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2023 West Virginia Motorcycle Safety Program Report Updated, December 12, 2023

To minimize the risk and maximize the fun of motorcycling, the West Virginia Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Program (WVMSP) focuses its efforts on enhancing public motorcycle safety awareness, promoting alcohol and drug effect awareness for motorcyclists, rider improvement, licensing improvement, program promotions, through education.

The Motorcycle Safety Program as a Board of Directors comprised of 8 individuals from state agencies, law enforcement, and other highway safety programs and advocacy groups. This make up is established in accordance with West Virginia Code §17B-1D-8

Additionally, the West Virginia Motorcycle Safety Program has a single training vendor; the Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF). The MSF provides motorcycle training, technical assistance, and all the required equipment and training materials to each of the five training sites located throughout the state. The combination of efforts between the WVMSP and the MSF has reduced the cost of individual training to \$100 out-of-pocket cost to the WV resident rider. This training is conducted by “Rider Coaches” that are nationally certified by the MSF. Representatives from the MSF wrote the curriculum that is taught in West Virginia. The motorcycle training contract was re-awarded to MSF in 2022 through the state bid process. After the purchasing bid process was complete, MSF



was awarded the training contract on an annual renewable basis for the next three years. The out-of-pocket cost to the WV resident rider remains at \$100 but in the 2022 contract the cost for WVMSP reimbursement increased from \$139 per student to \$169 per student.

Analyzing several years of West Virginia motorcycle crash data revealed that as many as 30% motorcycle operators did not have a motorcycle endorsement in fatal crashes. In 2023 there were 39 fatal motorcycle crashes in WV and 12 of the 39 was not licensed to ride a motorcycle. Recognizing that professional motorcycle training is key in motorcycle crash avoidance and survival, the Motorcycle Safety Board voted to approve out of state class completions for courses outside of the Motorcycle Safety Foundation curriculum if that state used an acceptable introductory rider curriculum that was compliant with provisions in Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. Additionally, the state must have had a National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) approved 405(f) grant application. This compliant public meeting was held on April 10, 2019, with a quorum met.

Motorcycle Safety Foundation

There are currently 42 Certified Rider Coaches in West Virginia eligible to teach the Basic Rider Course (BRC) with 21 of those 42 who teaches on a regular basis. Five of the Certified Rider Coaches are Site coordinators, one for each of the five sites around the state. 3 Military Rider Coach provide the Basic Rider Course (BRC) and Experienced Rider Course (ERC) Training to military personnel.

WVMSP Numbers at a Glance

Motorcycle registrations were up for FY 2023 for a total of 32,285. The Training Program had a 92.84% pass rate in the Beginning Rider Course, 100% pass rate in the Experienced Rider Course, and a 100% pass rate in the 3 Wheel Course. Rider Coaches have trained over 20,000 students since 2001. There more than 123,192 drivers in the state with an "F" (motorcycle) endorsement. Training classes are also offered for the state's rural areas of Romney and Franklin and taught out of the Program's mobile unit. The mobile unit was also used in Morgantown this year.

2023 Highlights

The WVMSP participated in one motorcycle-related event this past year. In July, the McKee Sky Ranch Vintage Motorcycle Rally in Terra Alta, WV provided an

opportunity to project the Motorcycle Safety message to a unique group of riders who may not have been aware of the WVMSP mission. WVMSP also participated in a Safety and Health Fair at the Covestro plant in New Martinsville. In FY 2024, the WVMSP will continue its participation or sponsorship of motorcycle events, as well as other regional events across the state as approved by the board to improve its exposure and safety influence on the riding community.

Since the past data has shown us that at least 30 % of the motorcycle related crashes have drivers who do not hold a motorcycle "F" endorsement, the WVMSP inserted a rack card in all the motorcycle renewals for February 2023 with information on where on your license to check to see if you have an endorsement and how to go about obtaining an endorsement if you do not. It also had contact information for any questions the driver may have. This rack card was well received and WVMSP received a lot of calls regarding licensing and safety classes. The cost of these cards was minimal to approximately \$3,200.00.

Additionally, in May, Federal 405f funds in the amount of \$40,027.29 were spent on "Look Twice, Save a Life" messaging focused in areas where motorcycles frequently travel in West Virginia, but the primary focus of this message was to keep it fresh in driver's minds that motorcycles are present and to look twice. Paid media categories used were billboards, Spotify, Radio, Connected TV (CTV), Twitter, and Facebook.

Program Budget

The WVMSP is primarily funded as prescribed in WV Code §17B-1D-7, which creates a special designated fund, the "Motorcycle Safety Fund." The fund was established in 2001 and receives all monies from motorcycle endorsement fees, except, for \$5.50 from instruction permit fees. It is a special revolving fund that is exempted as part of the state's general revenue fund. Additionally, the WVMSP utilizes residual federal funding from federal 405(f) funds to operate its programs.