



*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>24</b>	<b>Marine Corps</b>
Rider fatalities this report: <b>4</b>	Total fatalities this report: <b>5</b>	Rider fatality this report: <b>1</b>
Rider fatalities for FY 25: <b>7</b>		Rider fatalities for FY 25: <b>5</b>

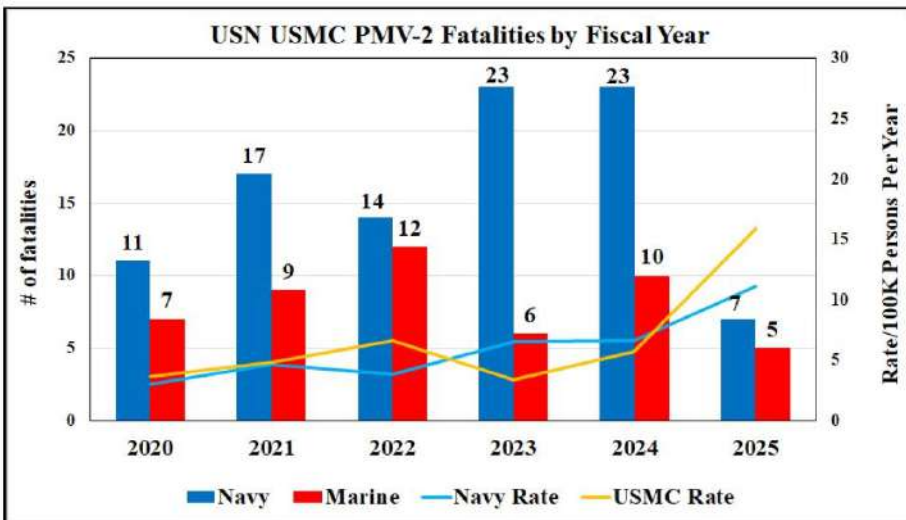
# Riding safely together can save lives

By Juan Aguilar

As November rolled in, it remains crucial for Sailors, Marines and motorcycle enthusiasts to focus on safety. Looking at last fiscal year's *Rider Down* issue for November, there were 23 non-fatal crashes and four fatalities for that month. Of concern is that this fiscal year's November numbers total 24 crashes with an additional five fatalities, reflecting an upward trend for the same timeframe.

Motorcycles offer a thrilling experience, but they come with inherent risks, especially with fall's cool weather underway and the cold winter months quickly approaching many areas of the United States. It is prudent to remain alert to changing riding conditions, compared to the summer days we have become accustomed.

Along with the cooler weather comes the risk of freezing roadways, bridges and entrances and exits to tunnels. Watch out for potential black ice conditions and loosely packed snow. Be cautious during and after rain and snow as the roads will be slick. As always, when trying to avoid dangerous road conditions, be alert to other drivers around you. The combination of bad weather, road conditions, lack of practice, diminished maneuvering skills and poor riding techniques may lead to a fateful outcome. Keep your motorcycle maintenance up to date and adapt for the winter weather conditions, as needed.



It is imperative to prioritize safe riding practices. Riders should consistently wear a Department of Transportation-approved

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Figure 1 above 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 (November).

# Riding safely

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helmet and appropriate protective gear, including clothing, gloves and boots. Enrolling in an Advanced Rider Course is highly recommended to enhance riding skills and knowledge. Additionally, riders must remain sober and alert, avoiding the influence of alcohol or drugs while also taking care to manage fatigue. Inspecting key motorcycle components, such as brakes, tires and lights, ensures proper functionality. Finally, increasing visibility on the road through reflective gear and lighting is crucial for enhancing safety and ensuring other drivers can see the rider.

As another month concludes, the commitment to prioritizing safety on the road remains unwavering. By adhering to best practices and maintaining vigilance, riders can significantly reduce the risks associated with motorcycle riding, ensuring a safer experience for all. The message is clear: stay safe and enjoy the ride. By emphasizing comprehensive training and encouraging responsible riding behaviors, we aim to sustain this positive momentum and enhance the safety of all Navy and Marine Corps personnel on the road.

Together, we can foster a safer riding environment for our service members. Additional traffic safety facts and statistics are available at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813589>

In November, the Naval Enterprise recorded 29 motorcycle crashes, five of which resulted in fatalities. California and Virginia led in motorcycle crashes, each with 10 reportable – followed by Washington with three crashes. The remaining crashes occurred throughout the United States with one fatality in Japan.

Over a quarter of the crashes reported had minimal or no age data reported; 37% of the crashes involved riders between the ages of 22-25. Twenty-three percent of the crashes occurred between noon and 4 p.m. and 17% of the crashes occurred between 8 p.m. and midnight. Additionally, 47% of the crashes occurred on weekdays and 53% on the weekends.

It's crucial to pay attention to the factors behind this month's motorcycle crashes and understand that detailed and accurate reports help ensure the data collected reflects the actual

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***In the pursuit of safety, every detail matters. Do not ignore even minor factors, as this inaction raises your risk and may result in a collision.***

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## By the numbers

- 8 (30%) crashes had no details reported.
- 8 (27%) crashes involved loss of control.
- 7 (23%) crashes involved an improper maneuver.
- 3 (10%) crashes involved collision with moving vehicle.
- 2 (7%) crashes involved PMV-4s hitting a rider.
- 1 (3%) crash was due to following too close.

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 distressing statistics emphasize the critical importance of motorcycle safety awareness and proactive measures to prevent future tragedies.

Amidst the critical mission of ensuring warfighting readiness, the diligent efforts of motorcycle safety representatives (MSRs), supervisors and collateral duty safety officers persist in keeping personnel current with their training and licensing. The *Rider Down* reports are indispensable tools in your arsenal, integral to risk awareness 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 seamlessly integrated the *Rider Down* 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: <https://navalsafetycommand.navy.mil/Media/Mags-Pubs/Motorcycle-Rider-Down-Reports-Newsletters/>.

Also visit the CAC-enabled site for more tools and Resources, <https://intelshare.intelink.gov/sites/nsc/Pages/PMV-2.aspx>.

In the pursuit of safety, every detail matters. Do not ignore even minor factors, as this inaction raises your risk and may result in a collision. On the following page, take a look of some safety reminders for both motorcyclists and motorists. Factors provided from the crash narratives on the pages thereafter are based on the information presented in the operations reports and the investigators' reports, most of which are still under investigation. Remove one factor and the crash may not have occurred.

# Important Safety Reminders

## ***For Motorcyclists:***

- Wearing a helmet is the single most effective way to protect yourself from a head injury. Use a motorcycle helmet for every ride, and ensure your passengers also use a helmet.
- Make sure your helmet has a valid DOT label; the label means the helmet meets the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards – this is also known as the FMVSS 218 standard. Novelty helmets without this label may not meet the same standard and will not provide the best protection needed in a crash.
- Check the fit of your helmet to ensure optimal protection.
- Wear protective gear like a sturdy jacket, pants, boots and gloves; safety gear provide protection in case of falls or crashes and improves comfort during the ride.
- Make yourself visible by using high-visibility colors and retro-reflective materials to maximize the ability of drivers to see you.
- Motorcycle riding requires full attention, skill and coordination. Avoid combining riding with drinking alcohol or using other impairing drugs.



## ***For Drivers:***

- Always be on the lookout for motorcyclists.
- A motorcycle's smaller size means it can be hidden in your vehicle's blind spot.
- A motorcycle's size and narrow profile can make it difficult to judge its distance and speed. Take extra care when judging when to turn or merge.
- Keep a safe distance from the motorcycle in front of you; motorcyclists can slow their motorcycles by downshifting instead of using their brakes. This means the brake lights won't come on.
- Remember that motorcyclists sometimes change positions in their lane to avoid debris on the road.

— NHTSA's Research and Program Development



# Motorcycle Crashes

## November 2024



### Motorcycle Crash Legend

NR represents information not reported

Red entries represent Marine Corps-specific crashes

All times local

#### Fatal Mishaps

Nov. 7, 8:44 p.m., 24-year-old E-5  
Location: Oak Harbor, Washington  
Remarks: Rider was involved in a fatal motorcycle crash in which they were struck by a truck. The rider was wearing PPE, including a helmet and gloves.

Nov. 8, time and age NR E-5  
Location: Groton, Connecticut  
Remarks: Rider was involved in a fatal motorcycle crash.

Nov. 19, 3:58 p.m., age NR E-3  
Location: Okinawa, Japan  
Remarks: The command was notified that a Marine had sustained fatal injuries while operating their motorcycle off base and in town. Despite receiving immediate medical attention, the service member succumbed to injuries and was pronounced dead.

Nov. 25, 12:23 a.m., 23-year-old E-4  
Location: Hampton, Virginia  
Remarks: Rider was involved in a fatal motorcycle crash and was pronounced deceased at the scene. At the time of the incident, the motorcycle was not being operated in accordance with regulations. The bike had been purchased on Nov. 18, 2024, and the rider was neither licensed nor had attended any required motorcycle safety courses within the specified timeframe. *Although the rider was using PPE, including a helmet and gloves, the absence of proper training and licensing contributed to the incident circumstances.*

Nov. 27, 11:40 a.m., 20-year-old E-3  
Location: Jacksonville, Florida  
Remarks: Rider was involved in a fatal motorcycle crash.

#### Nonfatal Mishaps

Nov. 1, 7 a.m., 20-year-old E-3  
Location: Norfolk, Virginia  
Remarks: Rider was en route to work when they collided with a PMV-4. They wore all required PPE and had completed a civilian BRC in June 2024. Despite the rider's training, which is essential for promoting safe riding practices, the rider sustained a fractured pelvis and was transported to hospital for treatment. *This incident highlights the importance of continuous safety awareness and ongoing rider education, as even well-trained riders can be involved in crashes.*

Nov. 1, 8:15 a.m., age NR E-6  
Location: Camp Pendleton, California  
Remarks: The rider understeered when riding on the mountain road highway interchange. The rider hit the road's outside median and fell

off the motorcycle, hitting their head. The PPE worked properly, but the rider sustained a concussion.

Nov. 1, 1 p.m., 20-year-old E-3  
Location: Norfolk, Virginia  
Remarks: Rider departed work for their commute home around 1 p.m. and was rear-ended by a motor vehicle while taking the freeway on-ramp. The impact caused the rider to swerve into the ramp railing, ejecting them from the motorcycle. The motor vehicle did not stop. Bystanders assisted the rider, who contacted a friend to take them to an urgent care facility. After receiving treatment, the rider was released and placed on SIQ for 48 hours. This incident underscores the risks of riding in traffic, the importance of protective gear and the challenges of handling unexpected collisions, especially when the other party does not remain at the scene.

Nov. 3, 10 p.m., 22-year-old E-4  
Location: Hampton, Virginia  
Remarks: Rider was involved in a motorcycle crash while wearing all required PPE and having completed BRC in June 2022. While the BRC provides essential training for basic motorcycling tasks, more advanced techniques such as emergency braking, advanced cornering and defensive riding often require additional practice and specialized training. *If the rider has not pursued further education, such as ARC or ERC, they may not have the opportunity to develop these advanced skills. This lack of advanced training and experience could have contributed to the rider's inability to handle the situation effectively, highlighting the importance of continuing education and practice beyond basic certification.*

Nov. 4, 5 p.m., 32-year-old E-3  
Location: Stafford, Virginia  
Remarks: Rider was driving home from the base on their motorcycle when they crashed. As a result, the rider sustained a broken left leg and was treated at the hospital. The details of the crash, such as the cause and circumstances, are unclear, but the rider's injury required medical attention. *This incident highlights the importance of safety, situational awareness and wearing protective gear while riding.*

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#### Acronyms

- ARC: advanced rider course
- BRC: basic rider course
- EMS: emergency medical services
- ERC: experienced rider course
- LLD: light & limited duty
- MSR: motorcycle safety representative
- PMV-2: private motor vehicle 2 wheel (motorcycle)
- PMV-4: private motor vehicle 4 wheel (automobile)
- PPE: personal protective equipment
- SIQ: sick in quarters

# Motorcycle Crashes

November 2024

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investigation into the cause of the crash could provide additional insight into potential factors, such as road conditions, rider error or mechanical failure.

Nov. 10, 7:15 p.m., 25-year-old E-4

Location: Camp Pendleton, California

Remarks: Rider was operating a motorcycle when they hit a pothole, which caused them to lose control of the bike. The rider sustained multiple serious injuries, including fractures to the femur, pelvis, kneecap and skull. The rider was hospitalized for nine days to receive treatment for these injuries. *This incident highlights the potential dangers of road hazards like potholes, which can lead to catastrophic crashes, especially if the rider is unable to react in time. It also underscores the importance of wearing proper protective gear and maintaining full awareness of road conditions while riding.*

Nov. 11, 11:30 p.m., 25-year-old E-4

Location: Jamul, California

Remarks: Rider was thrown from their motorcycle while riding with a group in Lawson Valley after encountering gravel on the road. The gravel caused the rider's brakes to lock up, resulting in the loss of control and the rider being ejected from the motorcycle. The rider

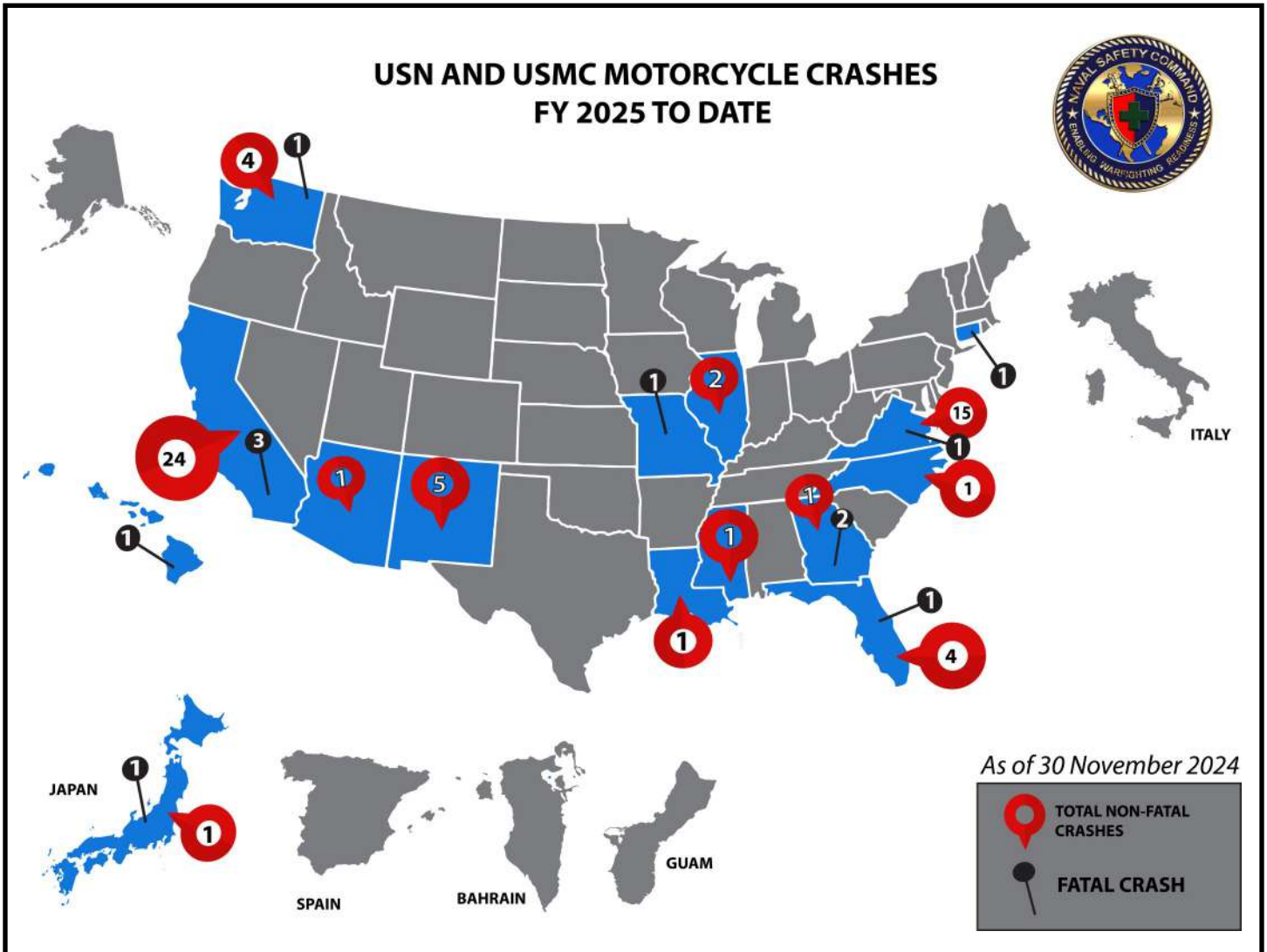
sustained minor injuries and was transported to the hospital via ambulance. *This incident emphasizes the risks of riding on roads with loose gravel, which can cause unexpected loss of traction and control, especially when braking. It also highlights the importance of practicing proper braking techniques, maintaining awareness of road conditions, and wearing appropriate protective gear to reduce the severity of injuries in case of a crash.*

Nov. 13, 1 p.m., age NR E-6

Location: Norfolk, Virginia

Remarks: Rider was leaving work when they over-leaned their motorcycle, causing the back peg to scrape the pavement and resulting in a loss of control. The police were called to the scene and no other vehicles or individuals were involved. The rider was issued a reckless driving ticket due to losing control. They sustained minor bruises to their right knee and left wrist but declined to go to the hospital for further treatment. *This incident highlights the risks of over-leaning, particularly when a rider may still need to gain the experience to manage more aggressive cornering, and emphasizes the importance of maintaining control and avoiding reckless riding behavior.*

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# Motorcycle Crashes

November 2024

*(Continued from Page 5)*

Nov. 13, 2:20 p.m., 22-year-old E-4

Location: San Diego, California

Remarks: Rider was en route to report for duty when traffic on the interstate abruptly slowed. The rider could not slow down in time and attempted to swerve left to avoid colliding with the vehicle directly in front. However, the second vehicle in the left lane also slowed unexpectedly, causing the rider to collide with its right rear bumper. The impact caused the motorcycle to fall to the left, ejecting the rider. The rider was transported to hospital, where they were treated for a fractured clavicle. The rider was wearing a helmet and jacket. *The collision highlights the importance of maintaining safe following distances and being prepared for sudden traffic changes, especially in*

*high-speed environments like the interstate.*

Nov. 14, 9 p.m., 22-year-old E-4

Location: El Cajon, California

Remarks: Rider was learning how to ride by spouse, who has a valid motorcycle license. While in 1st gear, the service member accidentally released the clutch while hitting the throttle, causing the motorcycle to run into a wall on the 2nd deck of a parking garage. The trainee was transported to hospital and diagnosed with a broken right hip and left knee and required surgery. The rider was wearing a helmet and jacket. *This situation highlights the importance of leaving motorcycle training to a trained professional in approved training environments.*

Nov. 15, 6:40 a.m., 32-year-old E-4

Location: Everett, Washington

Remarks: Rider was entering the on-ramp to a highway when, halfway through, the motorcycle's tire slipped on the wet pavement, causing the bike to lay down. Despite the incident, the rider moved the motorcycle off the road and continued their commute to work. The rider sustained minor bumps and bruises but did not suffer serious injuries. The service member wore all required PPE at the time of the incident. The rider had completed BRC in November 2023 and ARC in October 2024.

*This incident highlights the potential risks of riding in wet conditions, even for riders with recent training and the importance of maintaining awareness and caution in adverse weather conditions.*

Nov. 15, 11 p.m., 22-year-old E-3

Location: San Diego, California

Remarks: Rider was operating a motorcycle with

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An instructor with the Mid-Atlantic region motorcycle training team prepares to begin an obstacle course demonstration for participants during a safety course at Naval Station Norfolk, Virginia, July 25, 2024. (U.S. Navy photo by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Amanda S. Kitchner)

# Motorcycle Crashes

November 2024

Safety officers from Naval Station Great Lakes (NSGL) and Recruit Training Command train Sailors on the fundamentals of motorcycle safety during a rider refresher course onboard NSGL, Illinois, July 30, 2024. The course is intended to foster discussions on motorcycle safety and develop good riding practices. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Matt Hall)



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an additional passenger when they attempted a maneuver that caused both individuals to fall off the motorcycle. Both the rider and the passenger were transported to hospital by ambulance. *A motorcycle rider with minimal training faces significant challenges when performing maneuvers, especially with a passenger. The rider's limited skills may lead to improper throttle control, incorrect leaning during turns or poor braking, which can destabilize the bike, particularly when the passenger shifts their weight. The added weight of the passenger requires extra balance and coordination, which an inexperienced rider may struggle to manage. Additionally, the lack of communication and safety precautions, such as proper gear, increases the risk of a crash. In such cases, the rider's inability to react or recover from an improper maneuver can lead to loss of control, jeopardizing both their safety and that of the passenger. Effective training and practice are essential for managing the complexities of riding with a passenger.*

Nov. 16, 12:30 p.m., 23-year-old E-4

Location: San Diego, California

Remarks: A newly trained rider who had recently completed the California Motorcyclist Safety Program was involved in a single-vehicle crash while navigating a turn at a safe speed. Despite wearing all required PPE, the rider lost control of the motorcycle and collided with several parked vehicles. The rider was transported to hospital, where they were diagnosed with a fractured right foot. *As a rider with limited experience, it's likely that improper maneuvers, such as incorrect leaning or throttle control, contributed to the loss of control during the turn. Although the rider had undergone formal training, limited riding experience may have impacted their ability to handle the motorcycle in a more challenging scenario.*

Nov. 16, 11 p.m., 38-year-old rate NR

Location: National City, California

Remarks: Rider was involved in a single-vehicle motorcycle crash while traveling home from a friend's house. During the ride, the motorcycle slid out from under them, causing the rider to be thrown from the bike. The rider was transported to hospital and was unable to report for duty the following day due to injuries sustained in the crash. *While the rider had completed the BRC in November 2018 and the ARC in January 2023, the crash may have resulted from a combination of factors, such as road conditions, rider error or an improper maneuver. Despite completing both courses, the rider's reaction to the situation may have been impacted by factors like limited experience or a lack of recent practice.*

Nov. 17, 5:30 p.m., 25-year-old E-2

Location: Virginia Beach, Virginia

Remarks: Rider, operating a motorcycle with a suspended license, failed to yield when police signaled them to pull over. In resisting the traffic stop, the rider lost control of the motorcycle, slipping and falling off, though they suffered no serious injuries. The rider had completed the BRC in April 2024, but it appears they may have missed or misunderstood the portion of the course regarding licensing and registration requirements. As a result, the rider was unaware of the legal implications of operating a motorcycle with a suspended license. *The incident highlights the importance of fully understanding legal responsibilities, alongside basic riding skills, to ensure both safety and compliance with traffic laws.*

Nov. 18, 5 p.m., 21-year-old E-4

Location: Virginia Beach, Virginia

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# Motorcycle Crashes

November 2024

*(Continued from Page 7)*

Remarks: Rider was stopped at a traffic light when they were rear-ended by another vehicle. The rider was taken to hospital for an MRI and remained in the hospital for two days for observation. After the examination, the rider was released with no injuries. *This incident highlights the risks of being rear-ended while stopped, underscoring the importance of maintaining situational awareness ensuring proper following distances when riding and wearing all necessary protective gear to mitigate potential injuries in such situations.*

Nov. 20, 1:12 p.m., 20-year-old E-4  
Location: Whidbey Island, Washington

Remarks: Rider was operating a motorcycle on base when they lost control and crashed. The rider was transported to hospital with a dislocated right shoulder and road rash. The rider wore all required PPE. *The rider completed BRC in April 2024, but despite the recent training, the rider may have been unable to maintain control of the situation, possibly due to inexperience, environmental conditions or improper maneuvering. The incident underscores the importance of continued practice and experience beyond the basic training to improve handling in various riding situations.*

Nov. 21, 8 a.m., 34-year-old E-7  
Location: San Diego, California

Remarks: Rider was involved in a motorcycle crash and was transported to hospital, possibly with a fractured leg – no further details available. The rider holds a valid driver's license with a motorcycle endorsement and has completed all required training courses. *Despite having the proper licensing and training, the incident highlights the importance of ongoing skill development and situational awareness, as even experienced riders can be involved in crashes.*

Nov. 21, time, age, rank NR  
Location: NR

Remarks: Rider was on their way to work when the rear tire of their motorcycle locked up, causing the bike to slide out from underneath them. Fortunately, there were no injuries and only minor damage occurred to the motorcycle. *This incident highlights the importance of regularly maintaining the motorcycle, especially the tires and braking system, to prevent equipment failure and ensure rider safety. Additionally, the event emphasizes the need for caution when riding, especially in situations that could lead to sudden loss of control.*

Nov. 24, time, age NR E-7

Location: Albuquerque, New Mexico

Remarks: Rider was involved in a motorcycle crash – no further details available.

Nov. 25, 7:58 a.m., 24-year-old E-5

Location: Hampton, Virginia

Remarks: Rider was involved in a crash while making a turn. During the maneuver, the motorcycle's front wheel lost traction, causing the rider to lose control and fall. No collision with other vehicles occurred. The rider sustained injuries. *The primary factor contributing to the incident appears to be the loss of traction on the front wheel while turning. This could have been caused by a variety of factors, including road surface conditions, speed, tire conditions, mechanical failures like brakes or suspension or lack of training and riding experience.*

Nov. 26, 5:45 p.m., 20-year-old E-1

Location: Hampton, Virginia

Remarks: Rider was involved in a single-vehicle crash while operating an electric bicycle on base. The rider was transported via ambulance to hospital with road rash and a suspected concussion. Upon further evaluation, the rider was diagnosed with intracranial hemorrhaging and was transferred to a specialty hospital for diagnosis confirmation. The rider was wearing all appropriate PPE, which included a helmet and other safety gear.

Nov. 27, 3:30 p.m., 34-year-old E-6

Location: Ramona, California

Remarks: Rider was involved in a motorcycle crash and was air transported to hospital's trauma unit. Rider was evaluated and moved out of trauma unit but stayed at hospital overnight for observation for facial fractures, broken ribs and road rash. Alcohol was not involved. The rider was wearing PPE, had a valid motorcycle license or permit and had attended BRC in 2016 and ARC in 2022.

Nov. 30, 8:30 a.m., age NR E-3

Location: Yuma, Arizona

Remarks: Rider was involved in a motorcycle crash and was transported to hospital for treatment of sustained injuries.

*\*Even though the following crash is not a reportable event, it is worth referencing for training purposes.*

Nov. 4, 4 p.m., age NR WG-8 Civilian

Location: Texas

Remarks: Rider was involved in a motorcycle crash while on leave, resulting in a head-on collision. They were transported to a hospital, where they were treated for fractures to the arm and ribs. Motorcycle crashes occur across all demographics, military and civilian, male and female. The common factor in these incidents is often the level of training or the lack thereof.



## ENABLING WARFIGHTING READINESS

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[navalsafetycommand.navy.mil](http://navalsafetycommand.navy.mil)