

MOTORCYCLE SAFETY ALERT

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, motorcycle fatalities have been rising steadily since 1997 and currently represent our Nation's greatest highway traffic safety challenge. The latest poll showed the motorcycle fatality rate at 73 per 100,000 registered motorcycles. By comparison, the fatality rate in the same period for passenger vehicles per 100,000 registrations was 14. This trend has been so pronounced that motorcycle fatalities have for all practical purposes offset the gain in lives saved resulting from higher seat belt use and improved passenger vehicle safety. Motorcycle rider fatalities now account for 11 percent of total fatalities and dramatically affect the Nation's overall highway fatality rate.

There are more than 35-thousand motorcycles registered on Army installations. As the number of motorcycles goes up, accidents increase proportionally. According to the Combat Readiness Center, thirty-seven Army Soldiers have died in motorcycle accidents so far this fiscal year. The rate of accidents and fatalities more than double last year's rate. Major characteristics of the thirty-seven Army-wide motorcycle fatalities are listed below:

- 35% NOT ATTENDED a Motorcycle Safety Foundation Safety Course**
- 27% NOT LICENSED**
- 19% NOT WEARING PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**
- 81% traveling at a HIGH RATE of SPEED or lost control of motorcycle**
- 78% of the fatalities involved E-4 through E-7**
- 62% involved Soldiers ages 20 through 27 years old**
- 38% of the accidents occurred Texas and Hawaii, the other**
- 62% occurred in 14 other states**

The enclosure provides a short synopsis for each Army accident that has occurred this fiscal year. Commanders will discuss and pass this information through the chain of command so that every leader is aware of this trend. It takes continued engagement by leaders to ensure Soldiers and DA Civilians have a safe riding season for 2008.

- Don't be a statistic**
- Use extreme care**
- Ride within your limits**
- Drive defensively**
- Assume the other guy doesn't see you**
- Use common sense and think ahead**