



INFORMATION BULLETIN

for Allied
Agencies

October 22, 1991

Exhibit "FF"

BULLETIN NO. 29
MANDATORY MOTORCYCLE HELMET LAW page 1 of 5

California's mandatory motorcycle helmet law becomes effective January 1, 1992. The California Highway Patrol (CHP) is disseminating this information to California law enforcement agencies because of the intense interest surrounding the passage of the legislation.

The CHP will begin to issue citations to violators of the helmet law on January 1, 1992. There will be no "conditioning period" after the effective date of the law, as a media publicity campaign will have taken place prior to that date. The CHP believes that this law has the potential to prevent great human tragedy and that its effect dictates an immediate enforcement posture.

Vehicle Code (VC) §27803 applies only to vehicles on a highway that meet the definition of motorcycle, motor-driven cycle or motorized bicycle (including many Cushman police vehicles).

The operator of a motorcycle, motor-driven cycle or motorized bicycle is in violation of §27803(b) if the operator or any passenger is not wearing a safety helmet meeting the requirements of §27802 VC.

The passenger of a motorcycle, motor-driven cycle or motorized bicycle is in violation of §27803(c) if that passenger and/or operator is not wearing an approved helmet.

An approved helmet is a motorcycle helmet that meets United States Department of Transportation standards. (American National Standards Institute [ANSI] standards meet or exceed DOT standards. Snell Foundation standards meet and exceed both DOT and ANSI standards.) To be legally sold in California, all motorcycle helmets must meet DOT standards.

A copy of the new §27803 VC and additional information regarding the use/non-use of safety helmets by motorcycle riders is attached. This information may be useful to your officers or deputies during enforcement stops or media contacts.

Questions concerning this subject should be directed to the California Highway Patrol, Office of Research and Planning, at (916) 657-7237.

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

OPI: 004

DISTRIBUTION: A E G S (All Chiefs of Police and Sheriff's Departments)

ATTACHMENTS

CHP 47A (2-88) OPI 076

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State of California—Business, Transportation and Housing Agency

PETE WILSON, Governor

DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL



HELMET LAW FACT SHEET

Number of registered motorcycles in California: 640,745

Number of persons licensed to drive motorcycles in California:
842,145

Number of persons killed or injured in motorcycle collisions in
1990: 19,148 (out of 370,931 killed or injured in all traffic
mishaps)

Percentage of registered vehicles in California that are
motorcycles: 2.8

Percentage of fatal and injury accidents that involve
motorcycles: 7.2

Number of motorcyclists lives saved by helmets nationwide from
1982 through 1987: 4,645

Estimated additional lives that would have been saved during
that period had helmet use by motorcycle riders been universal:
9,030

Unhelmeted motorcycle riders:

- Are twice as likely to suffer head injuries in the event of a crash.
- Are six times more likely to suffer a critical or fatal head injury.
- Require an average of three more days in the hospital if they are injured in a crash -- and \$3,000 more in hospital charges.

Helmet Myths

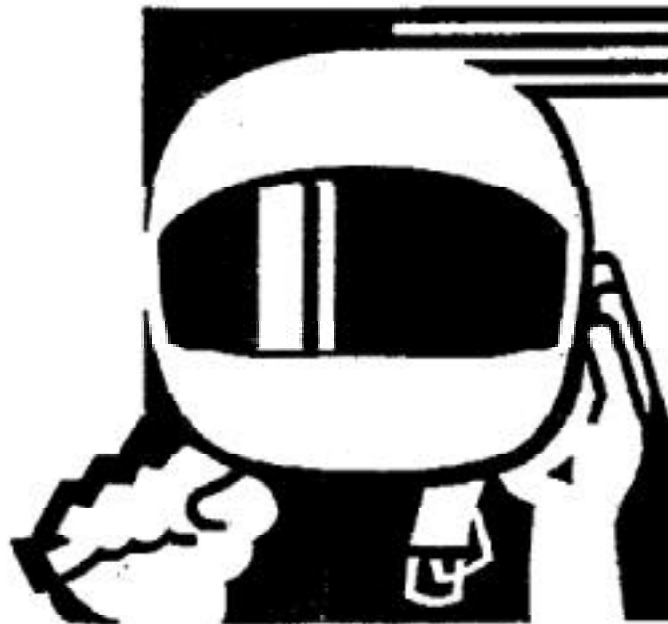
1. Helmets cause injuries. FACT: Research shows conclusively that helmeted motorcycle riders suffer far fewer injuries.
2. Helmets impair hearing. FACT: Because most noise for motorcycle riders is generated by wind flow, helmets actually aid in hearing warning signals and sirens by cutting down on wind noise. They can also cut down on hearing damage caused by extended exposure to wind noise.

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3. Helmets restrict peripheral vision. FACT: The "window" on all legal helmets is considerably larger than the typical peripheral vision of most people -- 210 degrees, compared to the 140 degrees that state licensing agencies use to screen out drivers with possible vision problems. Eyeglass and sunglass frames can cut down on peripheral vision far more than a helmet.
4. Helmets cause overheating FACT: The temperature inside a properly fitted helmet rarely rises more than one or two degrees above body temperatures in even the hottest conditions.



GET IT ON!

CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL



DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL

ANSWERS TO COMMON QUESTIONS ASKED
ABOUT THE NEW HELMET LAW

- Q. When does the new helmet law go into effect?
- A. The new helmet law becomes effective January 1, 1992.
- Q. In the past the California Highway Patrol has allowed a "conditioning period" for the first 90 days of a new law, during which officers would issue warnings instead of citations when citizens did not comply with that law. Will there be a conditioning period for the first 90 days of the helmet law?
- A. No. The California Highway Patrol will begin issuing citations on January 1, 1992, the first day the law goes into effect.
- Q. How is the new helmet law different from current helmet laws in California?
- A. The law through December 31, 1991, requires helmets for motorcycle/motorized bicycle drivers and passengers under 15 years, six months of age. The new law requires all drivers and passengers of motorcycles, motor scooters and mopeds to wear helmets, regardless of age.
- Q. How many motorcyclists are there in California, and how many of them were killed or injured in motorcycle collisions last year?
- A. There were 640,745 motorcycles registered in California in 1990, and 842,145 people were licensed to drive motorcycles. Five hundred sixty nine people were killed in motorcycle accidents last year, and 18,578 were injured. (Note: these figures include motorcycles, motor scooters and mopeds.)
- Q. What results do you expect the new helmet law to have?
- A. Based on the experiences of other states that have enacted universal helmet laws, we expect the new California helmet law to save from 150 to 200 lives in 1992 alone.
- Q. What will the fine be for not wearing a helmet?

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A. The fine for the first infraction can be up to \$100. The fine for a second infraction within one year of a prior infraction can be up to \$200, and the fine for a third infraction within one year of two prior infractions can be up to \$250. Additional penalty assessments levied by the courts (which, statewide, average 120 percent of the original fine) are not included in these figures.

Q. What requirements must a motorcycle helmet meet to be legal?

A. The law will require that the helmets be approved by the United States Department of Transportation. The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standards meet and exceed DOT standards. Snell Foundation's standards meet and exceed both DOT and ANSI standards. Helmets approved by any of these organizations will carry stickers to indicate that the helmet meets or exceeds their standards. Helmets approved by any of these organizations will be considered legal.

In addition, the person must have the helmet fastened on his or her head with the helmet straps. The helmet must be sized so that it fits securely without excessive lateral or vertical movement.