

Texas Motorcycle Safety Coalition Meeting Notes



August 17, 2023, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Texas A&M Transportation Institute Headquarters

Opening Remarks & Introductions

Maurice Maness, Coalition Chair, opened the meeting by welcoming everyone in person and online. Each attendee introduced themselves and how they are a motorcyclist safety stakeholder.

Task Force update

June Schexnyder, Task Force Chair, shared outcomes of work done by the Task Force this year and what laws changed that effect motorcycling and motorcyclist safety in this year's legislative session.

Motorcyclist Safety Initiatives

The list of initiatives was approved by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and will be distributed to the Coalition email list and TxDOT Traffic Safety Specialist (TSS). The list is intended to provide ideas for future project planning. Initiatives include:

- Improve data sharing (i.e., crash, registration, licensing, and training) – we can't solve the problem unless we understand the problem.
- Expand TMSC membership – more people at table more people can help to share solutions and come up with new ideas.
- Improve motorcyclist awareness within driver education - address the human factors of drivers not seeing motorcycles as easily and requirements for motorcycle licensing.
- Research motorcycle training funding -
 - Funding mechanisms and management
 - Training subsidies and cost offsets for schools and trainers
 - What is done in other states?
- Involve motorcycle dealers in safety efforts.
- Consider motorcycles in roadside barrier designs – what protects the rider.
- Involve influencers who are riders e.g., Keanu Reeves in motorcyclist safety outreach.
- Research benefits of lane filtering/ splitting to educate law enforcement and legislators.

- Outreach on penalties for riding without a license – for riders, partnering with law enforcement, and municipal and county judges.
- Prepare motorcyclist safety toolkit for TSS – identify and update current materials and fill gaps as needed.

Legislative update

Many motorcycle/motorcyclists related bills were introduced in the 88th legislature. Profiling and getting a database made no progress. Three motorcycle related bills did pass.

- House Bill 3297 – eliminates safety inspection for noncommercial motor vehicles – if motorcycle is noncommercial motor vehicle it doesn't require safety inspection (like cars and truck) unless you are in emissions county.
 - Motorcycles have been exempted from emissions testing, so they “may” be fully exempt.
 - Fee will not go away; Safety inspection fee is still being collected will be added to registration fee. Effective January 1, 2025.
- House Bill 4122 – allows motorcycle full use of lane.
 - Disallows cars etc. from crowding motorcycles to pass.
 - Disallows traffic filtering or lane splitting, except by on-duty law enforcement.
 - Research on lane filtering or lane splitting prior to the next legislative session can be used to educate.
 - Educating legislature and law enforcement are equally important.
- Senate bill 479 – removes TEEX from oversight of motorcycle instructor training.
 - Returns instructor training to free market.
 - Motorcycle safety grant program was removed. The question again is how one can possibly access and utilize this funding to defer the costs of motorcyclists and instructor training.
 - Effective date January 1, 2024.

Support

TMSC and TMSC Task Force need more active members. Can get lot more funds/ideas and opinions from all different aspect from the community. That was the original vision for TMSC – to apply positively to motorcyclist safety.

Contact Jude with questions: judeschex@gmail.com

“Unlicensed to Ride” Project Update

Cody Stewart is a researcher at TTI, a rider, and a motorcycle track instructor. He shared an update on the project that started back in 2019 to encourage unlicensed riders to get training (and licensed). C-Stewart@tti.tamu.edu

A problem in Texas

- 535 motorcycle operator fatalities.
- 297 were unlicensed – suspended or no license or no MC endorsement.
- 56% of motorcyclist fatalities were unlicensed.
- Compared to cars/trucks where 16% drivers involved in fatalities are unlicensed

TTI and TxDOT goal – To encourage riders to take rider safety training and continue a culture of rider safety in Texas.

- Important to get the training rather than just the license.
 - Having the license doesn't naturally mean safe riders.
- In other states motorcycle will get towed if you don't have license and police in Texas don't like that – they don't want to wait, be liable etc.
 - Mailing campaign – have data and information available to all the people involved.
 - License number dropped from 2021 to 2022.
 - 84K people had registered Motorcycle and no license.
 - Some reasons are like – bought it for child/spouse.
 - Postcards being sent out to the households with registered motorcycle and no motorcycle licensed residents.
 - The postcard seems to be working as the number of people getting the license is increasing.
 - Limitations – cannot share data.
 - Registration and license databases are separate.
 - Registration not required during covid.
 - Don't have baseline prior to the project to compare for results.
 - Future
 - Develop a centralized location for motorcyclists to find training and licensing information.
 - Mailing campaign and evaluation continues.
 - Support riders through trainings for taking a before and after survey.

“Motorist Awareness & Motorcyclist Safety Outreach & Support” Update

Cathy Brooks is a TTI project specialist, motorcyclist, and rider safety instructor. She shared what has been accomplished this year in the TxDOT/TTI project that includes the TMSC. C-Brooks@tti.tamu.edu

- Motorcycle safety and outreach event
 - Have attended 4 events.
 - An additional event was approved and to be shared with Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation.

- In addition to events, they sent some materials (motorcycle safety) to groups requesting items for their local communities.
- Printed materials – are provided by the grant, swag requires outside funding.
- Some are published through TTI and some by TxDOT.
- TMSC Forum – in San Marcus
 - Registration was higher but 27% of early registrants were no show.
 - Actual attendance was about double of last year.
 - Survey suggested they loved the forum.
 - Want to know more about motorcyclist safety.
 - Networking and socializing with other riders.
 - No statewide forum in 2024, but there will be community presentations.
- LookLearnLive.org
 - 2022 crash data has been updated to the home page and routes page.
 - Routes page
 - Maps some routes that are good motorcycle rides.
 - Gives information about the routes, some include videos and information from other riders, and crash data including hazardous condition locations.
 - Number of people seeing the route page is diminishing – check it out and share with others to encourage usage and growth.
 - Social media – about 20 new content posts were created each month.
 - If you are seeing the posts, interact with them, share, like, comment.
 - Follow Look Learn Live in your favorite social media channels.
 - Social media channels are listed on the bottom of the LookLearnLive.org home page.
- TSS information Sheets - Information sheets of 2016 – 2022 motorcycle fatal and suspected serious injury crash data were created with the help of a focus group of TSS's.
 - One side has statewide information the other has data specific to each TxDOT district.
 - TSS's have been sent a digital copy and are welcome to order print copies to distribute in their district.
 - How can you partner with your local TSS to be more effective?
- Coming in FY 2024
 - National Highway Traffic Safety Admin State Motorcycle Safety Program Assessment (NHTSA)
 - Motorcyclist Safety Presentations to riders and non-riders
 - Presentations to TxDOT traffic safety specialist coalitions
 - Continue
 - Outreach, social media, events etc.
 - TMSC

- Task force (dealership engagement)

“Reducing Impaired Riding” Project Update

Laura Higgins, a researcher from TTI shared the work that has been done on a two-year project to engage with stakeholders to reduce impaired riding. L-Higgins@tti.tamu.edu

- Goal: Stopping impaired rider – involving the motorcycling community.
- Videos – last year’s is still available to share and use – Chris’s motorcycle crash while impaired. New this year:
 - Culture and community
 - Leading by example
 - How does alcohol affect riding?
 - Sober rider (you are your designated driver – every time)
- Facts about drinking and riding graphics.
 - What the riders are already doing and what else needs to be done.
 - Hard to provide data in a way which is interesting – used warning label format to provide facts about impaired riding.
 - Printable sheets – available to download and print/share.
- Feedback survey –
 - On the materials that are shared – the survey is active.
 - Will be active through 8/25/2023 Friday.
- The project is not continuing as a separate project next year, but materials and outreach will continue through the larger outreach and support project.
- All the materials are available to download at [looklearnlive.org](https://www.looklearnlive.org), including the Motorcycle stakeholder’s toolkit.
 - Some potential update to the toolkit via additional source of funding.
 - Electronic and hard copies are available to anyone who is interested.
- Encourage to share the materials.
- Even though it is not continuing – do share some insights and opinions?
- <https://www.looklearnlive.org/safety/preventing-impaired-riding/>



Announcements and Open Forum

- No statewide forum in 2024.
- 3 TMSC meetings planned for 2024.
 - In person, virtual, hybrid? – in person in cooler weather.
 - Bryan or regionally?
 - What topics do you want to hear more about?
 - How can you, as the TMSC be more effective?

- TMSA patches available – provide zip code, even if you are already on the mailing list. TXDOT asked us to contact people from areas of higher risk for motorcycle fatalities and suspected serious injuries. Emails do not give us location.

Adjourn

Cathy Brooks moved to adjourn, Jude Schexnyder seconded, Maurice Maness adjourned the meeting.

Attendees:

In Person

1. Maurice Maness

2.

3. Jude Schexnyder

TTI/TAMUS Staff, TxDOT, and NHTSA:

1. Cathy Brooks

2. Stephanie Ferguson

3. Laura Higgins (presenter)

4. Cody Stewart (presenter)

5. Elizabeth Jones, TxDOT