



# SMSA COMMUNICATION PLAN

Developed by the National  
Association for State Motorcycle  
Safety Administrators

Communications and Membership  
Committee

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## 1. Background

The National Association of State Motorcycle Safety Administrators (SMSA) assists motorcycle safety programs, through collaboration and partnerships, to implement comprehensive, data-driven motorcycle safety programs and countermeasures to achieve a significant reduction in motorcycle operator traffic crashes, fatalities and injuries.

SMSA is administered by an Executive Committee comprised of the Chairperson, six regional representatives, one Supporting Member Representative and one Individual Member Representative.

Three SMSA committees address specific projects.

- Communications and Membership
- Motorcycle Safety Programs
- Policy and Planning

The National Association of State Motorcycle Safety Administrators (SMSA) is comprised of individuals and organizations working to make a difference. We are the people who coordinate the safety programs at the state and local level joined by other professional organizations, corporations, instructors, and other individuals in efforts to make motorcycle riding a safer and more enjoyable experience.

## 2. Purpose

The purpose of this communication plan is to develop a process to keep members, partners and stakeholders informed on SMSA projects and activities, including conducting semi-annual conference calls/webinars with the SMSA Regions, Supporting Members and Individual Members; and establishing a process for the SMSA Executive Committee (EC) Representatives to contact the SMSA membership on a regular basis.

The communication plan includes audiences, mission, goals and objectives.

## 3. Audience

The audiences for this communication plan are:

- State Administrators
- SMSA Membership (state, supporting, individual)
- Offices of Highway Safety
- Federal, National, Private and International Organizations involved in Motorcycle Safety
- Prospective members (states, supporting, individuals, agencies, organizations)
- Motorcycle Rider Education Instructors

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**4. Mission/Vision (SMSA Strategic Plan)**

The SMSA assists motorcycle safety programs, through collaboration and partnerships, to implement comprehensive, data-driven motorcycle safety programs and countermeasures to achieve a significant reduction in motorcycle operator traffic crashes, fatalities and injuries.

**5. Goals / Objectives of the SMSA (SMSA Strategic Plan)**

- Influencing national policy and standards
- Providing guidance on adoption and administration of policy and standards
- Encouraging comprehensive programs
- Fostering communication, collaboration and partnerships
- Encouraging data collection, sharing and research
- Promoting effective management practices
- Identifying proven best practices

**6. Goals / Objectives of the Communications Plan**

- Market and promote SMSA.
- Communicate the value of membership to existing and prospective members.
- Increase membership within all membership categories.
- Communicate motorcycle safety initiatives and promote the benefits to the membership.
- Promote the exchange of ideas and resources.
- Promote communication among members, federal agencies, national organizations, manufacturers and motorcycle safety community.

**7. Outcomes**

- Membership increased in each category annually by:
  - State Members (3%)
  - Supporting Members (30%)
  - Individual Members (40%)
- Communication between SMSA, the SMSA membership and the motorcycle safety community as demonstrated by measurement of:
  - Participation in communication webinars
  - Activity on the SMSA Listserv
  - Readership of the Spotlight Magazine
  - Traffic on the SMSA website
  - Participation in annual SMSA conference

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## **8. Communication Channels**

### ***Annual SMSA Conference***

The SMSA will conduct an annual conference. The conference should rotate between regions each year. The conference will bring together a variety of individuals and agencies involved in motorcycle safety, including State rider education programs and instructors, State motorcycle safety agencies, State highway safety offices and State law enforcement agencies to network and gather information on successful approaches to motorcycle safety in other states.

### ***Business Meeting***

The SMSA will conduct an annual business meeting, usually during the annual SMSA conference to conduct the business of the SMSA. All members are invited to attend the annual business meeting, which provides a review and approval of the next year's 1-year plan, proposed budget, current projects, policy positions or white papers. The business meeting also includes reports from the SMSA committees and the regional/supporting member and individual member roundtable discussion and report-outs. The SMSA Executive Committee for the next year will also be introduced.

### ***Conference Calls / Webinars***

The SMSA Executive Committee will conduct monthly conference calls/webinars. SMSA will conduct semi-annual conference calls/webinars with the SMSA Regions, Supporting Members and Individual Members to keep the membership informed of SMSA news, including elections/awards, committee activities, current projects, conference details and an opportunity to discuss what SMSA can do for the membership and how SMSA can improve their membership services and benefits.

### ***Website***

The SMSA Website contains updated information about SMSA news, including elections/awards, call for papers and conference details. The SMSA website also includes a member's only section with access to a directory of state members, current and past Spotlight magazines/newsletters, motorcycle safety related documents and resources, a summary of the SMSA listserv questions and answers, surveys conducted, and media and motorcycle awareness used by state motorcycle programs.

### ***SMSA Listserv***

The SMSA Listserv is made available to all members. Members can send out questions on issues related to motorcycle safety to obtain feedback from other states. Members can also post current news, resources, events, job openings, etc. related to motorcycle safety on the Listserv.

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### ***SMSA Spotlight Magazine***

The SMSA will send out, through e-mail and regular mail the SMSA Spotlight Magazine quarterly. The Spotlight magazine provides articles written by members, federal organizations or other individuals in the motorcycle safety community, which are related to motorcycle safety and pertain to the SMSA membership. The magazine provides current SMSA and motorcycle safety news, resources, events, etc. Each issue features individual, supporting or state members and provides a description and current initiatives in motorcycle safety.

### ***Emails***

The SMSA will send out email blasts with information important to the membership, including elections/awards, Spotlight magazines, call for papers, conference details and current motorcycle safety resources or news.

### ***Telephone calls***

The SMSA Executive Committee will make phone calls to the SMSA membership on a quarterly basis to inform the membership of upcoming events and projects and to discuss what SMSA can do to improve their membership services and benefits and what SMSA can assist the membership with.

Other communication channels, which may be utilized include:

- Letters
- Flyers
- Face-to-face small meetings
- Workshops
- Social media (i.e., Facebook)

## **9. Partnerships**

There are many organizations and agencies through which SMSA can partner. These include, but are not limited to:

- American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA)
- American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO)
- American Automobile Association (AAA)
- AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety (AAAFTS)
- American Motorcyclist Association (AMA)
- Center for Disease Control (CDC)
- Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA)
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- Motorcycle Riders Foundation (MRF)
- Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF)
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)
- National Safety Council (NSC)

- 222 • National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB)
- 223 • Skilled Motorcyclist Association Responsible, Trained and Educated Riders
- 224 (SMARTER)
- 225 • Transportation Research Board (TRB)
- 226 • United State Department of Transportation (USDOT)

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## 228 **10. Implementing the Plan**

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- 230 • SMSA will:
  - 231 ○ Market and promote the SMSA to all prospective members. Promote the
  - 232 value of membership to existing and prospective members.
  - 233 ○ Determine and eliminate barriers to increased SMSA membership.
  - 234 ○ Survey membership on the perceived value of their membership, including
  - 235 results on effectiveness of the communication plan.
  - 236 ○ Determine and implement the best tool(s) for communicating to the
  - 237 membership in each category. Determine how to communicate motorcycle
  - 238 safety initiatives and promote the benefits to the membership. Promote the
  - 239 exchange of ideas and resources.
  - 240 ○ Plan, market and conduct semi-annual SMSA communication and
  - 241 educational webinars.
  - 242 ○ Evaluate the effectiveness and value of the SMSA Listserv, website and
  - 243 Spotlight Magazine.
  - 244 ○ Conduct a formal review and update of the SMSA website annually.
  - 245 ○ Promote communication between members, federal agencies, national
  - 246 organizations, manufacturers and motorcycle safety community.
  - 247 ○ Update SMSA contact list of members, federal partners, national
  - 248 organizations, manufacturers and motorcycle safety community quarterly.

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## 250 **11. Evaluation and Maintenance**

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252 The SMSA Communications and Membership Committee shall be responsible for the  
253 review, update and evaluation of the SMSA Communications Plan on an annual basis.  
254 The revised SMSA Communications Plan will be presented to the SMSA Membership  
255 during the Annual Members Business Meeting.

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## Appendix A: Key Themes/Messages in Motorcycle Safety

### Motorcycle Operator Fatality Statistics

- Motorcycle operator fatalities and injuries decreased in 2009 and 2010, but have increased significantly within the past few years, especially between 2011 and 2012.
- In 2012, 41 percent of fatally injured motorcycle riders and 53 percent of fatally injured motorcycle passengers were not wearing helmets at the time of the crash. NHTSA estimates that helmets saved the lives of 1,699 motorcyclists in 2012. If all motorcyclists had worn helmets, an additional 781 lives could have been saved.

### Motorcycles

Motorcyclist Fatalities	
2012	4,957
2011	4,630
2010	4,518

Source: FARS

Motorcyclist Fatalities Unhelmeted*	
2012	2,036 (42%)
2011	1,852 (41%)
2010	1,868 (42%)

Source: FARS

\*Percent where helmet use was known.

Motorcyclists Injured	
2012	93,000
2011	81,000
2010	82,000

Source: GES

Source: NHTSA Traffic Safety Facts Motorcycles 2011 Data, NHTSA Traffic Safety Facts Overview 2012 Data.

### Progression of Motorcycle Safety

- Motorcycle safety has not progressed at the rate it should over the last 3 decades. Significant changes have occurred in other traffic safety areas, including: driving under the influence, occupant restraint use, commercial motor vehicle safety requirements, graduated driver licensing and driver education.
- In some respects, motorcycle safety has not progressed over the decades with failure to implement universal helmets laws or the repeal of such laws, a reduction and/or restriction in state funding for motorcycle safety programs and a focus on rider training and motorist awareness.
- The approach to motorcycle safety needs to change. We need to develop innovative approaches that are effective and measurable which produce results.

### Demographics of Motorcycle Operators

- The typical motorcycle owner has jumped from age 24 in the 80's to age 41 in 2009.
- Women continue to take up riding, making up 10% of owners in 2009, compared with 6% in 1990.

### The Future of Motorcycle Safety

- For over 30 years, motorcycle safety has relied on rider training and motorist awareness to reduce crashes. Unfortunately, there is no evidence that supports the success of these strategies. To effectively reduce crashes, we need: More data to identify the critical issues, initiatives that are data driven, initiatives that are measured and evaluated on their effectiveness for crash reduction, grant funding that is more flexible so issues can be addressed, research to support motorcycle safety countermeasures, initiatives driven by



295 research, innovative approaches to reducing motorcyclist crashes, and the motorcycle  
296 safety community to work collaboratively to reduce motorcyclist crashes and fatalities.  
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