



*Rider Down* is a monthly update of motorcycle crashes that occurred throughout the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps. The data in this publication reflects what was reported during the time period covered.



**Information contained in the report is based on preliminary data and is provided for hazard awareness and training purposes only.** The Naval Safety Command recommends Motorcycle Safety Representatives use this information for training and mentorship programs and forward to others who may have an interest.



**Obtain official crash data from Naval Safety Command**

<b>Navy</b>	Total non-fatal crashes this report: <b>41</b>	<b>Marine Corps</b>
Rider fatalities this report: <b>0</b>	Total fatalities this report: <b>0</b>	Rider fatalities this report: <b>0</b>
Rider fatalities for FY 24: <b>10</b>		Rider fatalities for FY 24: <b>9</b>

# Look out for distracted drivers; avoid distracted riders!

By Juan Aguilar

It's hard to believe we are halfway through the year and into the 3rd quarter. With fair-weather riders taking to the roads across the United States and worldwide, it's important to be mindful of the risks of motorcycle riding. Unfortunately, thus far, this year has been particularly challenging for the Department of the Navy regarding motorcycle crashes. In the past six months, several private motor vehicles have struck riders while distracted, highlighting the dangers of distracted driving, which was especially relevant as April was National Distracted Driving Awareness Month, raising awareness about the risks associated with this dangerous behavior.

Additionally, the 101 Critical Days of Summer are just around the corner, another reminder to stay vigilant and prioritize safety on the road. By being aware of the potential risks and taking steps to minimize them, we can ensure a safe and enjoyable

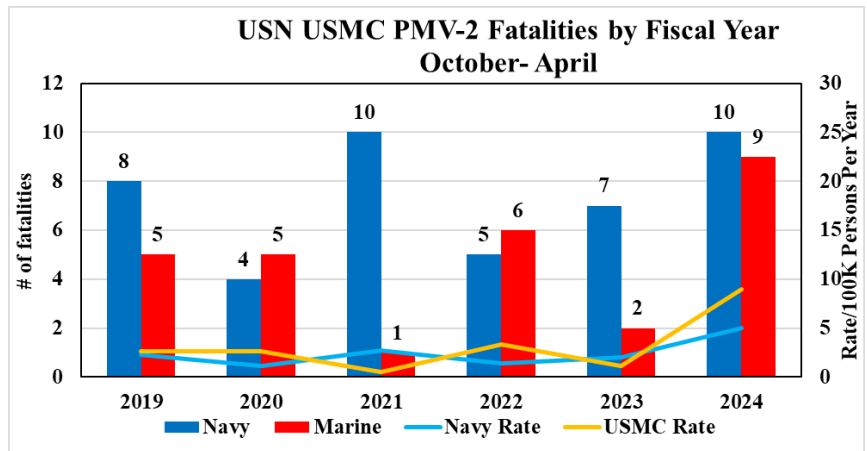


Figure 1 depicts Navy and Marine Corps reported motorcycle fatalities by fiscal year from 2019 to date.

riding experience. Remember, your actions can make a difference.

The recent ALNAV 039-24 stated “according to the Department of Transportation, per vehicle miles traveled, the fatality rate for motorcycle riders was approximately 28 times that of drivers and passengers in cars. Unfortunately, the Department of

# Distracted driving

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the Navy (DON) has realized similar tragic statistics. As of the release of the ALNAV, the DON had lost 18 Sailors and Marines to motorcycle crashes since October 2023. This number is more than we have lost due to on-duty mishaps and almost twice the number from fatalities of 4-wheel motor vehicle mishaps.” The number of fatalities has since increased to 19 as of April 30.

Training is critical to reducing these crashes. Developing skills like evasive maneuvers, maintaining a safe following distance and rider etiquette can help prevent crashes. Practicing these skills regularly is important, as injuries or other factors can affect one’s ability to ride safely.

If you have doubts about your riding skills, seek advice or training from your command riding coach or motorcycle safety representative (MSR). By being responsible and cautious riders, we can continue to enjoy the thrill of riding motorcycles without worrying about the potential risks.

During this month, the top three primary causes of motorcycle crashes is lack of real-time experience on motorcycles, riders struck by other vehicles and excessive speed while taking turns. Practicing swerving in a safe location is advised to prepare yourself for unexpected situations you may encounter on the road. You should never forget your entry speed, the speed at the beginning of a turn or curve that allows you to maintain or increase your speed while in the turn. If you cannot safely increase your speed, your entry speed is too fast.

MSRs, supervisors and collateral duty safety officers should continue to ensure their personnel are current with their training and licensing. Use the *Rider Down* reports as part of your safety and training briefs.

Additional *Rider Down* reports are available here: <https://navalsafetycommand.navy.mil/Resources/Motorcycle-Rider-Down-Reports-newsletters/>.

There are usually many factors or reasons that interact or combine to result in a crash. Do not ignore even the minor factors, as this raises your risk and may result in a collision. The factors provided from the crashes on the following pages are

## April’s numbers

**The naval enterprise has lost 19 riders this fiscal year, comprised of 10 Sailors and nine Marines between October and April. In April, there were 41 reported motorcycle crashes, with zero fatalities.**

**The 41 non-fatal motorcycle crashes were spread across 19 states, with two reports not listing the state. California led with 11 crashes, followed by Florida with seven crashes.**

**It’s concerning to see so many crashes happening, primarily when 20% of crashes occurred during the evening hours between 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. Overall, 16 crashes occurred on weekdays and 25 on the weekends.**

- **16 (39%) - Crashes involving PMV-4s hitting a rider.**
- **15 (37%) - Crashes involved rider inexperience.**
- **4 (10%) - Crashes were due to road conditions.**
- **2 (5%) - Crashes involved loss of control.**
- **2 (5%) - Crashes had no details reported.**
- **1 (3%) - Crash involved excessive speed.**
- **1 (3%) - Crash the result of lane splitting.**

based on information presented in the OPREPS and the investigators’ reports, most of which are still under investigation. Remove one factor and the crash may not have occurred.

When reviewing the crashes in the following pages, consider other factors that may have influenced the crash. Get your riders involved and have them ask themselves, “What would I have done under each scenario?”



# Motorcycle Crashes

## APRIL 2024



### Motorcycle Crash Legend

NR represents information not reported

Red entries represent Marine Corps-specific crashes

All times local

### Nonfatal Crashes

April 2, 7:20 a.m., 23-year-old E-5

Location: Chula Vista, California

Remarks: Rider was riding between 70-75 mph when they experienced speed wobbles, causing them to lose control and crash. The crash resulted in a 25-foot low-sided slide. Luckily, the rider only suffered minor injuries and was immediately treated at hospital. The rider wore all the necessary personal protective equipment (PPE) and had a valid motorcycle license or permit. The rider had also completed the Basic Rider Course (BRC) in June 2021 and the Advanced Rider Course (ARC) equivalent in August 2021.

*This crash highlights that while essential, training courses may only partially prepare riders for some potential scenarios, such as high-speed instability, which ultimately led to the crash.*

April 2, 2:58 p.m., 24-year-old E-5

Location: Martinez, Georgia

Remarks: A rider was riding at 30-40 mph when a PMV-4, approaching from the opposite direction, suddenly made a left turn in front of the rider and entered a side street. The rider didn't have sufficient time to react and collided with the PMV-4. The rider sustained multiple injuries all over the body and internal injuries in the thorax, abdomen and pelvis area. The rider was immediately taken to a hospital, admitted for eight days and received 21 days of convalescent leave.

April 4, 8:30 a.m., 31-year-old O-1

Location: Pensacola, Florida

Remarks: The rider was rear-ended by a PMV-4 vehicle. Fortunately, the rider did not sustain any injuries, emphasizing the importance of wearing proper PPE. However, the rider was not wearing a riding jacket, which could have offered extra protection.

*It's important to mention only the BRC completion is reflected, with completion in May 2021. This crash is a stark reminder of the potential hazards on the road and serves as a call to stay vigilant about your surroundings when riding. Always maintain a safe distance from parked vehicles and if you notice a possible danger, reduce your speed and prepare to take evasive action. Completing an advanced riding course may have helped the rider learn to avoid this type of crash.*

April 4, 1:45 p.m., 35-year-old O-4

Location: San Diego, California

Remarks: Rider split lanes while approaching an

intersection with a red traffic light. However, the traffic lanes had recently been changed and the left lane had become a dedicated lane for right turns. A PMV-4 vehicle was turning right legally from the left lane, but the driver failed to use a turn signal. The rider was riding parallel to the PMV-4 and did not anticipate the vehicle to turn right. Consequently, the rider collided with the PMV-4. The rider was taken to a hospital and treated for a displaced fracture on their left clavicle, left scapula and left hand middle and ring metacarpals.

April 4, 6:30 p.m., 21-year-old E-4

Location: Jacksonville, Florida

Remarks: A rider lost control of their motorcycle while taking a corner too fast. As a result, the rider was taken to a hospital for evaluation and admitted for observation.

*Awareness of your limits and experience level when riding a motorcycle is important. Lack of training has been identified as one of the leading causes of motorcycle crashes in previous monthly reports. Taking a few hours to improve your riding skills is much more beneficial than becoming another statistic.*

April 4, 10 p.m., 21-year-old E-4

Location: New Bern, North Carolina

Remarks: Two military riders were riding close on a group ride. While exiting the highway into a parking lot, the rider in front, Rider 1, downshifted from 45 mph but did not use the brake pedal to signal to the rider in the back, Rider 2, that they were slowing down. Rider 2 did not notice the deceleration in time and collided with Rider 1. As a result, Rider 1 suffered fractures in both wrists and was transported to hospital for treatment.

*Maintaining a safe distance between riders, especially when riding in a group is important. Riding too closely can increase the risk of crashes and injuries. Maintaining at least one car length distance between vehicles is recommended to ensure everyone's safety on the road.*

April 5, 7 p.m., 21-year-old E-4

Location: Saint Johns, Florida

Remarks: The rider did not lean enough into the upcoming turn and lost control of their motorcycle. Consequently, the rider was taken to a hospital for medical treatment. After the diagnosis, it was found the rider had nerve damage in their shoulder and no feeling in their left arm, a dislocated cervical disc and a foot contusion.

April 5, 10 p.m., 21-year-old E-4

Location: Oak Harbor, Washington

Remarks: On Friday night, a rider took their dirt bike out for a test run. While taking a corner too fast over gravel, the bike slid out from underneath them and the rider's right hand got stuck beneath the handlebars as the motorcycle slid. The rider was quickly transported to a hospital, where they received treatment for a fractured right hand and wrist. The rider spent the weekend in the

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# Motorcycle Crashes

APRIL 2024

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hospital and was released Sunday morning. They were given a soft cast for their right hand and lower arm, which they will wear for two weeks before it is replaced with a hard cast. The rider was placed on sick quarters (SIQ) for three days and limited light duty (LLD) for four months.

*It is important to remember that avoiding potential hazards when riding a dirt bike is essential, especially at night when visibility is low.*

April 6, 10:22 a.m., 18-year-old E-3

Location: Hammond, Louisiana

Remarks: While accelerating from the on-ramp onto the highway, the rider encountered a patch of loose gravel, causing them to lose traction. When the tire regained traction, they lost control of the motorcycle and had a high-sided crash. The rider hit their head on the handlebars and passed out because of the crash. They were then taken to a hospital, where they were treated for a concussion.

*It is important to maintain a good lane position while taking curves, it enables you to adjust your path of travel and avoid sand, gravel, rocks and debris.*

April 6, 5:15 p.m., 22-year-old E-4

Location: Gulfport, Mississippi

Remarks: The rider was on a group ride with friends when another rider's rear tire lost traction and went down in front of the rider. The rider performed an emergency braking maneuver but was ejected. The rider was transported to a hospital and treated for a fractured pelvis and received four weeks SIQ and 60 days LLD.

*Although this rider completed all the required training, continuing to hone your skills in a safe area, including proper emergency braking and swerving, will improve your riding skills.*

April 6, 9 p.m., 38-year-old E-7

Location: Jacksonville, Florida

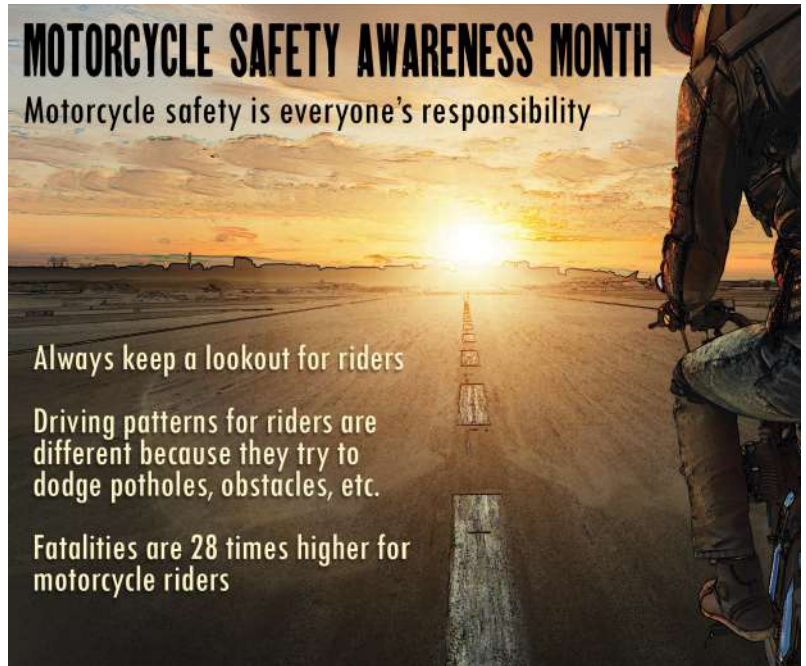
Remarks: A rider with 16 years' experience was part of a group ride with four other riders. While making a left turn from a street onto a highway, they were traveling at 45 mph when they collided with a raised median. The rider and their group did not see the median, which resulted in a crash. Fortunately, the rider landed on their feet; however, their motorcycle was destroyed.

*It's important to be mindful of low lighting conditions and unfamiliarity with the riding route, as these factors can increase the likelihood of a crash. One way to ensure you have the best view of the road at night is by aligning your headlights correctly. Your owner's manual or a technical professional can help you with this.*

April 7, 3:15 a.m., 24-year-old E-5

Location: Fresno, California

Remarks: Servicemember was involved in a motorcycle crash while riding as a passenger. Passenger was transported to a hospital and remains under observation.



In addition to the start of the 101 Critical Days of Summer safety campaign, May is Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month. (U.S. Navy Graphic by Mass Communications Specialist 2nd Class Benjamin Davella)

April 7, 2 p.m., 21-year-old E-3

Location: Jacksonville, Florida

Remarks: Rider hit a patch of gravel on a curving road. As a result, the rider was taken to a nearby hospital for treatment of injuries. The rider received three days SIQ and 14 days LLD.

*It's best to stay in the center of the lane when riding through curves. The middle of the lane is the safest lane position as debris, such as gravel, tends to accumulate on the sides of the road, especially around corners where there is minimal vehicular traffic.*

April 7, 3:06 p.m., 23-year-old E-4

Location: Ewa Beach, Hawaii

Remarks: Rider crashed into a vehicle that was braking in front of them. The rider sustained injuries and was immediately taken to a hospital for medical attention. It's worth noting that the rider had completed BRC in April 2023 and the ARC in May 2023.

*Always maintain a safe distance from any vehicle ahead of you while riding. In case you spot a potential danger, be ready to take evasive measures and have an escape plan in mind. This will help you avoid crashes and ensure your safety while riding.*

April 7, 8:45 p.m., 20-year-old E-4

Location: Charleston, South Carolina

Remarks: A rider had a collision with a PMV-4, and as a result, they suffered injuries to their left side, including bruising and abrasions, as well as to their big toe. The rider was taken to a hospital and received treatment. They were granted one day SIQ and 14 days LLD. The rider was wearing all the required PPE.

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# Motorcycle Crashes

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April 7, 9:00 p.m., age NR E-6

Location: Galali, Bahrain

Remarks: Rider was making a left turn and was hit by another vehicle changing lanes in the middle of the turn. The rider was transported to a hospital and treated for injuries sustained.

April 11, 4:35 p.m., 27-year-old E-4

Location: Pensacola, Florida

Remarks: The rider conducted a T-CLOCKS inspection and began to ride. While riding, the rider had to slow down to 35-40 mph because the vehicle in front of them, a PMV-4, was also slowing down. The rider looked to their right to change lanes and when they looked back to the front, the PMV-4 abruptly hit the brakes. Unfortunately, the rider was too close to stop in time and crashed into the PMV-4. The rider suffered a fractured wrist and was transported to a hospital for treatment. The rider received 10 days of convalescent leave. *Remember, always have a plan of escape when riding. Be aware of your surroundings and use rider radar to prepare yourself better to accelerate, stop or swerve. Maintaining a four-second urgent distance between you and other vehicles on the road is essential.*

April 12, 7:30 a.m., 27-year-old E-6

Location: Port Royal, South Carolina

Remarks: Rider was at a stop light waiting to turn right when they were rear-ended by a PMV-4. Rider was transported to a hospital and treated for head injuries. Rider received two days SIQ and two days LLD. Rider wore all appropriate PPE.

April 12, 6:55 p.m., 27-year-old E-4

Location: Honolulu, Hawaii

Remarks: Rider lost control while riding a scooter. Rider was transported to a hospital and treated for a fractured arm.

April 12, 9:30 p.m., 27-year-old E-4

Location: San Diego, California

Remarks: Rider was making a left turn when a PMV-4 struck them. They were transported to a hospital and treated for minor injuries. Rider was admitted to the hospital for one day and given 10 days LLD.

April 13, time NR, 24-year-old E-5

Location: Kaneohe, Hawaii

Remarks: A rider fell off their motorcycle and was taken to a local hospital, where they were treated for injuries to their kneecap and bones. The rider was given seven days of LLD.

*The rider had borrowed a friend's PMV-2 and all PPE as they planned to attend the next BRC; it's important to note the BRC course accepts walk-ins. You may be added if you show up before class start time and pending an open spot availability.*

April 13, time NR, 24-year-old E-5

Location: Norfolk, Virginia

Remarks: Two riders were traveling down a local road when a PMV-4 merged into their lane without warning. Rider leaned to the left to avoid the PMV-4. Another PMV-4 did not see the rider and crashed into them making a left turn. Rider was transported to a hospital and treated for a left femur fracture, fractured left hand and laceration on left shoulder. Rider was hospitalized four days and received 60 days SIQ.

April 14, 6:30 p.m., 28-year-old E-5

Location: Richmond, Virginia

Remarks: A rider was on their way to work when they fell asleep and crashed into a wall and flipped over their bike's handlebars. As a result, the rider sustained two fractured arms and had to be taken to a hospital for treatment. *Fatigue is a common cause of road crashes. When you are tired, drowsy or exhausted the chances of getting into a crash increase. This could be due to a restless night's sleep or a particularly demanding day at work. When you are exhausted, your senses are less alert and you will need more time and distance to react to potential dangers on the road. Therefore, it is always wise to take breaks when feeling tired.*

April 14, 6:45 p.m., 24-year-old E-4

Location: NR

Remarks: Rider struck a PMV-4. Rider was transported to a hospital and treated for a lacerated liver and a fractured hip. Rider remains hospitalized.

April 14, 1 a.m., 25-year-old E-5

Location: Maryland

Remarks: Rider was involved in a crash with a PMV-4. Luckily, the rider was wearing all required PPE. Rider was taken to a hospital for treatment of injuries to their femur and a fractured hip.

*To reduce the risk of crashes at entrance and exit points on freeways, it is recommended to use the middle lane. Moreover, one must check for other vehicles trying to merge into the same space while changing lanes. At night, it is important to wear bright and reflective clothing, use high beams when possible and rely on the lights of other vehicles to see ahead. Also watch for taillights that bounce, indicating a road surface hazard. While slowing or waiting at an intersection, flash your brake lights. Lastly, consider installing more approved lighting on your motorcycle for increased visibility.*

April 15, 7:15 a.m., age and rank NR

Location: Escondido, California

Remarks: Rider was involved in a PMV-4 crash. Rider was transported to a hospital and treated for injuries sustained.

April 16, 12:10 p.m., 22-year-old E-4

Location: Brown Mills, New Jersey

Remarks: Rider was involved in a severe crash where they were struck by a PMV-4 that was turning left at an intersection and ignoring a stop sign. As a result of the impact, the rider was lodged in the PMV-4's left fender and

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# Motorcycle Crashes

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Remarks: Rider ran over a pothole and a divider on the road and lost control. Rider was transported to a hospital and treated for a left wrist fracture, injuries to the right ankle and road rash.

April 20, 6 p.m., 32-year-old E-5  
Location: Pearl City, Hawaii

Remarks: Rider was cut off by a PMV-4 driver at an intersection. Rider swerved to avoid a collision, but lost control. Rider was transported to a hospital and treated for injuries sustained.

*Rider wore all proper PPE and attended BRC in July 2022 and Experienced Rider Course (ERC) in March 2023.*

April 21, 11 a.m., 24-year-old E-4  
Location: San Diego, California

Remarks: Rider's rear tire blew out resulting in the motorcycle crash. Rider did not seek medical attention. Rider was wearing all proper PPE.

*Service member attended BRC in August 2022 and ARC in May 2023. The cause of the blowout was not disclosed, performing proper T-CLOCKS may have identified inadequate tire pressure or depth and identifying may have been able to have prevented this mishap.*

April 21, 11:20 a.m., 22-year-old E-4  
Location: Bremerton, Washington

Remarks: Rider had the right of way when they collided with a PMV-4 that failed to yield. The PMV-4 was turning left through a flashing yellow signal, which resulted in the crash. This instance is a clear case of the PMV-4 driver's negligence and failure to follow traffic rules, which could have been prevented. The rider was transported to a hospital and treated for multiple internal and external injuries. The rider received 21 days SIQ.

April 21, 6 p.m., 19-year-old E-4  
Location: Jamul, California

Remarks: Rider lost traction on a highway and slid. Rider did not operate the vehicle at a safe speed. Rider was transported to a hospital and treated for a fractured ankle. Service member received one day SIQ and three days LLD.

April 23, 7:30 a.m., 36-year-old E-6  
Location: San Diego, California

Remarks: Rider was merging onto highway when a PMV-4 in front slammed on their brakes, resulting in the rider crashing into them. Rider was transported to a hospital

and treated for injuries to their leg and ankle.

*Rider wore all required PPE. Rider attended BRC in September 2023. Riders must continue to practice swerving to avoid a crash and braking to stop at shorter distances in a safe area to be ready to avoid a crash.*

April 23, 3:15 p.m., 29-year-old E-5  
Location: North Chicago, Illinois

Remarks: Rider was stopped at a red light when a PMV-4 struck them from the rear. However, the rider had taken all necessary precautions, including wearing a DOT-approved half helmet. The rider was taken to a hospital for treatment of injuries to their brain, head, skull, spine and lower legs.

*It is always recommended to maintain two exit strategies even when stopped to avoid similar crashes with PMV-4s that may not slow down at red lights. Leaving enough space to pull over to the side of the road is crucial if needed. Following these safety measures can reduce the risk of crashes and ensure your safety on the road.*

April 25, 7:40 a.m., 29-year-old E-4  
Location: San Diego, California

Remarks: Rider was stopped at a red light. Upon the light turning green the rider attempted to proceed forward and noticed a PMV-4 running the red light. The PMV-4 attempted to brake but still struck the rider at a slow, reduced speed. Service member was taken to a hospital and was released with no injuries.

April 27, 12:00 a.m., 20-year-old E-3  
Location: San Diego, California

Remarks: Rider was involved in a motorcycle crash. Service member has no recollection of the cause of the crash, location and other personnel involved. Rider was admitted to the hospital after being diagnosed with a concussion. On a lighter note, the rider had completed BRC and was wearing all required PPE.

April 28, 4:30 p.m., 20-year-old E-3  
Location: Gaeta, Italy

Remarks: Rider was launched over a highway guardrail after losing control of their motorcycle. Rider was transported to a hospital and admitted for follow-up care. *Rider was wearing all required PPE and had attended BRC in January 2024 and ARC in March 2024. While completing all required training is important, nothing can replace the experience gained from actual practice and hands-on riding. Understanding the nuances of the motorcycle and how it handles in different situations is crucial in avoiding major crashes.*



## ENABLING WARFIGHTING READINESS

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