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**U.S. ARMY COMBAT READINESS CENTER**

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**Contact: Michael Negard**  
**Telephone: (334) 255-3770**  
[michael.j.negard.civ@mail.mil](mailto:michael.j.negard.civ@mail.mil)  
<https://safety.army.mil/>

## **Army Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month campaign on a roll**

### **COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center**

FORT RUCKER, Ala. — A communications campaign focused on Army motorcycle mishap trends and related loss prevention launched today, April 20, to coincide with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month in May.

"We're excited to provide this campaign for leaders, safety professionals, riders and non-riders across the Army as riding season gets underway," said Brig. Gen. Andrew C. Hilmes, U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center commanding general and director of Army Safety. "As we emerge from the public health restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic, it will be critical for leaders to reinforce the importance of trained skills and positive riding behaviors among their Soldier riders."

Leader engagement is critical, as is arming them with information and guidance they can use to save lives — not just during May, but throughout the year.

Motorcycle mishaps are already up 22 percent for FY21. Whether this increase is a product of a milder winter, cabin fever after months of pandemic-related restrictions, or just an anomaly, it's a worrying indicator of what could be to come if leaders do not focus their attention on Soldier riders at the start of riding season.

"It's not just an Army problem, it's a nationwide issue," said USACRC Command Sgt. Maj. William L. Gardner II. "Numbers from NHTSA show riders are overrepresented in all American traffic fatalities. The reality is motorcycles don't offer the same protection as conventional vehicles, and behavioral factors like indiscipline make some riders more susceptible to fatal injury."

This year's campaign features informative articles, posters for safety boards, leader talking points, and video public service announcements targeted toward both individual riders and leaders of Soldiers who ride. Gardner encouraged leaders at all levels to share this information within their commands and particularly with first-line supervisors.

"These campaign materials are based on our most recent data and specifically targeted to the Army's problem areas," he said. "First-line leaders, who know their Soldiers best and can have the greatest impact off duty, have an awesome opportunity to really engage their Soldiers on motorcycle safety here. It's already packaged and ready to go with the click of a button."

In addition to the USACRC website, campaign products will be released weekly on the organization's social media platforms on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Hilmes encouraged users to check these venues frequently for motorcycle safety information and more.

“We’re working hard to give our junior leaders, whether they themselves ride or not, the information they need to keep their Soldiers aware of the hazards riders face on our nation’s roads and highways,” he said. “Junior leaders are best able to influence their subordinates’ behaviors.”

The complete campaign is available online at <https://safety.army.mil/MSAM>.