



Statens vegvesen

Press release

Press release from Statens vegvesen (Norwegian Public Roads Administration) in regard to the 'Workshop on Motorcycle Safety' at Lillehammer

Motorcycle safety stakeholders agree upon recommendations

“Motorcycles must be fully integrated into the transport system and transport policies”. One of the main messages from motorcycling stakeholders taking part in the OECD/ITF (International Transport Forum) Workshop in Lillehammer, Norway, last week.

The objectives of the workshop were to identify the real problems of motorcyclist safety, discuss practical solutions to these problems, and propose a set of measures to improve safety. Nearly 100 expert participants from 21 countries, representing the main stakeholders involved in motorcycling safety met in Lillehammer on 10-11 June 2008. This is the first time that so many high-profile stakeholders have met at international level.

The workshop was officially opened by the Norwegian Minister of Transport and Communication, Mrs. Liv Signe Navarsete, along with Mr. Jack Short, the Secretary General of the ITF.

During her opening remarks, the Minister underlined that motorcycles have a natural place in the transport system. At the same time, the vulnerability of motorcyclists requires a range of policy responses including increased training and awareness as well as responsible behaviour from the individual road users. Mr. Short pointed out that motorcyclist fatalities were rising in many countries and that the problem needed urgent attention. He also stressed that “Norway was the perfect place to hold the workshop, because it is a leader in road safety, with many excellent initiatives emanating from Norway that have spread elsewhere”,

Participants at the workshop identified a number of measures that could be implemented in the short term to make motorcycling safer. The overarching principle was the need to support continuing dialogue and co-operation between the various actors involved in motorcycle safety (including policy makers, researchers, manufacturers, and motorcyclists themselves).

Including motorcycles more fully in transport policy and infrastructure policy/management, so that an integrated approach can be developed, was seen as fundamental.

Motorcycle crash counter-measures need to be developed on the basis of evidence-based research into car driver and motorcycle rider behaviour. Evaluating the success or otherwise of the measures introduced is a key aspect of developing effective safety programmes.

Better training is a key counter-measure. This means developing a tiered approach to motorcycle training which builds upon existing standards, focusing on risk awareness and risk avoidance and an understanding of the limits of rider/motorcycle capacities.

Regarding more practical measures, the following ideas were supported by participants:

- Including, in the general training for all drivers, a component on awareness and acceptance of motorcyclists.
- Expanding the introduction of advanced braking systems for motorcycles.
- Partnering with motorcyclists to develop and implement programmes on safety issues that affect motorcycling communities

The event in Lillehammer was an important step towards the aim of ensuring a true dialogue between the various stakeholders. The initiative was welcomed by Mr. Hans Petter Strifeldt, President of FEMA (European Federation of Motorcyclists' Associations) who said “it was crucial for motorcycle safety that all stakeholders meet in order to find an integrated approach to the challenges”. The results from the Lillehammer workshop will also be considered at the OECD/IF High Level Road Safety Seminar in Paris in September.

Papers from the workshop will be available shortly on the website of the International Transport Forum at: www.internationaltransportforum.org

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Note about the International Transport Forum (ITF)

Recently transformed from the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT), the International Transport Forum is an inter-governmental organisation within the OECD family. The International Transport Forum is a global platform and meeting place at the highest level for transport, logistics and mobility. The aim of the Forum is to foster a deeper understanding of the essential role played by transport in the economy and society. The highlight of the International Transport Forum's activities is the annual meeting in Leipzig, during the last week of May.