

# Michigan Motorcycle Safety Action Team

Wednesday, October 18, 2023

## Meeting Minutes

### Present

Vince Consiglio – Abate of Michigan  
Peggy Hines – MI Dept. of State  
Lori Thomas – MI Dept. of State  
Rebecca McGeorge – MI Dept. of State  
Chad Bassett – MI Dept. of State  
Quinn Passmore – Ofc. of Hwy Safety Planning  
Patricia Heiler – MI Dept. of State  
Butch Brown – Abate of Michigan  
Dan Petterson - SMARTER  
Sean Diaz – Schoolcraft College  
Rick Massic - RiderCoach  
Lindsey Higginbottom – Washtenaw Community College  
Deanna Ward – RiderCoach Trainer  
Virginia Henry – MI Dept. of State  
Virginia Abdo – MI Dept. of State  
Gary Kopta – Abate of Michigan

### Roll Call

The Michigan Motorcycle Safety Action Team meeting was called to order at 9:01 AM.

### Introductions

Self-introductions were made by those present.

### Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the July 19, 2023, meeting minutes was made. Unanimous approval was given.

### Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Fund - Financial Report Fiscal Year (FY) 2023

Patricia Heiler provided a historical overview of the Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Fund. She reported that \$300,000 is allocated to the fund for the “Motorcyclists are Hard to See. Look Twice. Save a Life.” comprehensive communication campaign. She also discussed the website where motorcyclist sponsors, providers, and instructors may obtain campaign materials. Discussion took place on the marketing campaign. Patricia Heiler reported that Gud Marketing uses data including demographic/population data as well as crash data to identify areas of the state where campaign messaging is focused.

### Michigan Crash Statistics

Discussion took place on where the Action Team can obtain final 2022 and preliminary 2023 crash statistics that highlight helmet use including when a helmet was reported as being worn, no helmet worn, and unknown whether a helmet was worn. Dan shared the specific name of the report as Motorcycle Helmet Traffic Crash Statistics published by Traffic Crash Reporting System, Michigan State Police. Quinn Passmore reported that she would research this information and provide it to the Action Team.

## **RiderCoach Training**

Vince Consiglio discussed the issue of students signing up for RiderCoach Preparation Training and then not following through with course completion. The students that have showed up and participated in the course, have all passed the course successfully.

Lori Thomas informed that many inquires come into the MI Department of State from potential RiderCoach candidates inquiring about fall courses and the need to offer courses in northern and west Michigan. Currently fall courses are unavailable throughout the state. Discussion took place on establishing RiderCoach course dates in September. Further discussion took place that students completing the RiderCoach certification course must conduct a Basic Rider Course within one year and that their RiderCoach certification is good for two years.

Deanna Ward informed the Action Team that she would be willing to conduct a fall RiderCoach course with the assistance of another RiderCoach Trainer.

Dan Petterson shared that identification of dates and locations of RiderCoach training should lie with MI Department of State based on the needs throughout the state.

Lindsey Higginbottom discussed that early planning of RiderCoach Preparation Training is important and having the 2024 dates identified now would be helpful. Lindsey also discussed how RiderCoach Preparation students often do not realize how demanding the course is upfront which leads to students dropping out. Discussion took place on better advertising and informing students of the requirements and demands of completing the course.

Lori Thomas reported that there are currently 233 active RiderCoaches in Michigan.

The Action Team determined that further discussion of this topic may be better suited for a separate meeting with RiderCoaches and sponsors.

## **Skills Testing**

Vince Consiglio shared that in his opinion there is a need to modify the existing Basic Rider Course skills testing to include a reaction-based test in east Michigan. Other members voiced opinions on the need for the Motorcycle Safety Foundation skills test criteria be evaluated at a state-wide level to ensure uniformity in the state. Discussion took place on the utilization of existing funding for modified skills testing in one area of the state and whether this is a good use of the limited funds available. Lindsey Higginbottom shared that he and his staff at Washtenaw Community College (WCC) required students to pass the Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) skills test and the MI Motorcycle Operator Skills Test (MI MOST) to successfully complete their motorcycle safety class in the late 1990's and early 2000's. Lindsey shared that this was also the requirement at the Metro Detroit classes. During this time, it was discussed that the State was aware of this process and allowed it. No other Michigan programs that Lindsey knew of required both skills tests. Lindsey shared that two things occurred which caused WCC to drop the MI MOST test from the passing requirements from the WCC program. First, the Harley Davidson (HD) Riders Edge rider training program became active in Michigan. Instructors that WCC shared with local HD programs and other public programs voiced concerns about failing students at WCC who passed the MSF riding skills test but failed the MI MOST. During this time, concerns involved that students would have passed and become endorsed if they had taken the HD class, or a class at any MI training site except WCC or Metro. Second, grant funding offered to WCC was a concern, because the MI MOST was not required by MSF or by the applicable Michigan Compiled Law and Michigan Administrative Rules, making it difficult for WCC to continue the MI MOST requirement. Lindsey added that dropping the second skills test saved WCC about an hour per double class, 4 instructor-hours per double class, and roughly 100 instructor-hours per training

season. The WCC program choose to drop the MI MOST requirement and use the savings to train more students. Lindsey concurred with Vince's opinion that the skills test should include reaction-based testing, but any modifications should be used by all public and private Michigan Rider Education Programs. It was decided that this conversation required further discussion outside of the MCSAT.

### **Advanced Training**

Deanna Ward shared that additional testing may not be the all-inclusive answer to reducing crash rates, but rather advanced motorcyclist training may help. She shared that promoting options for motorcyclists to take advanced training will allow cyclists to obtain their cycle endorsement, spend time riding and then come back for advanced skills training. She shared that there are options for flexibility in advanced courses where focus can be placed on specific skills and no specific time requirements are in place offering students flexibility in scheduling.

Further discussion took place on the lack of interest in Advanced Training where it is difficult to get established cyclists to come back for Advanced Training courses.

Dan Petterson discussed that some states have transitioned to a graduated or tiered licensing process for motorcyclists. This licensing process allows cyclists to obtain a cycle endorsement after completing specified training requirements during intervals of the endorsement process.

### **State Motorcycle Safety Association (SMSA) Conference**

Quinn Passmore discussed the SMSA Conference that was held in Columbus, Ohio in September 2023 in which several Action Team participants attended. Quinn discussed the ability of Michigan to request an updated National Highway Safety Administration Motorcycle Safety Assessment. The Action Team discussed the last assessment was completed in 2015 and before requesting an updated assessment, the Action Team must review the 2015 assessment and determine if the state has accomplished the recommendations previously given. It was recommended this topic be placed as a standing agenda item for future Action Team meetings.

### **Round Table Discussion/Updates**

**Vince Consiglio** reported that this will be his last meeting serving as the Chair. The group discussed holding a vote at the January meeting to establish Chairs (co-chairs) going forward.

**Peggy Hines** discussed that all Action Team Chairs received an invitation to the Governor's Traffic Safety Advisory Commission meeting being held on November 29, 2023. Action Team Chairs will report out on Action Team efforts. Lindsey Higginbottom requested the concern about the safety of motorcyclists be presented as it relates to autonomous vehicles.

**Dan Petterson** discussed SMARTER's involvement in a national coalition that is addressing motorcyclist safety related to autonomous vehicles.

**Chad Bassett** discussed whether this Action Team is meeting the overall goals of the Governor's Traffic Safety Advisory Commission. Further discussion took place on the Action Team not having an established Action Plan in place that provides direction for the Team. Peggy Hines recommended that the Action Plan be placed as a standing agenda item going forward in 2024.

### **Action Items**

Quinn Passmore: Provide the 2022 Traffic Crash statistics related to helmet use.

Peggy Hines: Provide a copy of the draft version of the Action Plan previously worked on by the Action Team to all Action Team attendees.

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:52 AM.

**Next Meeting**

Wednesday, January 17, 2024, 9:00 AM Michigan State Police Headquarters, 7150 Harris Drive  
Dimondale, Michigan 48821