

Texas Motorcycle Safety Coalition Meeting Minutes



March 31, 2023

City Of San Marcos Conference Center

Opening Remarks & Introductions (Maurice Maness)

Maurice Maness welcomed everyone to the meeting. Everyone introduced themselves.

Task Force update (Cathy Brooks)

Cathy Brooks reviewed the work that the TMSC Task Force is doing. The objective for this fiscal year is to identify ten motorcycle safety initiatives that could be considered for future grant funding. A survey has been sent out to Task Force members including the ideas generated in the first meeting and a request for additional ideas. Another survey will go out in April asking members to rank the ideas within each of the Countermeasure categories. The next Task Force meeting will be set to review the ranking and settle on the top ten recommendations to be sent to TxDOT. The Task Force has room for additional members, so if you are interested in participating in that effort, contact Cathy at c-brooks@tti.tamu.edu.

Data to Drive Safety (Cody Stewart)

Cody Stewart from TTI showed attendees the public online crash data tool, C.R.I.S. Query. CRIS Query (<https://cris.dot.state.tx.us/public/Query/app/home>) is a way to find and filter Texas crash data to answer specific questions. He then reviewed crash data using a Power BI developed by TTI's Crash Analytics team, and showed attendees where to access data analysis reports on LookLearnLive.org (<https://www.looklearnlive.org/resources/data/>).

Data highlights included the following:

- Fatal crashes have increased since 2020, for motorcycles but also across the board.
- Motorcycle crashes typically peak in the summer months, and decrease during the winter.
- In 2022, 58% of crash involved riders were wearing a helmet. Alcohol-involved riders were at about 50% in helmet use.
- About 56% of crashes in 2022 were speed-related.

- Of crash-involved riders, 45% licensed and 51% unlicensed. About 83% of riders in Texas are licensed, so this is an overrepresentation of unlicensed riders involved in crashes.
- Around 46% of crashes in 2022 were single-vehicle.
- Age and gender – vast majority of fatalities (96%) are male. Crashes are high in 21-25 year age range; again in 40s. One reason for the increase in crashes in middle-age may be riders who are coming back to riding after years away.

Questions from attendees:

- Do we know how many of the crash-involved riders had training? *Answer:* There's no one easy way to check for training status. Since 2009, the path to motorcycle licensing in Texas is by completing a motorcycle safety course, but many people got their license before then, or got their license in another state. Cody will be speaking more about what his team has learned about unlicensed riding in Texas at tomorrow's Forum.
- Is there a relationship between an increase in unlicensed riders and increased crash rates? *Answer:* Likely yes.

Maurice reminded attendees that these data tell some stories about the biggest problems contributing to fatalities in the motorcycling community.

Legislative Update

Jude Schexnyder provided an update to motorcycle-related legislation that has been submitted to the Texas State Legislature during this year's session.

- HB 230 (Gang Database bill) has been referred to the Homeland Security and Public Safety committee but has not had a hearing.
- HB 258 Motorcycle Profiling bill has been referred to the same committee but again has not been scheduled for a hearing.
- HB 2465 Lane splitting bill has been referred to House Transportation committee but has not had a hearing. HB 4122 is anti-lane splitting bill that has been referred to House Transportation but has not had a hearing.
- SB 478 is the Motorcycle Safety program bill. It has had a hearing and passed unanimously in Senate Transportation and has been placed on the consent calendar. It should be voted off the Senate floor soon and go to the House Transportation. This bill would remove TEEEX from oversight of Instructor Training but unfortunately would also kill the motorcycle safety grant program before it even starts.

The State Legislature has a web page where you can track progress of bills, text of bills, etc. If you sign up for the mailing list, it will send you email notifications when things change. Instructions for looking up bills and signing up for email updates on bills that you are interested in are here: <https://capitol.texas.gov/resources/FollowABill.aspx>

STOP Impaired Riding Toolkit (Laura Higgins)

Laura Higgins from TTI presented the current version of the Motorcycle Stakeholder Toolkit for Preventing Impaired Riding that TMSC members helped to develop in FY22, and discussed plans for Tool Kit updates and outreach material development in FY 2023.

- Tool Kit updates:
 - Change to the recommendation for riders to check with their insurance providers about the possibility of roadside assistance in the event of rider impairment. After interviewing representatives of numerous insurance providers, the consensus is that roadside assistance reimbursement through insurance is possible only in the case of a disabled motorcycle.
 - Add information about laws pertaining to free and BYOB alcohol served at events by businesses/organizations without a liquor license, and link to training resources for servers.
 - Additional examples of peer intervention strategies from clubs and individual riders.
- Outreach materials for FY24:
 - 4 new videos
 - New graphics for online/print messages

The Tool Kit and other materials are online at <https://www.looklearnlive.org/safety/preventing-impaired-riding/>. New materials will be added there as they are completed.

Announcements and Open Forum (open)

1. TMSC meeting, August 17 (in-person-hybrid?).
2. Events and Outreach: Final event is **EarthX2023 April 19-23** in Dallas.
3. TxDOT Strategic Communities/update contact information – Please update your TMSC contact information: [Online Survey Link](#). You can receive a TMSC patch when you provide sign-up for emails and add your zip code.
4. Ask for your TxDOT Traffic Safety Specialist (TSS) (they are your best contact for yard signs) and District Traffic Safety Coalitions: <https://www.txdot.gov/about/districts.html>. Each TSS is supposed to hold one motorcycle safety event per year, and they would welcome your help!
5. If you are doing promotional events in your area, contact Cathy (c-brooks@tti.tamu.edu) for any printed materials to hand out. Cathy will have a selection of materials available for pickup at the Forum tomorrow.
6. TTI is looking for riders to participate in a focus group discussion to review some upcoming outreach materials for recruiting new motorcycle safety instructors. A sign-up sheet was available at the meeting; if you did not get a chance to sign up and would like to be contacted about participating in that discussion, contact Laura Higgins at L-Higgins@tti.tamu.edu

7. Mike Sconza announced that Ford Strawn from TDLR will be at the Forum on April 1 to bring more news from the legislature.
8. Questions:
 - With the current need for new rider coaches, has there been a consideration of doing away with the two-year riding experience requirement? *Answer from Keith Rovell:* that 2-year requirement is still in the new bill, despite efforts to do away with it. Mike Sconza provided his contact info for anyone needing assistance with that process.
 - Has there been any thought process on allowing out-of-state coaches to coach in Texas? *Answer from Maurice Maness:* That process has been improved recently, to eliminate some of the hurdles involved in certifying out-of-state coaches, but there are still some barriers, including the requirement for a Texas state Instructor license through TDLR.
 - Is there a push for motorcycle license students under 18 not to have to go to DPS to test? Could that be requested? It's an extra burden on parents and students. *Answer from Maurice Maness:* I think it's a case of it being a small population of licensees, so no one's in a hurry to change it. *Cathy Brooks:* We can add educating DPS on the value of changing this rule to the list of Initiatives for the Task Force to review.
9. Adjourn (Maurice M.) - The meeting adjourned at 4:05 pm.