DEPARTMENTS OF THE ARMY AND THE AIR FORCE
NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU
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NGB-AVS 2 October 2006

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ADJUTANTS GENERAL OF ALL STATES, PUERTO RICO, THE US VIRGIN ISLANDS, GUAM AND THE COMMANDING GENERAL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

SUBJECT: Motorcycle Accident Prevention Emphasis

1. Seventeen Army National Guard Soldiers were killed or seriously injured in motorcycle accidents in fiscal year 2006. It is sobering any time to read the report of a Soldier's death or serious injury. However, it is further distressing when these casualties occur needlessly as a result of irresponsible or ill-prepared driving. All vehicular accidents involving our personnel, whether on duty or not, affect the readiness of the ARNG.

2. Motorcycling continues to become more and more popular. While we encourage activities like motorcycling that boost morale and espirit de corps, our Soldiers and employees need to be responsible and safe. Motorcycle accidents are occurring at alarming rates. Safety reports identify reckless driving, horseplay while excessively speeding, weaving around traffic, driving under the influence, loss of vehicle control and colliding with other vehicles. To date the United States Army sustained a total of 47 casualties due to motorcycle accidents. That is 47 Soldiers no longer able to stand alongside you and answer the call to duty.

3. This unacceptable trend toward death and injury requires leadership intervention. ARNG personnel need motorcycle training and education. It is hereby required under Department of Defense Instruction (DODI) 6055.4, DoD Traffic Safety Program and AR 385-55, Prevention of Motor Vehicle Accidents for all personnel operating a motorcycle to complete the Motorcycle Safety Foundation Course. NGB-AVS will work funding solutions to back this training requirement. In the interim, I request you support through available means those personnel attending this course.

4. ARNG personnel, regardless of duty status, are required to wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) when operating a motorcycle – even where not required by State law. This is a requirement and a responsibility of your service to the military and the people of the United States. Furthermore, all ARNG personnel, regardless of duty status, must comply with DODI requirements for motorcycle safety.

5. Rider PPE includes: Department of Transportation approved helmet, face shield or impact goggles properly attached to the helmet, sturdy over the ankle footwear, long sleeved shirt or jacket, long pants, full fingered gloves or mittens designed for motorcycles and a brightly colored outer garment vest/belt/riding jacket (day) / retro-reflective upper garment (night).

6. Leaders must reinforce the mandatory training requirements and use of PPE for all ARNG Soldiers and employees. Compliance must be enforced both on and off duty. Leaders must ensure that every ARNG motorcycle operator reads, understands and acknowledges the training, licensing, registration and use of PPE requirements of DODI 6055.4.

7. The Army resourced Cape Fox Professional Services to provide Motorcycle Safety Foundation Courses. Training will be available to both Active and Reserve Components. Training is scheduled at the seven regions of the Installation Management Agency. The ARNG surveyed the number of motorcycle operators requiring training and provided Cape Fox with our requirements. As resources allow, mobile training teams will conduct training at identified ARNG sites. The Army acknowledged that this contract cannot resource all training requirements. As such, many States are being proactive and implementing various training initiatives to accomplish this requirement.

8. Also available to ARNG personnel is the Motorcycle Mentorship Program (MMP). The United States Air Force credits MMP with their 50 percent accident reduction in motorcycle accidents. The program's mission is to establish a community-based approach to rider education and skill development. This state of the art voluntary program reinforces positive training, supports motivation that results in enhancing performance abilities, skills and knowledge. This inexpensive and accessible program receives good buy in and can be tailored to the local environment even amongst the large geographical dispersion of the ARNG.

9. It is imperative to review, update, and enforce State motorcycle operations policy and practices to ensure compliance with the DOD / Army requirements. Leaders should emphasize to subordinate commanders and junior leaders that loss of life due to these unnecessary motorcycle accidents is unacceptable and preventable.

10. We are an organization committed to the safety of our personnel. We represent a Nation that expects and deserves our very best. Even while on a motorcycle, we should exemplify nothing short of loyalty, duty, respect, selfless-service, honor, integrity, and personal courage. Remember, everywhere you ride you represent this country and this institution. The Army National Guard is *always ready, always there* and safety is therefore non-negotiable.

11. The Point of Contact is COL Jackie Reaves, Chief, Aviation and Safety Division, DSN 327-7700 or 703-607-7700.

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