

RIDER DOWN

JUNE 2026

Mastery requires practice

Readiness beyond Basic Riding Course

By Juan Aguilar

The Naval Enterprise recorded 36 motorcycle crashes in June, including four fatalities involving active-duty personnel, as well as the fatality of a Reserve Sailor not on active-duty orders, therefore not reportable as an off-duty mishap.

The incidents occurred across the continental United States, Hawaii and Italy, with the highest concentrations reported in California (31%). Most significantly, the data reflects a persistent trend: more than 67% of these crashes involved riders ages 29 and under, particularly those in pay grades E-5 and below, which continues to highlight a critical at-risk demographic and requires continued command emphasis on mentorship, training and command engagement.

June's mishaps reflect recurring, largely preventable risk factors, including multi-vehicle interactions, loss of control during cornering and braking, roadway hazards, mechanical failures and rider decision-making. Several incidents

involved younger riders, recent Basic Riding Course (BRC) graduates and riders attempting evasive maneuvers in response to the actions of other motorists.

The severity of injuries, including traumatic brain injuries, multiple fractures and fatalities, highlights the unforgiving nature of motorcycle mishaps and reinforces the need for continuous skill development, defensive riding practices and command engagement.

Mishap Overview

In June, 36 motorcycle-related accidents were reported:

- Fatal Crashes: 4 active-duty
- Multi-vehicle collisions: 10
- Collisions with an animal or object: 4
- Loss of control/rollover: 18

Key observations:

- Roadway hazard risks: Multiple riders lost control after encountering dirt, sand, gravel, pine needles, construction zones, animals and roadway debris.
- Mechanical failure: One rider lost control after a stuck throttle caused the motorcycle to strike a curb and

At a Glance

USN

Rider fatalities this report: 3
Rider fatalities for FY 26: 15

USMC

Rider fatalities this report: 1
Rider fatalities for FY 26: 9

Totals this report

Non-fatal crashes: 32
Fatalities: 4

become airborne, leaving the rider with a severe femur injury. A second rider was hospitalized for three days following an accident while testing the throttle on his bike.

- New rider risk: Several riders had completed BRC only days prior to the mishap, reinforcing the gap between course completion and real-world proficiency. One on-duty accident occurred while a rider was attending BRC.

- Multi-vehicle collision fatalities: Two riders lost their lives after collisions with other vehicles, including a left-turn conflict and a two-vehicle collision.

- Rear-end and following-distance concerns: Several riders struck vehicles that slowed ahead of them or were forced into evasive action due to sudden traffic changes.

- Severe injury trend: Multiple riders sustained traumatic brain injuries, pelvic fractures, broken extremities and other life-altering injuries.

U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Bryan McDougal, a supply quality assurance specialist for Blount Island Command, signals a thumbs up during a basic rider course June 25, 2026, at Marine Corps Support Facility Blount Island, Florida. The two-day course equipped novice riders with classroom instruction and hands-on training to develop rider proficiency and promote motorcycle safety. (Marine Corps photo by Dustin Senger)



Contributing factors, key takeaways for safe riding

(Editor's note: By analyzing the mishap reports, we're able to gain a more in-depth look at possible causes behind the mishaps and to find areas to get real and get better. Below are key points found and areas of focus.)

1. Multi-Vehicle Interaction Risks:

Interactions with other vehicles remained the most significant threat during June. Several riders were struck, cut off, forced into evasive action or involved in fatal collisions initiated by other motorists. Riders must continue to assume they are not seen and continue planning escape routes whenever possible.

2. Loss of Control and Cornering Errors:

A large portion of mishaps involved riders losing traction, departing the roadway or failing to negotiate curves. Many of these incidents occurred during routine riding conditions, reinforcing the importance of maintaining proficiency in braking, cornering and traction management

3. Training Gaps and Skill Retention:

Several mishaps demonstrated a gap between completing initial training and applying those skills in real-world riding conditions. Riders had trouble with cornering, braking, traction management and hazard response. Recent BRC

completion did not prevent multiple loss-of-control mishaps, reinforcing that riding proficiency requires continual practice, mentorship and follow-on training.

4. Environmental and Roadway Hazards:

Gravel, pine needles, construction zones, roadway debris, animals and wet pavement all contributed to mishaps this month. Riders must continuously evaluate roadway conditions and adjust their speed and positioning accordingly.

5. Mechanical Reliability and Pre-Ride Inspections:

Mechanical failures played a direct role in multiple mishaps. Routine inspections and prompt correction of deficiencies remain essential components of motorcycle readiness. Riders should never attempt maintenance, troubleshooting or adjustments while riding. If a problem is identified during a ride, safely stop and address the issue before continuing.

This month's motorcycle mishaps highlight persistent and largely preventable risks across the riding population. Four active-duty riders and one Reserve Sailor lost their lives during the reporting period, while numerous others sustained severe injuries. Multi-vehicle interactions, loss of control,

roadway hazards and mechanical failures continued to be the primary contributors to mishap occurrence.

The number of serious injuries among younger riders and incidents involving lack of fundamental riding skills prove that training is only the beginning of proficiency development. Continuous skill improvement, disciplined riding practices, mechanical readiness and engaged leadership are essential to reducing motorcycle mishaps and preserving our Sailors and Marines lives.

To prevent future "shake your head" incidents, motorcycle safety representatives and leadership are encouraged to share the following mishap incidents with their riders.

By the numbers

- 15 (42%) crashes involved a rollover/overturn.
- 10 (28%) crashes involved colliding with a moving vehicle.
- 4 (11%) crashes running off the road.
- 4 (11%) crashes involved colliding with animal or object.
- 3 (8%) crash data NR.

By the clock

- Midnight - 3:59 a.m. – 2 (5%)
- 4 a.m.-7:59 a.m. – 4 (11%)
- 8 a.m. - 11:59 a.m. – 4 (11%)
- noon - 3:59 p.m. – 9 (25%)
- 4 p.m. - 7:59 p.m. – 10 (28%)
- 8 p.m. - 11:59 p.m. – 6 (17%)
- No Data - 1 (3%)

By the day

Weekdays – 14 (39%)
Weekend – 22 (61%)



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

Rider Down

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 REPORTS

Motorcycle Crash Legend

NR represents information not reported

Red entries represent

Marine Corps-specific mishaps
(all times local)

Fatal Crashes

June 9, 2:50 a.m., 25-year-old E-3

Location: Moss Point, Mississippi

Remarks: Rider crashed on an interstate and had already passed when law enforcement found them.

June 16, 9:45 p.m., 34-year-old E-6

Location: San Clemente, California

Remarks: Rider lost control of a motorcycle and crashed on the roadway. The rider sustained fatal injuries and, despite lifesaving efforts by a witness and responding emergency personnel, was pronounced dead at the scene.

June 17, 3:29 p.m., 24-year-old E-5

Location: Lorton, Virginia

Remarks: Rider was operating a motorcycle when a pickup truck towing a loaded trailer initiated a left turn across the rider's lane of travel. The motorcycle collided with the trailer and the rider was subsequently struck by a second vehicle. The rider was pronounced dead at the hospital.

June 19, 4:20 p.m., 26-year-old E-5

Location: Norfolk, Virginia

Remarks: Rider was involved in a two-vehicle motorcycle collision and sustained life-threatening injuries. The rider was transported to a local hospital where they later succumbed to their injuries.

Nonfatal Crashes

June 1, 3 p.m., 35-year-old E-6

Location: Visalia, California

Remarks: Rider was involved in a collision with a passenger vehicle. The rider sustained multiple fractures, including a broken sternum, clavicle and pelvic bone.

June 1, 7:44 p.m., age and rank NR

Location: Patuxent River, Maryland

Remarks: Rider was practicing motorcycle riding skills during a base training course when they lost control and fell. The rider sustained a fractured knee, a sprained ankle and road rash. The rider was placed on one day of SIQ.

June 4, 5:50 p.m., 24-year-old E-7

Location: Virginia Beach, Virginia

Remarks: Rider collided with the rear end of a braking vehicle. The rider sustained a sprained ankle and was placed on seven days LLD.

June 5, 7:25 a.m., 22-year-old E-5

Location: San Diego, California

Remarks: Rider was departing a driveway at low speed when the wheel cover became entangled in the rear wheel, causing the wheel to lock and the rider to fall. The rider sustained a wrist fracture and a left forearm fracture and was placed on LLD pending further evaluation to determine the need for surgery.

June 6 7:30 p.m., age NR E-6

Location: Moncks Corner, South Carolina

Remarks: Rider lost traction while negotiating a curve covered with pine needles, departed the roadway into a ditch and sustained minor injuries.

June 7, 2 p.m., 28-year-old E-6

Location: Rockville, Maryland

Remarks: Motorcycle rider collided with the driver's side of a vehicle and sustained minor injuries. They were evaluated by the hospital and placed on LLD.

June 8, 1:30 p.m., 20-year-old E-3

Location: Norfolk, Virginia

Remarks: Rider was operating a motorcycle in an apartment complex parking lot when their throttle stuck and the rider lost of control. The motorcycle struck a curb and became airborne, and suffered a severe femur injury. The rider had completed BRC only days prior to the mishap.

June 8, 3:48 p.m., 22-year-old E-4

Location: Caserta, Italy

Remarks: Rider was operating a motorcycle when an oncoming vehicle abruptly cut into their path and braked. Although the rider braked hard, the collision was unavoidable. The offending vehicle fled the scene; the disabled motorcycle was towed and no injuries or lost workdays reported.

Acronyms

*BRC: Basic Rider Course

*LLD: light limited duty

*NR: not reported

*PMV-2: motorcycle

*SIQ: sick in quarters

June 9, 10 a.m., age and rank NR

Location: Springfield, Missouri

Remarks: Rider crashed while taking evasive action to avoid a deer entering the roadway. The rider sustained a broken thumb and road rash due to the rollover crash. No lost workdays were reported.

June 9, 1:30 p.m., 28-year-old E-5

Location: Ojai, California

Remarks: Rider lost control while negotiating a turn, departed the roadway and tumbled down an embankment. The rider sustained a fractured clavicle, a bruised thigh and a puncture wound to the calf. The rider was placed on 2 days of SIQ and 30 days of LLD.

June 10, 9 p.m., 24-year-old E-4

Location: Catania, Italy

Remarks: Passenger riding on a motorcycle was ejected after the operator lost control and skidded while attempting to avoid a collision. The passenger sustained a concussion, bruising and pain in the neck, hand, right knee and left flank. The passenger was placed on four days of SIQ.

June 11, 1 p.m., 31-year-old E-6

Location: Suffolk, Virginia

Remarks: Rider struck an object in the roadway, lost control of the motorcycle and flipped over the median. The rider sustained a broken left wrist, a broken left shoulder joint and a laceration to one knee.

June 12, 3 p.m., 20-year-old E-2

Location: San Diego, California

Remarks: Rider was operating a motorcycle when the front wheel struck a pothole, causing the rider to lose control and crash. The rider sustained a broken pinky finger, a broken wrist and a fractured knee.

June 12, 4:14 p.m., 40-year-old E-7

Location: Spring Valley, California

Remarks: Rider was involved in a single-vehicle motorcycle accident after taking evasive action to avoid a collision with another vehicle. The rider was ejected from the motorcycle and sustained injuries to the hip.

June 12, 9 p.m., age NR E-4

Location: Charleston, South Carolina

Remarks: Rider was involved in a motorcycle accident and sustained a fractured tibia. The rider was transported to a medical facility for treatment and further evaluation.

June 13, 5 p.m., age NR E-4

Location: San Diego, California

Remarks: Rider was involved in a motorcycle crash and sustained serious injuries to the face, chest and arms, as well as a traumatic brain injury with brain bleeding. The rider was admitted to the intensive care unit and placed on a ventilator for treatment and monitoring.

June 15, 4 p.m., 22-year-old E-2

Location: Bangor, Washington

Remarks: Rider lost traction after encountering a patch of gravel while departing a military installation, and laid the motorcycle down. The rider sustained a minor leg injury. They had recently completed BRC in May 2026.

June 16, 7:39 a.m., 28-year-old E-6

Location: Temecula, California

Remarks: Rider was involved in a motorcycle accident while commuting from their residence. First responders arrived on scene and the rider was subsequently transported to a hospital for medical treatment. The rider was hospitalized for ongoing treatment and observation.

June 16, 8:33 a.m., 25-year-old E-5

Location: Gulfport, Mississippi

Remarks: Rider was operating a motorcycle when a vehicle changed into the rider's lane and braked abruptly. With limited options to maneuver due to adjacent traffic and roadway debris, the rider laid the motorcycle down to avoid a collision. The rider avoided striking the vehicle and no injuries were reported.

June 16, 7:15 p.m., 24-year-old E-5

Location: Port Royal, South Carolina

Remarks: Rider lost control of a motorcycle while negotiating a curve during rainy conditions and departed the roadway. The rider collided with a tree, was ejected from the motorcycle and sustained a broken arm. Emergency medical personnel transported the rider to a hospital, where further evaluation ruled out a traumatic brain injury.

June 17 8 p.m., age NR E-2

Location: Lexington Park, Maryland

Remarks: Rider lost control of a motorcycle after an unintended throttle input caused the motorcycle to accelerate unexpectedly. The motorcycle departed the roadway and overturned into a dirt and grassy area. No injuries were reported.



ENABLING WARFIGHTING READINESS
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USN AND USMC MOTORCYCLE CRASHES FY 2026 TO DATE



As of 30 June 2026

