

**MAY 2025** 

# Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month shows concerning age, mishap trend

By Juan Aguilar

May was Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month, an important opportunity to reinforce safe riding practices as motorcycle activity increases with the onset of warmer weather. National statistics reveal concerning trends in motorcycle incidents involving younger riders, underscoring the need for targeted safety outreach and education. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA, 2024), 51% of motorcyclists aged 21 to 24 involved in fatal crashes were speeding, the highest rate among all age groups.

Additionally, 35% of all motorcyclists involved in fatal crashes were speeding, compared to just 22% of passenger vehicle drivers. The same report also found 42% of riders killed in single-vehicle motorcycle crashes were alcohol-impaired. These figures underscore the disproportionate risks faced by younger or less experienced riders, especially when speeding or riding under the influence.

More detailed data on national statistics can be accessed here: Traffic safety facts

2022 data: Motorcycles (Report No. DOT HS 813 528) <a href="https://rosap.ntl.bts.gov/view/dot/78012">https://rosap.ntl.bts.gov/view/dot/78012</a>.

The naval enterprise recorded 42 motorcycle crashes with four resulting in fatalities in May. California led in motorcycle crashes for the 16th month with 12 reported – and over a quarter of the accidents (28%) overall; Virginia followed closely with 11 reported and over a quarter of the incidents (26%). Washington had four crashes (9%), followed by Hawaii with three (7%) and Florida with two crashes (5%). The remaining incidents occurred throughout the United States with one crash in Japan.

It's crucial to pay attention to the factors behind May's motorcycle crashes and understand detailed and accurate reports help ensure the data collected reflects the actual circumstances of each incident. Comprehensive data allows for identifying patterns and trends, such as common causes, locations or times of day when crashes occur. These statistics emphasize the critical importance of motorcycle safety awareness

#### At a Glance

#### USN

Rider fatalities this report: 2 Rider fatalities for FY 25: 20

#### **USMC**

Rider fatalities this report: 2 Rider fatalities for FY 25: 11

Totals this report
Non-fatal crashes: 38
Fatalities: 4

and proactive measures to prevent future tragedies.

Within the Navy and Marine Corps, the national trends are mirrored in service-specific incident data. Younger enlisted members, particularly those under 25 years old, continue to be overrepresented in motorcycle crashes. Last month, initial reports showed approximately 34% of reported motorcycle crashes involved riders aged 25 and under. Notably, 23% of incident reports lacked data regarding rider age, which presents challenges in accurately assessing risk patterns and developing targeted interventions.

All commands should ensure full and accurate reporting of all mishap data, including demographic details, to support comprehensive safety analysis. As a reminder, all riders must complete the Basic Rider Course (BRC) and are strongly encouraged to pursue the Advanced Rider Course (ARC) to further enhance their riding skills. Level II training must be completed within 60 days to one year of completing Level I training, per OPNAV M-5100.23 Series. Military riders will complete Levels II and III refresher training at least once every five years.

Commanders and supervisors must verify all riders possess valid motorcycle licenses, up-to-date training records and are fully

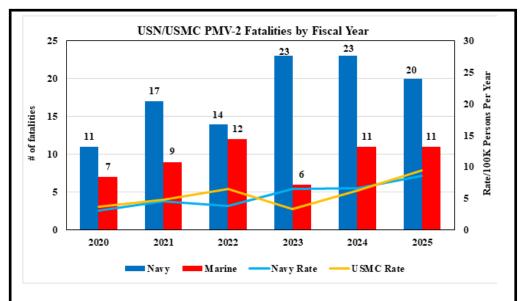


Figure 1 depicts Navy and Marine Corps' reported motorcycle fatalities by fiscal year. The numbers reflect the entire fiscal year for FY20-FY24; FY25 data is current to the end of the reporting month (May).

### **Trend**

compliant on wearing personal protective equipment. A proactive safety culture, driven by personal accountability, peer involvement and leadership oversight, remains the most effective defense against preventable motorcycle accidents.

Let us remain vigilant and committed to safe riding practices as we enter peak riding season. Your safety on the road is not only a personal responsibility but a matter of operational readiness and mission success.

Amidst the critical mission of ensuring operational readiness, the diligent efforts of motorcycle safety representatives (MSR), supervisors and collateral duty safety officers persist in keeping your Sailors and Marines current with their training and licensing. The *Rider Down* reports are indispensable tools in your arsenal, integral to safety and training briefs. Their detailed insights and analysis are invaluable in understanding the factors contributing to crashes and formulating preventive measures.

To those with Risk Management Information (RMI) access, we've integrated the *Rider Down* 

#### (continued from page 1)

reports within RMI. Once logged into RMI, click on the left-hand tab under "Pubs and Refs" homepage and proceed to "Motorcycle Rubber Side Down" to subscribe to and view these publications. The site contains the current year motorcycle publications produced by NAVSAFECOM for Navy and Marine Corps MSRs, riders and safety professionals.

More information, videos and archived newsletters can be found on the NAVSAFECOM website: <a href="https://navalsafetycommand.navy.mil/Media/Mags-Pubs/Motorcycle-Rider-Down-Reports-Newsletters/">https://mayalsafetycommand.navy.mil/Media/Mags-Pubs/Motorcycle-Rider-Down-Reports-Newsletters/</a>. Also, check out the Commander Naval Air Forces motorcycle safety video located here: <a href="https://www.dvidshub.net/video/965123/airboss-motorcycle-safety-psa">https://www.dvidshub.net/video/965123/airboss-motorcycle-safety-psa</a>.

In the pursuit of safety, every detail matters. Do not ignore even the minor factors, as this raises your risk and may result in a collision. Factors were provided from the crashes on the following pages based on the information presented in the operations reports and the investigator's reports, most of which are still under investigation. Remove one factor and the crash may not have occurred.

#### By the numbers

- 14 (33%) crashes involved colliding with a moving vehicle.
- 10 (23%) crashes involved a rollover/overturn.
- 8 (19%) crashes had a rider who ran off the road.
- 5 (12%) crashes had no details reported.
- 4 (9%) crashes involved colliding with an animal or object.
- 2 (4%) crashes had a rider that lost control.

#### By the clock

- 4 a.m.-7:59 a.m. 12 (28%)
- 8 a.m. 11:59 a.m. 4 (9%)
- Noon 3:59 p.m. 6 (14%)
- 4 p.m. 7:59 p.m. 11 (26%)
- 8 p.m. 11:59 p.m. 8 (19%)
- No data provided 2 (4%)

#### By the day

Weekdays - 24 (56%) Weekends - 19 (44%)





Sailors assigned to Naval Safety Command prepare for a command group ride, May 16. Motorcycle safety plays a critical role in the naval enterprise's commitment to reducing preventable fatalities and ensuring mission readiness. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Felix Castillo Reyes)

#### Rider Down



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.

Crash data can be obtained from Naval Safety Command.





#### **Motorcycle Mishap Legend**

NR represents information not reported Red entries represent Marine Corps-specific mishaps (All times local)

#### **Fatal Crashes**

#### May 12, 3 p.m., 21-year-old E-4

Location: Norfolk, Virginia

Remarks: Rider and their motorcycle were found on a roadway approximately 500 yards from a major intersection. The rider was transported to hospital and was pronounced deceased by the trauma team. The motorcycle involved was a Honda CBR 500. The rider was wearing full PPE and held a valid motorcycle license and completed BRC in April 2025.

#### May 15, 9:30 p.m., age NR E-4

Location: Okinawa, Japan

Remarks: Rider was involved in a fatal off-base collision with a local

national in Okinawa.

#### May 29, 5:30 a.m., age NR E-2

Location: San Antonio, Texas

Remarks: Rider was involved in a motorcycle crash while performing duties in support of Recruiting Assistance. The incident resulted in multiple traumatic injuries, including a traumatic brain injury, internal organ damage (liver and spleen), pelvic and rib fractures. The rider succumbed to injuries.

#### May 31, 11:30 a.m., 22-year-old E-5

Location: Poway, California

Remarks: Rider was involved in a fatal motorcycle crash near a major intersection. A vehicle reportedly crossed the roadway centerline, resulting in a collision with the rider, who was operating a sports bikestyle motorcycle. The rider was wearing PPE at the time of the incident. A passing motorist provided medical assistance until emergency responders arrived. Despite these efforts, the rider was pronounced deceased at the scene by medical personnel. It is unknown whether the rider held a valid motorcycle license or permit or if any motorcycle safety training had been completed.

#### **Nonfatal Crashes**

#### May 1, 7:30 a.m., 49-year-old 0-4

Location: Norfolk, Virginia

Remarks: Rider was operating a privately owned motorcycle. The weather was clear and traffic was moderate. While taking an exit at approximately 25 mph in the left lane, a black SUV in the right lane attempted to change lanes to return to the main highway. The rider applied brakes and skidded 50 feet before falling. The rider sustained three broken ribs and required a chest catheter. Bystanders provided initial assistance and emergency services transported the rider to hospital.

#### May 1, 9 p.m., 21-year-old E-5

Location: Alder, Washington

Remarks: Rider was involved in a motorcycle crash while operating a BMW S-1000RR sports bike, losing control after encountering loose gravel and sliding into a rock wall, sustaining a left ankle fracture. The rider was wearing full PPE, a valid motorcycle license was held and ARC was completed in January 2023.

#### May 2, 6 a.m., 25-year-old E-5

Location: San Marcos, California

Remarks: Rider of a Suzuki GSX-R1000 sports bike was approaching heavy traffic at a red light when they applied the brakes. During braking, the front wheel locked up, resulting in a loss of control and collided with another vehicle. The rider was transported and admitted to the hospital. At the time of the incident, the rider was wearing appropriate PPE, including a helmet, gloves, boots and eye protection, though a protective jacket was not worn. The rider held a valid motorcycle license and successfully completed BRC in July 2022 and ARC in July 2023.

#### May 2, 3 p.m., 23-year-old E-5

Location: Honolulu, Hawaii

Remarks: Rider was operating a motorcycle when a nearby vehicle made a sharp turn toward the rider's lane. In response, the rider veered off the road to avoid the collision. The rider did not make contact with the other vehicle and was not injured. The motorcycle sustained cosmetic damage. No medical assistance was required.

#### May 3, 5 p.m., age NR E-4

Location: Wrightsboro, North Carolina

Remarks: Rider was operating a PMV-2 when a sudden gust of wind

(continued on page 4)

#### **Acronyms**

**ARC:** Advanced Rider Course

**BRC:** Basic Rider Course

**DOT:** Department of Transportation

EMT: emergency medical technician

**ERC:** Experienced Rider Course **HOV:** high occupancy vehicle

ICU: Intensive Care Unit

LLD: light & limited duty

MSR: motorcycle safety representative

**NR**: not reported

PMV-2: private motor vehicle-2 wheels

(motorcycle)

PMV-4: private motor vehicle-4 wheels

(automobile)

PPE: personal protective equipment

SIQ: sick in quarters

## CRASH REPORTS

#### (Continued from page 3)

caused them to lose control. As a result, the rider sustained a broken finger and road rash upon impacting the ground. The individual was placed on 14 days LLD, with additional LLD pending due to the finger injury. The accident occurred despite no indication of reckless behavior or violation of riding procedures. Weather conditions, specifically wind, were the primary environmental hazard. All required protective gear was worn and the rider had completed ARC two days before the incident.

#### May 4, 5 p.m., 27-year-old E-5

Location: Milton, Florida

Remarks: Rider was test driving a Honda CRF50F 50cc dirt bike to ensure recent repairs were functioning correctly. After confirming the repairs, the rider returned home. As they approached their residence, the rider slowed to pull over when a vehicle pulled out of a nearby driveway. The vehicle's occupant waved the rider on to proceed. However, due to a patch of loose gravel left on the road by the homeowner's landscaping, the front wheel of the bike slipped, causing the rider to lose control and fall to the asphalt. The rider was not wearing required PPE, per OPNAV M-5100.23 series, specifically a DOT-approved helmet.

#### May 4, 5:46 p.m., 27-year-old E-4

Location: Beaufort, South Carolina

Remarks: Rider ran off the road and collided with a guardrail, resulting

in a fractured knuckle on the right pinky finger. The rider was treated at a medical facility and released the same day.

#### May 5, 7:45 a.m., 25-year-old E-4

Location: Norfolk, Virginia

Remarks: An off-duty motorcycle rider was struck from behind by a truck, resulting in a left leg injury. The rider was placed on SIQ status for 48 hours for recovery.

#### May 6, 12:30 p.m., 29-year-old E-5

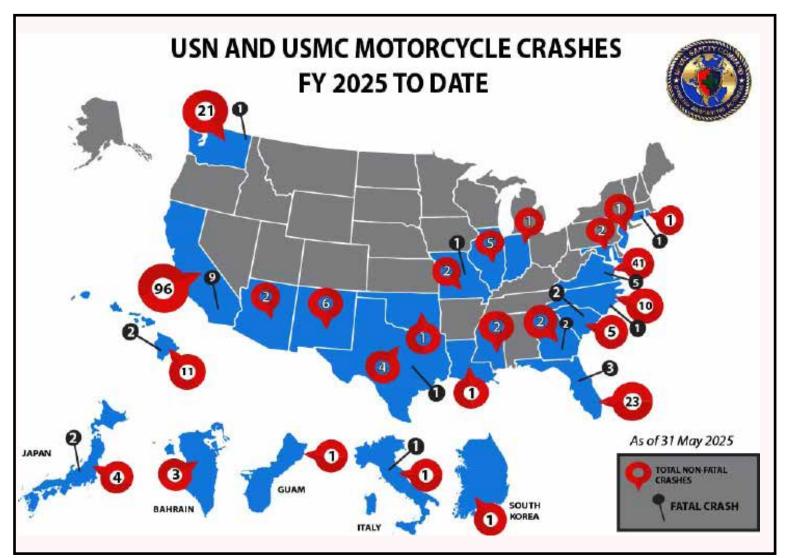
Location: San Diego, California

Remarks: Rider was attending a motorcycle course at a local training location and lost control during an exercise when their hand slipped, resulting in a collision with a wall. The rider's head struck a gate, prompting emergency medical services. All vital signs were reported as normal on scene. The rider later reported right foot pain and was evaluated at a military medical facility. The rider was placed on one day SIQ and 16 days LLD.

#### May 7, 6:15 p.m., 31-year-old E-6

Location: Waukegan, Illinois

Remarks: Rider was operating a PMV-2 on a local road when an unidentified individual driving a PMV-4 entered the rider's lane from a crossroad. This action caused a collision in which the rider struck the PMV-4 and rolled over the top of the vehicle. An unidentified bystander contacted emergency services due to the rider's condition. The rider was transported to an emergency room for evaluation and treatment.



### - CRASH REPORTS -

#### May 8, 6:35 a.m., 35-year-old E-6

Location: Great Lakes, Illinois

Remarks: Rider accelerated rapidly at an intersection, causing the rear tire of the motorcycle to lose traction. While attempting to regain control, the rider experienced a high-side fall, resulting in a fractured collarbone. The rider was evaluated and treated at a medical facility and discharged later that same day. At the time of the accident, the rider was wearing all required PPE, possessed a valid motorcycle license and completed BRC in July 2014. In addition, the rider completed ARC several times over the past 10-plus years, demonstrating an ongoing commitment to motorcycle safety and proficiency.

#### May 8, 4:45 p.m., 25-year-old E-5

Location: Norfolk, Virginia

Remarks: Rider was involved in a motorcycle crash while traveling on an interstate with two other motorcyclists. After encountering stopped traffic in the right lane, the group merged left. A vehicle ahead merged unexpectedly into their lane and the lead rider was unable to stop in time, resulting in a collision at approximately 20 mph. The rider was ejected over the handlebars and the vehicle responsible left the scene. The rider remained coherent, moved to the roadside and was assisted by a passing law enforcement officer. Emergency personnel cleared the rider on site. The rider later sought medical attention and was diagnosed with a minor concussion and a sprained wrist.

#### May 9, 4 a.m., 24-year-old E-5

Location: Norfolk, Virginia

Remarks: Rider fell from a scooter on a local road during rain, striking the pavement face first and sustaining facial fractures, including a broken nose. The rider was hospitalized and scheduled for surgery. It is unclear whether an approved helmet was worn at the time of the accident.

#### May 10, 3:30 p.m., 23-year-old E-6

Location: Hampton, Virginia

Remarks: Rider returning home on a motorcycle encountered a civilian SUV stopped in an intersection. The rider applied front brake pressure to avoid a collision but locked the front wheel, resulting in ejection over the handlebars and a slide along the roadway. A nearby resident provided initial aid for road rash. Emergency services arrived within 15 minutes and transported the rider to a medical facility. The rider was diagnosed with a fractured left wrist and fractured right fibula. They were treated and discharged the same evening.

#### May 11, 7 p.m., 35-year-old E-5

Location: Tacoma, Washington

Remarks: While driving home, the rider hit a slick spot on the road,

causing the motorcycle to fishtail and lose control. The rider sustained a fractured right elbow along with road rash to the left foot, both knees, torso and lower back. Emergency room treatment was provided. Road conditions were a contributing factor in the incident.

#### May 12, 6 a.m., age NR E-6

Location: Virginia Beach, Virginia

Remarks: The rider took an exit ramp where the road transitioned from asphalt to concrete and encountered a dip in the pavement. This caused the rear end of the bike to slide out, resulting in the rider coming off the bike while the bike slid down the road. It had been raining the night prior, leaving the roads wet. The rider was evaluated by EMTs and released with minor road rash on the right upper forearm. All PPE was worn correctly and no other injuries or damage were reported.

#### May 12, 7:40 a.m., 27-year-old E-5

Location: San Diego, California

Remarks: A rider operating a 2024 Kawasaki Ninja 500 motorcycle was involved in a minor collision, clipping the side mirror of another vehicle. The rider was wearing full protective gear, including a riding jacket, gloves and helmet. No police were involved and the rider was evaluated at base medical and released. The rider completed BRC in July 2024 and held a valid motorcycle license.

#### May 14, 5:25 p.m., 32-year-old E-7

Location: Newport, Rhode Island

Remarks: Rider was involved in a motorcycle crash where they collided with a vehicle that crossed into their path. The incident resulted in a minor physical injury and damage to the motorcycle. No long-term limitations or duty restrictions were reported.

#### May 16, 6 a.m., 26-year-old 0-2

Location: Pensacola, Florida

Remarks: Rider was commuting to base when they began experiencing fatigue and drowsiness. As a result, the rider briefly fell asleep at the wheel, veered off the road and came to a stop. There were no reported injuries or property damage.

#### May 16, 10:15 p.m., 30-year-old E-6

Location: Virginia Beach, Virginia

Remarks: Rider was a victim of a hit-and-run motorcycle crash. Witnesses rendered medical aid on scene until emergency services arrived. Rider was initially transported by ambulance to a civilian hospital and later transferred to a military medical facility for further evaluation and treatment. Reported injuries include a broken clavicle, bruised lung, road rash and leg injuries. Rider was wearing full PPE. Rider holds a valid motorcycle license and completed BRC in April 2025.



ENABLING WARFIGHTING READINESS 375 A Street, Norfolk, VA 23511-4399 Navalsafetycommand.navy.mil



### CRASH REPORTS

#### May 17, 12 p.m., 38-year-old 0-4

Location: Ewa Beach, Hawaii

Remarks: Rider operating a motorcycle collided with a PMV-4 on a highway. The collision resulted in a broken ankle for the PMV-2 operator and significant damage to the motorcycle. The rider was transported to hospital for medical treatment.

#### May 17, 2:30 p.m., 21-year-old E-3

Location: Oxnard, California

Remarks: Rider and a group of friends went to a restaurant for lunch and later departed to return home. During the return trip, a truck two vehicles ahead began turning into a gas station and stopped partially in the roadway. This caused the vehicle in front of the rider to brake suddenly. The rider applied hard braking in response, resulting in the rear tire locking up and the motorcycle sliding out from under them. The rider collided with the rear side of the vehicle in front, was ejected over the handlebars and the vehicle and landed on the roadway.

#### May 17, 5 p.m., age NR E-4

Location: Lynwood, California

Remarks: Rider was involved in a motorcycle collision with another vehicle and was ejected, striking the vehicle's windshield. The rider was transported to a medical facility and received treatment for multiple fractures, with surgeries pending involving the heart, spine and lungs.

#### May 19, 8:30 p.m., age NR E-4

Location: Borrego Springs, California

Remarks: Rider was admitted to the intensive care unit at a civilian medical facility following injuries sustained in a motorcycle crash.

#### May 19, time NR, age NR E-5

Location: Seattle, Washington

Remarks: Commanding officer was notified a command Sailor was involved in a motorcycle crash along an interstate. The exact time of the incident is unknown. EMS responded to the scene and the rider was transported and admitted to hospital for treatment and followon surgery. The rider sustained multiple fractures and underwent initial surgery. The rider was admitted to the ICU with inpatient care estimated for a minimum of 13 days.

#### May 20, 4:45 p.m., 26-year-old E-4

Location: Irvine, California

Remarks: Rider was commuting northbound on a freeway in the HOV lane. Between two exits, the rider was cut off by a vehicle merging into the lane less than a car length ahead. The rider swerved left and applied the front brake simultaneously to avoid a collision, resulting in the motorcycle being laid down on its left side in the service lane.

#### May 21, 5 p.m., age and rank NR

Location: Portsmouth, Virginia

Remarks: Rider was driving a motorcycle when the bike stalled, resulting in a fractured left leg. The rider was admitted to the hospital for one day and placed on 30 days of convalescent leave.

#### May 22, 4:02 a.m., age NR E-3

Location: Jacksonville, North Carolina

Remarks: Rider was involved in a single-vehicle motorcycle incident and sustained injuries to the lower extremities and left arm. The rider was transported to a regional health center and received follow-on surgical care.

#### May 22, 8:20 a.m., 23-year-old E-5

Location: Lynchburg, Missouri

Remarks: During a Motorcycle Mentorship Program group ride, a rider experienced a crash shortly after the group departed for their first checkpoint. The incident occurred during transit following completion of pre-ride inspections and a route safety brief. The rider lost control of the motorcycle and sustained injuries to both hands as well as back pain. The rider was assessed on site and transported for further medical evaluation. The motorcycle was recovered and returned to the rider's residence.

#### May 22, time, age and rank NR

Location: Port Hueneme, California

Remarks: Rider stopped at a red light, positioned behind two vehicles. When the light turned green, the vehicle directly in front of the rider abruptly stopped without warning, causing the rider to collide with it. The rider laid the motorcycle down and sustained a minor abrasion to the leg and a minor injury to the elbow. The rider sought medical evaluation at a regional medical center and was released. A follow-up appointment with the primary care manager was scheduled. The rider was wearing proper PPE.

#### May 23, 7:45 a.m., 24-year-old E-5

Location: Norfolk, Virginia

Remarks: Rider lost control of a Suzuki GSX-S1000GT+ sports bike, resulting in a single-vehicle crash. The rider was transported by ambulance to hospital for evaluation. At the time of the incident, the rider followed all motorcycle safety requirements, held a valid license and had completed the BRC in June 2024. PPE compliance was confirmed.

#### May 25, 7 p.m., 25-year-old E-5

Location: San Diego, California

Remarks: While commuting home, the rider was driving on a parkway and attempted to turn right into the driveway of an apartment complex. During the turn, the rider oversteered and collided with an object on the road. The impact caused the rider to be thrown over the handlebars, resulting in them striking the ground.

#### May 25, 8:15 p.m., age and rank NR

Location: Albuquerque, New Mexico

Remarks: While riding a motorcycle, the rider slipped on loose gravel but sustained no injuries or damage. The rider proceeded to the hospital for a precautionary evaluation.

#### May 26, 7:30 a.m., 21-year-old E-4

Location: Seattle, Washington

Remarks: Rider was operating a CF Moto 450 SS sports bike onto an on-ramp when they lost control due to wet road conditions. The motorcycle slid out and struck the median. The rider was wearing full PPE. No injuries were sustained. The rider holds a valid motorcycle license and had completed BRC in November 2024.

#### May 26, 11:45 p.m., 20-year-old E-3

Location: Honolulu, Hawaii

Remarks: Rider was involved in a motorcycle crash and transported by ambulance to hospital. They were treated for multiple facial fractures and signs of a traumatic brain injury. The rider was wearing full PPE. The rider has a valid motorcycle license/permit and completed a motorcycle safety course in December 2023.

### CRASH REPORTS

#### May 29, 8:30 p.m., 27-year-old E-6

Location: San Diego, California

Remarks: Rider of a motorcycle collided with an object on the road, resulting in a crash. The rider sustained a broken left leg and scratches on the left arm. Emergency services transported the rider to hospital for treatment. The motorcycle was damaged in the incident. The event is under review and follow-up care is pending.

#### May 30, 9:30 a.m., age NR E-6

Location: Naval Station Norfolk, Virginia

Remarks: Rider was involved in a motorcycle crash during a BRC. While traveling at approximately 5 mph, the rider lost balance and the motorcycle tipped over, landing on the rider's foot. The rider was transported to hospital for evaluation. An X-ray confirmed a broken foot. The rider has been placed on LLD and is scheduled to follow up with the ship's medical department.

#### May 30, time, age, rank NR

Location: Port Hueneme, California

Remarks: Rider was driving a motorcycle home from work when struck

by a car. The service member sustained an injury to the right wrist and the motorcycle was damaged. Preliminary findings indicate the service member was not at fault. Incident is under review and follow-up care is ongoing.

\*Even though the following fatal crashes are not reportable, they are worth referencing for training purposes.

#### May 3, 4:05 p.m., 35-year-old E-4

Location: Wilmington, Delaware

Remarks: A reservist, not on active-duty orders, was involved in a motorcycle crash in a metropolitan area. Following the incident, the rider was transferred to a regional medical facility, The rider was removed from life support May 12 and passed away shortly thereafter.

#### May 12, time and age NR E-4

Location: Newark, Delaware

Remarks: A reservist, not on active-duty orders, was involved in a motorcycle crash. The rider succumbed to injuries sustained in the incident.

