



**NTSB** National Transportation Safety Board

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# The NTSB and Motorcycle Safety

Maryland Motorcycle  
Instructor Conference

February 20, 2010

*Christopher A. Hart*

*Vice Chairman*

# NTSB

- Independent agency, investigate transportation accidents
- Make findings, conclusions, determine probable cause(s), and make recommendations to prevent recurrences
  - Conduct special studies and investigations
- Assist victims and their families after an accident



# Independent

- 5 Members, nominated by the President, confirmed by the Senate
  - Members are not investigators
  - Safeguards for independence
  - Conclusions from facts, not politics



# The NTSB Investigates:

- Highway accidents that involve issues of wide-ranging safety significance
  - All U.S. aviation accidents (except those of military and intelligence agencies)
- Railroad accidents in which there is a fatality, substantial property damage, or that involve a passenger train
- Pipeline accidents in which there is a fatality, significant environmental or property damage
  - Major marine accidents

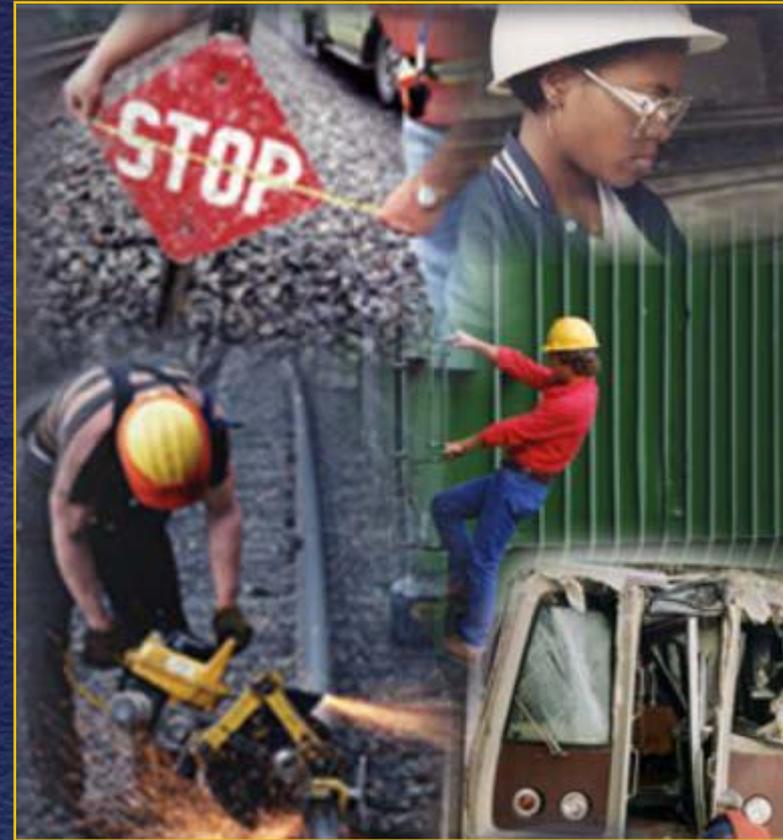
# Purpose

- Single focus is safety
- Objective is to determine probable cause, not liability or blame
- Primary product: Safety recommendations

# Safety Recommendations

Safety recommendations are issued to DOT and its modal administrations, transportation operators, manufacturers, trade associations, labor unions, and state and local governments.

Recommendation acceptance rate: More than 82%



# National Motorcycle Fatalities

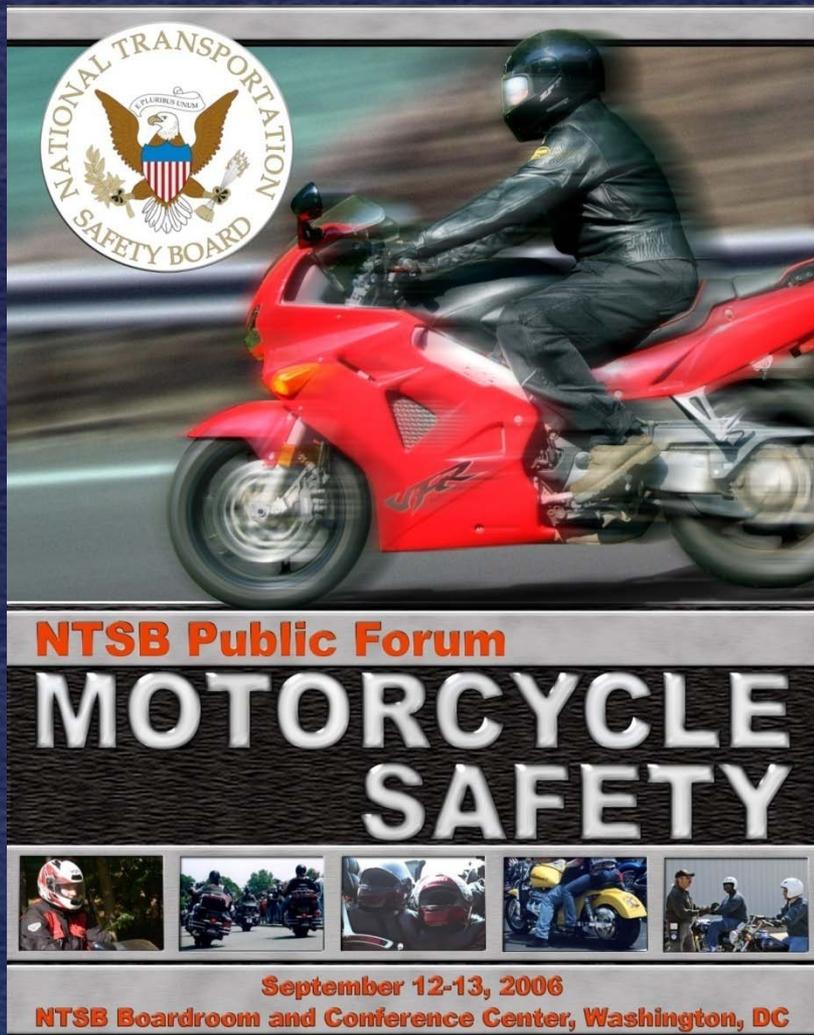
- 1998 - 2008: Motorcycle fatalities up 130%, injuries up 96%
- 1998: 2,294 motorcycle fatalities, 49,000 injuries (5.5% of all motor vehicle crash fatalities)
- 2008: 5,290 motorcycle fatalities, 96,000 injuries (More than 14% of all motor vehicle crash fatalities)
- Motorcycle fatalities significantly outpaced increases in motorcycle registrations and motorcycle miles traveled
  - Other motor vehicle fatalities: Leveling off or declining during the period



# Maryland Motorcycle Fatalities

- 2004 - 2008: Motorcycle fatalities up 32%
- 2004: 69 motorcycle fatalities
- 2008: 91 motorcycle fatalities
- Commend Maryland for universal helmet law

# NTSB Public Forum



The poster features the NTSB logo in the top left corner, which includes an eagle with a shield and the text 'NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD'. The central image shows a person in a black leather suit riding a red motorcycle. Below the main image, the text 'NTSB Public Forum' is written in orange, followed by 'MOTORCYCLE SAFETY' in large white letters on a black background. At the bottom, there is a row of five small images: a person in a helmet, a group of motorcycles, two people in helmets, a person on a motorcycle, and two people in a meeting. Below these images, the dates 'September 12-13, 2006' and the location 'NTSB Boardroom and Conference Center, Washington, DC' are listed in orange text.

**NTSB Public Forum**  
**MOTORCYCLE SAFETY**

September 12-13, 2006  
NTSB Boardroom and Conference Center, Washington, DC

- Participants included
  - Government agencies
  - Motorcycle manufacturers
  - Motorcyclist associations
  - State motorcycle rights organizations
  - Law enforcement
  - Insurance companies
- More than 150 attendees, more than 400 more by webcast
- Maryland Motorcycle Safety Program represented by Phil Sause and Andy Krajewski

# Recommendations

- Improve motorcycle activity data (FHWA)
- Reprioritize recommendations from the National Agenda for Motorcycle Safety (NHTSA)
- Require DOT-compliant safety helmets (States)

# Motorcycle Activity Data

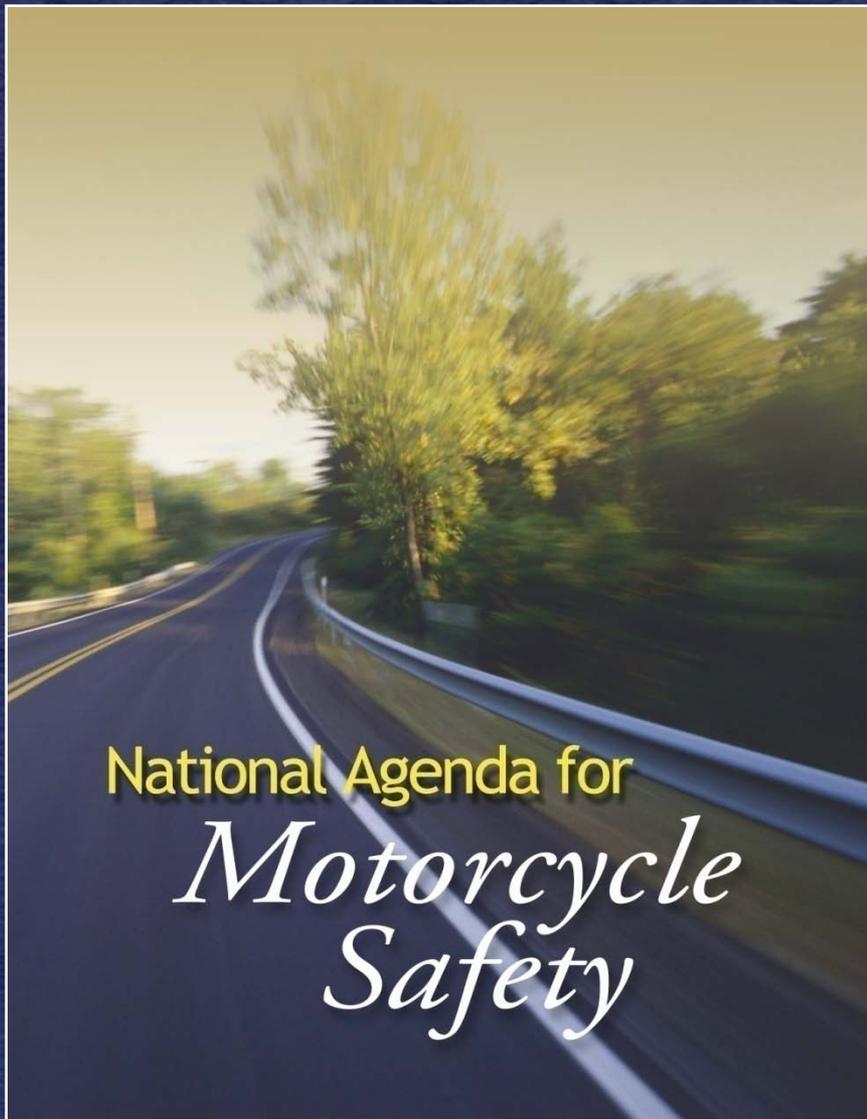
- Uses of activity data
  - Calculate safety rates
  - Allocate funding
  - Determine roadway needs
  - Assess safety countermeasures
  - Develop legislation



# Data Recommendation

- Develop guidelines for states to gather accurate motorcycle activity data (FHWA)
- Guidelines should include information about various methods to collect activity data

# NAMS - November 2000



- Sponsored by

- NHTSA
- Motorcycle Safety Foundation

# Forum Recommendations re NAMS

- Reprioritize the NAMS recommendations (NHTSA)
- Issue an action plan (NHTSA)
- Provide information about motorcycle safety program effectiveness (States)



# Protection

Head injury is a leading cause of death in motorcycle crashes



© 1997-2007  
Denis Markwell T/A Thundercat

# Helmet Law Recommendations

- Motorcycle helmets are effective at preventing deaths and injuries during motorcycle crashes
- Universal helmet laws maximize usage of compliant helmets for all riders



**Thank You!**

**Questions?**

**Website: [nts.gov](https://www.nts.gov)**