (SMIDSY)" – emphasizes actions a rider can take to be more conspicuous. Jude Schexnyder and Chris Beireis both volunteered to put on this type of demonstration.
- Additional demo/session topics and other input from attendees included the following:
 - Head and spine stabilization after a crash; good "first step" first-aid techniques. Return of Road Guardians?
 - Keep first aid techniques at layperson level.

- What type of kit to carry for first aid/crash scene management?
- Stop the Bleed – adaptation of army field first aid
- Vendors showing riding techniques between riding different types of bikes, so that riders who are thinking of branching out have a better idea of how they will have to change their riding techniques? Safety on Two Wheels in Houston can offer this type of demo. (SO2W.org) Can-Am BRP to do demo rides? Tie the demos in to an educational component.
- Friend of Lee Parks – called Fast Eddie (Greg Widmar) has a motorcycle safety club called Moto-gitsu. Start off with low-speed exercise (white belt) all the way up to very difficult/complicated maneuvers (black belt). If he could come with Lee Parks and do some parking lot demos?
- Simulator – Safety on Two Wheels has one and will bring it.
- How many vendors can we accommodate? Probably 15-20 booths inside. Maybe send out flyers to dealerships? TTI will design a flyer inviting vendors to participate in the Forum, and distribute it to TMSC members on Constant Contact.

TMSC Safety Award

Mike mentioned this as a follow-up to last meeting's discussion on ways to encourage dealers who offer alcohol-free events, and asked the group if this something they would like to pursue this year. The group agreed to discuss further, take some time to get it right, and maybe award it next year.

Open Discussion and Adjournment

Topics raised during open discussion included the following:

- Trainer from Lackland – far fewer riders from the air force base have been dying in the last year versus earlier years. This may be in part because of the increased requirements for and availability of motorcycle training on base. Since the standards were put in, deaths have gone down dramatically.
- Question to everyone: we've had a lot of MC curriculum changes and very few law changes. There's still a law on the books (TRC 545.416) about not raising off your motorcycle seat, but we're teaching that as a technique in the course. Need to see about changing this law. How do we go about doing that?
 - Jude Schexnyder took that information and will follow up with the commenter.
- Reminder from a member to promote TMSC events and participate in other outreach efforts. Promote, promote, promote!
- Any word if we're going to have a state instructor conference this year? No word yet.
- "Checking in" on Facebook/social media is one way of promoting the TMSC and its work

The meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

Notice of Vacancies on Motorcycle Safety Advisory Board

10/17/2019

OCTOBER 17, 2019

The Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (Department) announces vacancies on the Motorcycle Safety Advisory Board (Board) established by the Transportation Code, Chapter 662.001. The purpose of the Motorcycle Safety Advisory Board is to advise the Texas Commission on Licensing and Regulation and the Department on rules and educational and technical matters relevant to the administration of this chapter.

The Board consists of nine members appointed by the presiding officer of the commission, with the approval of the commission. The advisory board consists of the following members:

- (1) three members: (a) each of whom must be a licensed instructor or represent a licensed motorcycle school; (b) who must collectively represent the diversity in size and type of the motorcycle schools licensed under this chapter;
- (2) one member who represents the motorcycle dealer retail industry;
- (3) one representative of a law enforcement agency;
- (4) one representative of the Texas A&M Transportation Institute;
- (5) one representative of the Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service; and
- (6) two public members who hold a valid Class M driver's license issued under Chapter 521;

Members serve staggered six-year terms. The terms of three members expire September 1 of each odd-numbered year. The presiding officer of the commission, on

approval of the commission, shall designate a member of the advisory board to serve as the presiding officer of the advisory board for a one-year term. The presiding officer of the advisory board may vote on any matter before the advisory board.

The advisory board shall meet at the call of the executive director or the presiding officer of the commission. An advisory board member may not receive compensation for service on the advisory board but is entitled to reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses incurred in performing the functions as a member of the advisory board, subject to the General Appropriations Act.

Interested persons should [submit an application](#) on the Department website. Applicants can also request an application from the Department by telephone (800) 803-9202, fax (512) 475-2874 or e-mail advisory.boards@tdlr.texas.gov.

Issued in Austin, Texas on October 11, 2019.

Brian Francis
Executive Director
Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation

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