



Developing the Motorcycle Safety Foundation

Rider Education and Training System

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A society whose maturing consists simply of acquiring more firmly established ways of doing things is headed for the graveyard – even if it learns to do these things with greater and greater skill... In the ever-renewing society what matures is a system or framework with which continuous innovation, renewal and rebirth can occur. John Gardner, Self Renewal: The Individual and the Innovative Society.

Introduction

The Motorcycle Safety Foundation® (MSF) is a national, not-for-profit organization promoting the safety of motorcyclists with programs in rider training, operator licensing and public information. The MSF is sponsored by the U.S. manufacturers and distributors of BMW, Ducati, Harley-Davidson, Honda, Kawasaki, KTM, Piaggio/Vespa, Suzuki, Vengeance, Victory and Yamaha motorcycles.

Since March 1973, the MSF has set internationally recognized standards of excellence in motorcycle rider education and training. The MSF works with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), state governments, and other organizations such as the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, and the National Association of State Motorcycle Safety Administrators to improve motorcyclist education and licensing.

The MSF is the leader in championing the safety of the motorcyclist in many ways. The Foundation develops and maintains the highest quality, research-based rider education and training curricula, establishes national certification standards and provides technical assistance for training and licensing programs, actively participates in government relations, research and public awareness, and works in powerful partnerships with other motorcycling and public organizations toward improving and enhancing the enjoyment and safety of motorcycling.

The five primary messages for motorcyclists include 1) get and stay trained, 2) get licensed, 3) wear protective gear, 4) ride straight, and 5) ride within personal limits. The Motorcycle Safety Foundation does not deal with motorcycle design or manufacture, and its programs focus primarily on the motorcycle operator.

Late in the 1990s, MSF embarked on a significant renewal endeavor to improve the education and training processes related to motorcyclists and its certified instructors. It reinvented its entire motorcycle safety rider education and training system by significantly updating and improving its curricula and instructor certification programs and processes. Developed over the period of several years and continually analyzed, improved and expanded, the MSF Rider Education and Training SystemSM (MSF RETS)

uses proven and cost-effective approaches to promote motorcycle safety, ensure a positive image of motorcyclists, and enable a superior riding experience.

Two key curriculum components have been completed and introduced. These two curricula form the cornerstone of MSF RETS. They are the learn-to-ride Basic *RiderCourse*SM (BRC) introduced in 2001, and the more advanced Experienced *RiderCourse* Suite (ERC Suite) introduced in 2003. Additionally, a new alcohol education curriculum, called the Riding Straight Module, was released in 2003.

This paper presents a snapshot of the developmental aspects of MSF RETS, lays out the template for the system's courses, training opportunities and other areas of rider development opportunities, and provides the infrastructure mechanisms to ensure vital and effective programming with continuous quality improvement and evaluation procedures.

MSF RETS represents a challenging yet extremely rewarding opportunity to translate a remarkable vision into a dynamic system with opportunities for motorcyclist learning, growth and renewal. It means to bring together a multitude of elements within a system, a system that blends into a cohesive whole four primary elements: a variety of programs and services, varied skill levels and motivations of motorcyclists, talent and resourcefulness of MSF certified RiderCoaches and other stakeholders, and a multitude of delivery partners who will interact with motorcyclists as well as non-motorcyclists.

Goals and Learning Principles

The vision of MSF RETS is to create an education and training system embraced by the stakeholders and delivered in an effective, cost- and time-efficient manner. It is a system to enhance the human side of motorcycling, that is, to focus on the human factors related to motorcycle safety. The MSF RETS has four goals in achieving the mission of creating the most effective motorcycle rider education and training system that supports an increasingly safe riding environment in which responsible motorcyclists enjoy riding to the fullest. The four goals are:

Goal 1. Comprehensive Model. The MSF RETS is a dynamic program that packages education and training courses into interconnecting building blocks, each containing a specific set of core skills and competencies. MSF RETS offers learning opportunities at a wide variety of levels for riders, for the community that supports RiderCoachesSM, policy makers, program administrators and allied fields, as well as providing for the emergence of new collateral markets such as international licensees of MSF curriculum products.

Goal 2. Custom-Tailored for Riders. The MSF RETS uses stand-alone yet interrelated modules so participants can select courses to create a personalized education and training program with instruction matched to particular interests and skill levels.

Goal 3. New Opportunities for RiderCoaches. The MSF RETS enhances professionalism in rider education and training by adding opportunities for RiderCoaches and RiderCoach Trainer development and giving increased responsibility, visibility, and recognition.

Goal 4. Flexibility for Jurisdictions. The MSF RETS complements existing programs by offering options to respond to emerging countermeasures such as graduated licensing, rider improvement programs and online learning opportunities. The modular approach affords each jurisdiction the opportunity to design a program that is tailored to specific needs and enhance the quality of instruction participants will receive in the essential skills required for licensing. An additional benefit is that jurisdictions can expand their programs to meet increasing demands for education and training.

Contemporary research has uncovered a plethora of new information related to how a person learns. Theory and practice from the fields of adult education and brain-based learning are incorporated into the MSF RETS. The principles that make up the RiderCoach/learner transaction are based upon the following principles for curriculum design and facilitation:

- Learning occurs to the degree it is relevant and meaningful to participants.
- Mutual responsibility in the teacher-learner transaction is vital.
- Mutual respect in the teacher-learner transaction is essential.

- Past experiences form the basis for new learning.
- Learning environments should be characterized by physical comfort, freedom of expression, acceptance of differences, a high challenge/low threat environment, realness, genuineness, empathy and sincerity.
- Learning occurs within a context of motivation, emotion, and relevant situations.
- Teaching styles and learning styles can affect outcomes.
- Teaching is an art as well as a science.
- The social context of the learning environment can affect learning.
- Learning occurs in many ways, often characterized by one or a combination of the following: observation, imitation, repetition, experience, immersion, reflection, and collaboration.
- Learning occurs typically in a developmental and progressive manner, and is most commonly couched in the domains of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor.
- Learning usually involves change or reinforcement.

As the scientific community yields rigorous research results that lead to new and better ways to facilitate learning, and as the motorcycling community embraces improved ways to achieve safety and enjoyment from riding experiences, the Motorcycle Safety Foundation will remain vigilant in its efforts to continuously measure and improve its processes. The Motorcycle Safety Foundation continues to develop and field test all aspects related to its Rider Education and Training System based on these principles and will continue to seek opportunities to achieve excellence in products and services.

History and Underpinnings

The Motorcycle Safety Foundation was established in 1973 to develop programs and services to enhance motorcyclist safety. Releasing its first learn-to-ride curriculum in 1974, called the Beginning Rider Course, MSF established a pattern of continuous research and renewal that includes a plethora of products and services to enhance motorcycle safety in the United States. In 1976, MSF released the extensive research and field-tested Motorcycle Rider Course (MRC). It became the standard by which public and private entities offered motorcycle safety training to the public. In 1979 the Chief Instructor certification program was implemented to become the train-the-trainer mechanism to develop a corps of Instructors around the nation. In 1980, MSF released its first formal curriculum for the experienced rider called the Better Biking Program. Then in 1986, MSF released its updated learn-to-ride curriculum called the Motorcycle *RiderCourse*: Riding and Street Skills. It incorporated many of the findings from the Hurt Study (a study of motorcycle accident factors) and focused on motorcycle-specific collision avoidance skills.

In April of 1998 MSF embarked on an exhaustive effort to review and assess all motorcycle safety-training curricula they currently provided. This effort was initiated as part of their ongoing commitment to develop and maintain research-based rider education and training curricula of the highest quality. The effort involved forming a special Curriculum Development Team that would be above reproach. Team members would be unquestioned experts in their respective fields. The intent was to have involvement from a multitude of perspectives with a primary focus on the student experience and an outcome that would be acceptable to all key stakeholders; which included but were not limited to: students, MSF, policymakers, federal agencies, program administrators, chief instructors, instructors, dealers, etc. A basic timeline was developed with a target development period of two years.

The group was assembled with the objective of a team that would address all key perspectives related to the design and development of superior education and training for motorcycle riders. Members would be selected based on specific criteria and would have equal authority and accountability in establishing protocol and achieving objectives. The team was comprised of experts of two types. First were those with an “invested” perspective, having an understanding of the motorcycle rider training community. Second were those with a “divested” perspective, having little or no direct experience or understanding of the motorcycle safety training community. This unique mixture of expertise would ensure that the both macro and micro perspectives would be considered.

The first team meeting was held for what has become known by the acronym of RETSDOT or Rider Education and Training System Development and Oversight Team. The membership included individuals from within and without the motorcycle rider training community (invested and divested) including expertise in the following disciplines: education and curriculum development, state and federal policy and policymaking, quantitative and qualitative research and evaluation processes, instructor training and certification systems including professional development mechanisms, and educational/intervention program administration. A special facilitator was also engaged to guide the work and progress of the team.

MSF led an extensive data collection and research effort in which many work products were developed from RETSDOT initiatives. In 1998, a Joint State Motorcycle Safety Administrators (SMSA) MRC:RSS Enrollment Questionnaire was completed to gain a clear understanding of state and local administrative practices and student perspectives. During that time MSF worked jointly with a State Motorcycle Safety Administrators (SMSA) advisory committee to look at enhancements to improve the basic curriculum for new and experienced riders, and to identify a developmental process to improve products and services. Also in 1998, MSF commissioned a study in partnership with Appalachian State University to survey Chief Instructors as to their perceptions of training and recommendations to enhance the basic instructor preparation process. MSF completed student focus group in 1999 that identified the experiences and perceptions of persons enrolled in programs utilizing MSF curricula. These combined efforts provided both qualitative and quantitative data for RETSDOT to use as a basis for decisions and initiatives to further MSF goals and refine a rider education and training system.

Originally it was thought that a revised course curriculum would emerge as the final product of this group. However, the actual conclusions of this comprehensive and broad-reaching investigative approach to improvement of the curriculum yielded a much clearer view of the products and services necessary to maintain a viable, effective rider education system than a simple segmented course structure. The RETSDOT approach revealed that the curriculum content as it was taught was sound and effective; after all, it was based on sound research including the Motorcycle Task Analysis and the Motorcycle Curriculum Specifications published in the 1970s and refined throughout the years. But to meet current and future motorcycle safety rider education and training needs, the group developed a comprehensive education and training system. The new system would improve and integrate the processes of education and training to form a lifelong learning continuum and include processes for continuous and real-time improvement. Features of the system would provide leadership in championing the safety of motorcyclists, provide the initial and ongoing development and maintenance of the highest quality, research-based rider education and training curricula, establish national certification standards and provide technical assistance for training and licensing programs, allow the active participation to promote government relations, research and public awareness, and provide the capability to work in powerful partnerships with other motorcycle-related public and private organizations.

The MSF Rider Education and Training System was conceptualized and developed by considering several fields of study and disciplines. System underpinnings include motor skills development principles, traffic safety and motorcycle safety research and experience, contemporary principles of human learning and development, and human factors research related to the motorcycle rider task. Applicable motor skill development principles include proper application of whole-to-part training, speed versus accuracy, the distinguishing characteristics of kinesthetic and augmented feedback, and the effects of verbalization and visualization. Traffic safety and motorcycle safety research was reviewed that included crash studies and crash data and statistics, the Haddon Matrix of loss reduction which considers pre-, crash, and post-crash factors related to operator, machine and environments, and motorcycle training programs around the world specific to the development of motorcycle skills and techniques. How people learn and develop was key in designing a

system in which its products honor the contemporary theories and practices in learning. Adult learning literature was considered that included theories and practices of brain-based learning, accelerated learning principles and learner-centered instructional techniques. The goal was to establish a context of contemporary teacher-learner interactions characterized by meaningfulness and high-challenge/low-threat experiences. Lifelong learning became important in effecting a system that would ensure continued safety efforts that support safe and responsible motorcycling. Discarded was the factory model of instruction, and processes moved toward the use of facilitated learning experiences that blended training and education practice. A review of human factors research helped reveal principles related to the human functions of the motorcyclist task and considered rider culpability, personality factors, and risk-taking forces that motivate motorcyclists not just in overall risk taking but in making important decisions in moment-to-moment tasks. Visual perception, cognitive functions and motor skills aspects were important in considering how human factors could be addressed in a motorcycle safety education and training system.

Elements Related to Riders

The key to making the MSF RETS as useful as possible to motorcyclists and potential motorcyclists is to offer a complete array of course offerings and training opportunities suitable to encourage lifelong learning. The development of a continuum of opportunities makes it possible for participants to self-select into the MSF RETS by choosing appropriate course offerings for their skill levels, regardless of where they may be in their own personal learning continuum. Thus the key components of the MSF RETS from the participants' perspectives are assessment mechanisms to determine appropriate course level for their needs, a style of formal instruction and training that respects various learning styles, course offerings that are specific to exact rider characteristics coupled with program elements and a complete array of training opportunities for ongoing rider development.

Assessment

The MSF RETS offers a variety of courses and entry points. A two-phase assessment is being developed to connect participants with different levels of skill and experience to the proper courses and entry point. The first phase, participant self-assessment, will put participants in charge of selecting courses that match their skills and interests. The second phase, knowledge and skill verification, will allow delivery partners as well as RiderCoaches confirm that participants who register for a course meet prerequisites and are ready for the course.

This form of assessment is being designed to promote participant involvement in the enrollment process through self-assessment and selection of a suitable course entry point in the MSF RETS. The enrollment process will introduce a mechanism for participants to demonstrate pre-requisite knowledge and skills and facilitate RiderCoach verification of participant readiness for each course. This may occur with traditional pen-and-pencil inventories or be complete and self-scored online.

Self-assessment can be the first step in course enrollment. Prospective participants will be

invited to complete a self-assessment that can be accessed through a variety of sources including retailers, motorcycle operator manuals, incentives and special promotions, advertising in general interest publications, and the MSF toll-free number and Internet site. One method planned for self-assessment is an education and training checklist. Each prospective participant will complete and self-score the checklist, and use the results to select courses that match personal needs, interests, and skill levels.

The checklist will probe such characteristics as the potential participant's familiarity with motorcycles, motorcycle ownership, prior riding experience as a passenger or operator, motorcycle license/endorsement status (current, lapsed, never licensed/endorsed), courses completed and types of skills the participant seeks to develop. The checklist also will identify if a participant has special needs or physical limitations that require accommodation such as a translator, instruction in sign language or modified equipment.

Course descriptions will identify content, the target audience (e.g., new riders, seniors, re-entry riders) and as well as provide specific enrollment requirements. Examples of enrollment requirements include a minimum age for street riding courses, parental permission for youth in the MSF *DirtBike School*SM or graduated licensing courses, referral by a court for rider improvement courses, or completion of a basic skills class as a prerequisite for a touring course or instruction on advanced riding techniques.

Each course will begin with a process that allows RiderCoaches to conduct knowledge and skill verification to confirm that participants who register for the course meet prerequisites and are ready for the course. The criteria for verification will vary according to the type of course, and be designed so that it can be performed quickly. Verification may be accomplished by several means including holding a valid certificate from a previous course or module, holding a motorcycle permit or endorsement, and/or completing an introductory skills test.

Formal Instruction

The goal of formal instruction is to expand the current curriculum to encompass all aspects of rider training in an administratively feasible delivery framework to truly and completely meet the needs of the customer. This includes not only incorporating a wider range of information, but also allowing for multiple entry and exit points so that customers can choose training modules that specifically meet their needs.

All training is designed to be learner-centered and accessible by those with special needs. Each training module will focus on a core competency, an acquisition of a specific skill, and testing of that skill in order to achieve successful completion. Formal on-cycle instruction is conducted only by RiderCoaches who are trained and certified in proper facilitation techniques. They work together in teams, not hierarchies, and are encouraged to participate in an informal mentoring system.

While the common classroom instruction and formal riding practice are still widely used in the training system, especially when dealing with the entry level training modules that

make up the current products, other styles of knowledge transfer and instruction can be used. These include the Internet, CD-ROM, video/DVD, self-study booklets, one-to-one coaching, training simulators and on-road practice. Schedule variations and remedial elements are also taken into consideration.

Formal instruction, or facilitation of learning, requires a mix of elements to be successful and worthwhile for the rider. RiderCoach/participant ratio, the implementation ease of adjustments and modifications, the use of participant-owned motorcycles, pass/fail criteria, and the interface of training program-licensing all have been considered in the development and introduction of curriculum products.

Ongoing Rider Development

Learning and skill development are ongoing and lifelong endeavors. As a premier training system, MSF RETS encourages and supports lifelong learning and skill development, particularly self-renewal. The intent behind encouraging ongoing rider development is to promote a sense of membership in the greater riding community, a culture of safe and responsible motorcyclists. This is accomplished through increasing personal riding enjoyment and safety by creating an information gateway that highlights MSF as the premiere source for riding expertise, while offering easy access for experienced, novice and potential riders to the latest products, services, technical updates, and linkages with other riders and/or special market segments (e.g. women and the older riders).

Ongoing rider development will be achieved by offering a training product selection and concomitant service that will encourage riders to return to the system periodically for a skills refresher course that provides specific, pertinent information on certain skills/knowledge areas that is meaningful to the motorcyclist. Returning to the MSF RETS will be encouraged by its proactive promotion by state programs and MSF through the use of customer contact methods.

Other less formal opportunities to help riders maintain involvement in a beneficial, lifelong learning continuum will include the use of consumer information and attitude/awareness enhancement. Also, positive peer pressure will be used as much as possible to help create and maintain a culture of safety. There will be skills training information on CD-ROM, on the Internet, in consumer information kits, and in media and news releases. Also, formal and informal distribution channels will promulgate practice guides and safety-related information about courses and training opportunities offered at motorcycle retailers, rider club and group activities and other rider gathering places.

Rider Classifications and Program Elements

To more clearly define the type of customer and their training needs, MSF acknowledges that the customer has a certain amount of awareness of their skill and knowledge levels, and should be able to choose training components based on personal awareness. MSF RETS offerings take into account the following rider characteristics and program elements.

To conceptualize a system of training requires an acknowledgement of a continuum of riders. Rider classifications include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Pre-novice, pre-permit
2. Ready to be a novice, limited experience
3. Novice, limited experience
4. Intermediate
5. Experienced
6. Long-term enthusiast, highly skilled
7. Off-highway, trail rider
8. Experienced, problem.

Program content and procedures also follow a sequential and developmental pattern. Program elements include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Awareness (classroom activities)
2. Awareness (on-cycle activities)
3. Familiarization
4. Balance
5. Controls
6. Straight line riding
7. Turning
8. Braking
9. Shifting
10. Cornering
11. Street riding, on-road experience
12. Emergencies
13. Skills refresher
14. Advanced cornering
15. Rider improvement
16. Off-highway, trail riding
17. Other specialty courses.

All products are an integration of rider classifications and program elements. Each offering considers the minimum safety information and skills acquisition to ensure motorcyclists acquire the performance capabilities to ride safely and responsibly.

Courses, Training Opportunities and Other

MSF RETS consists of a framework of products and offerings comprised of Courses, Training Opportunities, and Other. The implementation of these follows teaching-learning transactions of well-established principles of adult and learner-centered instruction.

Examples of Courses include the Basic *RiderCourse*SM (BRC) and the three *RiderCourses* included in the Experienced *RiderCourses* of the ERC Suite (ERC Suite): the Skills Practice *RiderCourse*, the License Waiver *RiderCourse*, and the Skills Plus *RiderCourse*.

Training Opportunities consist of workshops, seminars, briefings and presentations that do not necessarily need to be conducted by MSF certified RiderCoaches; and Other represents training that is not covered under the MSF mission such as referrals to other motorcycle-related training events and activities.

Each course is a self-contained package with a set of objectives and performance measurements for specific skills and competency development. Some courses occur within a suite package such as the ERC Suite. Courses are typically made up of units or modules. Each module contains clear and detailed directions for the facilitation of participant learning. Also each module is designed so that participants learn specific knowledge, skills, habits and acquire an appreciation for a safety-conscious attitude. Some modules include a menu or choice of classroom activities and/or range exercises to provide RiderCoaches options for teaching certain skills. This allows customization of training to best serve the needs and interests of riders.

The goals of the MSF curriculum system are to provide lifelong learning and skills development, provide multiple entry points, and accommodate graduated licensing or other licensing needs. Additionally MSF RETS builds on the strong, successful base of previous MSF courses that has been responsive to motorcyclists' needs and interests in the past, and is flexible enough to be responsive to the realities of the marketplace.

Most components of the MSF RETS include classroom and range components in some form. On-road training will be considered in the future as a "real-world" application of the hands-on training provided in the MSF RETS.

The primary entry points to the system are the participant self-assessment, product familiarization, and motorcycle awareness components. The Basic *RiderCourse*, the ERC Suite, ScooterSchool and the *DirtBike School* are beginning opportunities for the riding skills training aspect of the MSF RETS. As part of the core of MSF RETS, the MSF *DirtBike School* is considered an entry point in learning how to ride an off-highway motorcycle for youth and adults, as well as a highly structured option for those participants who need additional attention or a less intense training environment prior to enrolling in one of the RETS street riding courses.

Rotating Advisory Pool

One of the core values of the Motorcycle Safety Foundation is to constantly be open to new ideas and features that will improve the system and enhance motorcyclist safety. A mechanism to embrace system renewal is the employment of a group of stakeholders that may be called into service periodically on an as-needed basis. A Rotating Advisory Pool is a group of invested and divested individuals with an interest in training systems, organizational structure and motorcycle safety. They are randomly selected to periodically convene to provide a fresh perspective of current and proposed features in the system. These individuals may be experts from allied fields, experienced MSF certified RiderCoach or RiderCoach Trainers, training experts within the industry or other stakeholders that could contribute to the quality and vitality of the system.

The intent of the Rotating Advisory Pool is to help define, measure, analyze and improve courses, training opportunities and other events within the system. This includes the administrative processes of certification and re-certification, articulation of courses and training opportunities, and insights into program and curriculum development.

Elements Related to RiderCoaches

Besides being a framework for the development and organization of courses and training opportunities, the MSF RETS is rooted in a contemporary approach to deliver training and education courses in a manner that focuses on the quality of the interaction between RiderCoaches and course participants. The quality of training and education ultimately rests with this interaction. Implicit within this approach are training techniques, personal skills and teaching styles that support learner-centered teaching where the participant is given individualized attention on an as-needed or desired basis. Within the system, RiderCoaches and RiderCoach Trainers replace the titles of Instructors and Chief Instructors to truly reflect a learner-centered environment. Shared team-teaching responsibilities replace the past primary instructor/assistant instructor hierarchical model of course delivery.

RiderCoaches are the heart of the delivery of RETS products and services. The goals set by the MSF RETS for RiderCoaches certification and development include but are not limited to the following:

1. To develop and support for those who demonstrate personal mastery of motorcycle riding and the ability to use effective teaching techniques for the education and training of course participants,
2. To provide new opportunities for growth and professional development,
3. To provide opportunities for participation in shaping ongoing development of the education and training system,
4. To initiate a framework in which informal learning and mentoring can occur.

Research on the dynamics of adult learning supports the transition from an Instructor/Chief Instructor to RiderCoach/RiderCoach Trainer nomenclature. Feedback from stakeholders, course instructors and course graduates solicited by RETSDOT during the early phases of system design support this notion. Adult learning principles support recognizing that adult learners vary widely in the level of experience they bring to the classroom and to riding, and teaching of facilitation styles can strongly shape the expectations and course outcomes of participants.

RiderCoaches bring varying levels of expertise to the classroom and range. A strong team teaching approach can maximize the unique technical and interpersonal skills of individual RiderCoaches. This allows a greater focus on the quality of the experience for course participants.

Major characteristics of the team teaching approach include:

1. Teaching style focused on shared learning and RiderCoach-participant relationships rather than solely on instructor interaction,
2. Reduced regimentation and greater flexibility in course delivery,
3. Increased range practice time including individualized observation and coaching,
4. Shared observation and communication regarding participant progress among a RiderCoach team.

The team teaching/coaching approach provides greater opportunities for continuous professional development as RiderCoaches exchange new skills and refine personal coaching styles. This serves to inhibit “burn-out” and supports the continuous improvement of RiderCoach professionalism. This model is supported within the MSF RETS through the creation for specific, yet flexible, avenues for initial RiderCoach recruitment and development, and continues through the use of the re-certification processes and mentoring.

Recruitment and Mentoring

Within the Rider Education and Training System, RiderCoach development is a process that is initiated prior to certification and is continued during a RiderCoach’s career through initial certification in a RiderCoach Preparation Course, RiderCoach updates, professional development workshops, and mentoring. Mentoring is a collaborative method in which RiderCoaches are encouraged to enlist the help of others in ongoing professional development and the acquisition of best practices. A RiderCoach may have more than one mentor, with each mentor addressing a different aspect of the RiderCoach’s interests. Because lifelong learning is a core value within the system, RiderCoaches are encouraged to seek out, use and/or serve as mentors to other RiderCoaches. Having or being a mentor requires personal initiative on the part of all RiderCoaches. It is likely that RiderCoaches who do not express such personal initiative will self select out of the system entirely and not remain certified as a RiderCoach.

Using mentors carries unique advantages for both members of the mentoring relationship. Prospective and current RiderCoaches gain direct access to information, skills and experience from RiderCoaches who have demonstrated competency while maintaining their RiderCoach certification. RiderCoaches who serve as mentors gain confidence through recognition of their knowledge and skills.

Mentoring opportunities are numerous. Relationships may take many forms, but some include:

1. Addressing varying levels of participant readiness for *RiderCourse* modules,
2. Demonstrating riding skills to participants,
3. Addressing RiderCoach/participant interaction and communication (personal coaching styles),
4. Fostering an understanding of the entire Rider Education and Training System and the role of the state program, other delivery partners and MSF,

5. Developing an understanding of underlying principles and best practices.

Certification and Professional Development

There are two formal levels for certification. These are RiderCoach and RiderCoach Trainer. Basic RiderCoach certification is for the enthusiast who wishes to teach the *RiderCourses* and other formal training opportunities in RETS. RiderCoach Trainer certification is for RiderCoaches wishing to train new RiderCoaches. To have a seamless transition along a line of continuous development and avoid hierarchical structures that can affect professional morale and training excellence, MSF has developed a RiderCoach Trainer Certification System.

Basic Certification

Basic certification includes successfully completing a RiderCoach Preparation Course and maintaining active status through coaching a certain number of *RiderCourses* at current MSF Rider Education Recognition Program (RERP) sites each year. RiderCoaches are assessed periodically. Additional professional development, both course-specific and general, will be encouraged and recognized, but not mandated. Annual MSF Learning Centers are used to ensure opportunities for RiderCoach growth and involvement.

RiderCoach Trainer Certification System

The MSF RiderCoach Trainer Certification System (RCTCS) is designed to support an effective and viable motorcycle rider education and training system. The RCTCS is a fluid program that provides ongoing and developmental growth for both RiderCoaches and RiderCoach Trainers. This result is enhanced safety training for RiderCoaches and of course, for all motorcyclists. The RCTCS is a performance-based program that establishes high standards of quality in MSF RiderCoach training and fosters RiderCoach Trainer development and excellence. Distinctive features in this system include portfolios, apprenticeship, learning experiences, and application statement. Each is briefly described here:

Portfolio. A RiderCoach Trainer portfolio contains RCTSC records. It is maintained by MSF until a person leaves the system, and remains current with RiderCoach Trainer submissions. The personal portfolio contains self-assessment critiques based on five subject matters strands. It will provide a tracking mechanism of RiderCoach and RiderCoach Trainer activities and display the breadth and depth of personal and professional development related to motorcycle rider education and training.

Apprenticeship. Apprenticeship applies to all RiderCoaches who are voluntarily apply and then accepted into the RiderCoach Trainer Certification System. Apprenticeship is a designation that indicates that a RiderCoach has been accepted into the RCTCS and has begun the process of developing the skill sets to

become an effective RiderCoach Trainer. A RiderCoach maintains RiderCoach Trainer apprenticeship by successfully completing and documenting 60 hours of learning experiences bi-annually. An apprenticeship can be maintained indefinitely and progresses to RiderCoach Trainer Certification upon successful completion of an MSF RiderCoach Trainer Preparation Course.

Learning Experiences. Learning Experiences consist of MSF-approved formal and informal RiderCoach Trainer experiences that occur after acceptance into the system. Skills and certifications that were acquired before acceptance as a RiderCoach Trainer Apprentice do not apply. Each experience may be categorized by five subject matter strands (see below), and requires the completion of acceptable application statements as determined by MSF.

Application Statement. The Application Statement (see below) is a reflective essay that explains the value and influence of a Learning Experience in developing the knowledge, skill, attitude and habits important in RiderCoach training. It is reviewed by MSF Training Systems and recorded in the RiderCoach Trainer portfolio.

Subject Matter Strands

There is a formal knowledge base within most disciplines. Motorcycle safety education and training is no different. Five subject matter strands have been identified that make up the core knowledge base. These are:

MSF RETS Knowledge. This includes certifications and experiences in MSF RETS courses and modules. Knowledge may be demonstrated by accomplishing additional MSF RETS certifications, direct experience teaching, mentoring, being mentored, and formal affiliation with motorcycle-related groups, clubs, or organizations that support safe and responsible motorcycling.

Motorcycle knowledge. Consists of general consumer information, safety-related aftermarket information, new features and technology, motorcycle and motorcyclist contemporary issues, and advanced motorcycle skills training.

Teaching-learning Interactions Knowledge. Refers to experiences such as completing a course of instruction, earning Continuing Education Units (CEUs), mentoring and earning certificates for completion of training or other credentials.

Motor Skills Development Knowledge. Refers to experiences such as completing a course in which motor skills are learned or developed. Examples include personal development in a non-rider education and training venue such as sporting or leisure activities that are physically engaging.

Safety/risk Management Knowledge. Refers to specific safety training that may be formal professional training such as AAA (formerly the American Automobile

Association) traffic safety courses and National Safety Council courses, or on-the-job civilian or military safety training.

Because some learning experiences can be associated with more than one strand, a RiderCoach Trainer may choose the strand that is most appropriate. Periodic MSF-required Learning Experiences will encourage balanced development, and if not directly related to the MSF RETS, must be approved in advance by MSF Training Systems. Some experiences could be approved after completion, but there is no guarantee that they will be accepted without prior approval. Each experience requires some written verification of successful completion plus written application statements. Each submission is assessed by MSF Training Systems with feedback provided as appropriate. Examples of learning experiences include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Coaching a complete BRC
- Coaching an Additional Practice module of the BRC
- Conduct BRC Formal Remediation training
- Coaching one complete *RiderCourse* from the ERC Suite
- Completion of Continuing Education Units (CEU) credit related to MSF RETS subject matter strands
- Completion of a training course in learning new skills, methods, or processes related to MSF RETS subject matter strands
- Completing a module of MSF RETS as a participant
- Earning certification in another MSF RETS module
- Conducting training in other MSF RETS modules (*Guide to Group Riding*, *Riding Straight* (alcohol awareness), *DirtBike School*, *Motorist Awareness*, etc.)
- Experiencing a formal mentoring process within MSF RETS
- Completion of an MSF Professional Development Workshop (PDW) or similar development activity
- Completing a state-sponsored program related to MSF RETS
- Activities related to project/grant work, such as assessment programs, technical assistance visits, or quality assurance visits
- Co-teaching/facilitating/mentoring with other RiderCoaches and RiderCoach Trainers
- Piloting or field testing MSF-approved innovative programs and techniques
- Participating in a professional conference, workshop or forum
- Becoming a contributing member of a professional organization
- Learning sign language
- Learning another language
- Completing local RiderCoach clinics or meetings involving MSF RETS activities and discussions
- Contributing to MSF's *Safe Cycling*
- Contributing to MSF's RETSORG with a best practices submission
- Participating in motorcyclist-related clubs, associations or groups that

promote safe, responsible riding behavior with education, training and awareness efforts

- Conducting MSF-related training and/or education activities, such as PDWs
- Participating in an MSF *DirtBike School* course.

Application Statement

The purpose of the application statement is to ensure that a learning experience transcends surface knowledge and applies in some manner to the MSF RETS. An application statement is to be approximately 250 words and is placed in the portfolio. Below are some questions that may be addressed in an application statement:

- How did this activity relate to the MSF RETS?
- How did this activity help me become a better RiderCoach?
- What changes might I make in my coaching?
- What creative ideas are applicable to the BRC and/or other MSF training?
- What changes might I make in conducting RiderCoach Preparation Workshops, professional development workshops, or in mentoring another RiderCoach?
- Experiences (either good or bad, positive or negative) that can help me be a better RiderCoach are?
- In what ways did this experience match or mismatch RiderCoach Training experiences?
- What was the best part about this activity (as it relates to MSF RETS)?
- What was the worst part of this activity (as it relates to MSF RETS)?
- How did mentoring or being mentored improve competencies or capabilities?

Once an experienced RiderCoach applies and is accepted in to the RiderCoach Trainer certification process, clearly defined milestones provide a tracking capability from entry to exit. Below is a typical progressive track.

RiderCoach Entry

Applicants must hold current RiderCoach certification and have personally conducted at least eight complete BRCs. There are two steps to enter into the RiderCoach Trainer Certification System. The first step is the submission of a completed formal application that includes three letters of recommendation. Once an application is assessed and accepted, the second step is completion of an enrollment package that includes:

1. Completing a *Personality Plus Profile* as a personal assessment of style of communication,
2. Providing a brief self-assessment in five subject matter strands,
3. Submitting participant evaluations from two recent, personally conducted BRCs or ERC Suite *RiderCourses*,
4. Providing evidence of recent learning experiences,
5. Providing a letter of local sponsorship or endorsement, if applicable.

RiderCoach Trainer Preparation Course

Upon acceptance into the RCTCS, a RiderCoach remains a RiderCoach Trainer Apprentice until successfully completing an MSF sponsored RiderCoach Trainer Preparation Course (RCTP). This 11-day course is conducted by MSF or can be a modified course or program that is coordinated by MSF with a cooperating entity. Such courses are offered periodically when demand necessitates additional RiderCoach Trainers.

RiderCoach Trainer Re-Certification

Once a RiderCoach Trainer Apprentice earns certification, re-certification is bi-annual. Within this time period, a RiderCoach Trainer must successfully conduct at least one complete RiderCoach Preparation Course (or assist in two or more that cumulatively equal one); or conduct four professional development workshops; and successfully complete at least 60 clock hours of learning experiences. Successful completion is determined by MSF upon review of documentation of activities that include formal application statements for each learning experience.

Leaving the RiderCoach Trainer Certification System

RiderCoach Trainers and RiderCoach Trainer Apprentices may leave the RCTCS several ways. These include but are not limited to:

1. Upon request by the RiderCoach Trainer/RiderCoach Trainer Apprentice,
2. Upon unsatisfactory completion of minimum acceptable Learning Experiences,
3. Loss of RiderCoach certification,
4. Documented and verifiable reports of non-compliance or substandard performance that is not in alignment with MSF RETS mission and goals,
5. Deficiencies in aligning with the intention of the letter and spirit of the RiderCoach Trainer Rules of Professional Conduct.

Once a RiderCoach Trainer or RiderCoach Trainer Apprentice leaves the system, re-application is not permitted for two years from the date of leaving as per MSF records.

Two of the more distinctive features of the RiderCoach Trainer Certification System are the subject matter strands that organize professional development activities and an application statement that is designed to ensure deeper understanding of concepts and content.

Learning Centers

The Motorcycle Safety Foundation has established the concept of Learning Centers to establish a framework for formal, MSF sponsored professional development. The first round of Learning Centers were used to assist stakeholders in making the transition from

the two-tier course *RiderCourse* system to the new comprehensive, multi-course system, and to move from the hierarchical Chief Instructor-Instructor classification to a more seamless team teaching approach. These initial Learning Centers consisted of three to five days of intensive training to familiarize participants with the new Basic *RiderCourse* as well as the underpinnings related to the breadth and depth of the new system.

Formalized Learning Centers may change from year-to-year to remain flexible and effective in meeting RiderCoach and RiderCoach Trainer needs. For instance, the second round of Learning Centers (2003) were an effort to reach out to RiderCoaches who have experience with the BRC and are willing to share their successes and challenges. These were small-group, after-dinner discussions facilitated by an MSF-authorized facilitator. Nearly one thousand RiderCoach participated in the opportunity. The 2004 MSF Learning Centers are regional, conference style events, with primary purposes to provide the current and future status of RETS and to continue development of RiderCoach competencies.

Rider Education System and Online Resource Guide

The Motorcycle Safety Foundation, as part of its continuing mission to promote excellence in motorcycle safety education and training, has implemented a RETS Online Resource Guide (RETSORG) as a portal for introducing changes into MSF RETS, testing and evaluating innovations, and allowing the exchange of creative activities and best practices among the RiderCoach and RiderCoach Trainer community.

RETSORG is a dynamic environment that is continually updated. It allows in a password protected environment, the submission and review of best practices for coaching and facilitation techniques that include curriculum changes and suggestions, as well as ideas and practices that improve individual program operation and administration. RETSORG contributes significantly toward refinement of quality rider education and training.

RETSORG achieves its mission in several ways. One section of this resource guide provides access to contemporary, expert thinking and research about motorcycle safety. Outside experts may be invited to participate as appropriate for given initiatives. Another section of RETSORG will include web-based training activities that are used for RiderCoach re-certification processes. As an on-line resource, it is available to many people and at many locations.

The forum aspect of RETSORG will be used to structure a process by which ideas and suggestions for change are submitted, evaluated, researched, managed and distributed. While the people and venues may change with each idea, the process for initiating and managing change and sharing best practices will be consistent. Conceptually and functionally, RETSORG provides a framework for an MSF alpha/beta laboratory that serves as a resource for continuous improvement of the training system as well as an information repository for best practices.

There are several goals for the RETSORG change process. These include testing and evaluating methods and materials to improve a motorcyclist's performance and behavior; testing and evaluating methods and materials to improve the education and training function; testing and evaluating new, innovative programs to enhance the MSF RETS; and field testing innovations and technology from industry that relate to human factors.

The change process begins as an idea or suggestion that is submitted by a stakeholder for consideration. The first step in the process involves assessing the viability of the idea with regard to MSF's vision for its customers. If the idea passes this crucial test, MSF staff will determine its viability and utility for the MSF RETS. Ideas are categorized as either non-structural or structural, the former being an idea that can be incorporated into existing courses and training opportunities, the latter being an idea that requires a change or addition related to course structure. Below are the sequential action steps and decision points within the change process:

Step 1. Originator Submits an Idea to MSF. An originator can submit an idea or suggestion for change to MSF via the RETSORG to be located within the MSF website. A suggestion form will ask the innovator to identify the problem to be solved along with an explanation of his/her solution. Each idea will be catalogued for evaluation by MSF.

Step 2. Initial MSF Internal Assessment. MSF will evaluate the submitted idea according to the following criteria: a) Is it consistent with MSF mission and values? and b) Does it add value for the motorcyclist? If the submission meets these two critical benchmarks, it will move on to Step 3. If the MSF Internal Assessment team decides not to continue, the originator of the idea or suggestion will be notified.

Step 3. MSF Categorizes the Submission. MSF Training Systems determines if the submission reflects a substantive or structural change to the curriculum or methods or if it falls into the Best Practice category, a more formative or non-structural change. Best Practice submissions are evaluated internally. A more formal change process evaluates substantive changes.

Step 4a. MSF Internal Assessment for Possible Best Practice. If the idea is a formative or non-structural change and is evaluated positively, the MSF may decide to publish the idea as an innovative method or addition or suggestion to the curriculum and/or method of instruction. Thus, the idea becomes a "Best Practice" and is logged as part of the RETSORG web-based database. In some cases, the MSF may decide to table the idea for future action. The originator is advised of MSF's decision at that time.

Step 4b. MSF Assigns Project to a Research Laboratory (ResLab). If the MSF internal recommendation is to continue evaluation of a more structural or substantive idea, a project name/number is assigned, a set of tasks and schedule is defined, a ResLab is identified to perform the investigation and the project is

begun.

Step 5. RESLAB Performs Assigned Tasks. An internal or external research team fully investigates the recommendation using sound qualitative and quantitative scientific principles.

Step 6. Research Findings Available to MSF. Upon completion of the evaluation, RESLAB submits the findings, recommendations, etc. to the MSF for action.

Step 7. MSF Reviews Findings. MSF reviews the research findings and decides whether or not to include the key learnings or best practices resulting from the evaluation. The originator is advised whether or not the idea will be acted upon or included into the MSF RETS. The originator may resubmit his/her idea at anytime.

Step 8. The Next Action by MSF. If the MSF decision is to continue, the project may be researched further or implemented. If MSF determines that further research is necessary, a new set of tasks is formulated, a schedule defined, and the project is assigned to a new or the existing ResLab. Alternately, due to extenuating circumstances, implementation of the change may be tabled for future action. If MSF decides to implement the project, the method of implementation is determined and the project (idea) is incorporated into the MSF system. Announcement of the changes will occur through the RETSORG system.

Delivery Partners

MSF recognizes that its delivery partners are key to have motorcyclists maximize capacity and ensure the best learning experience possible. The primary delivery partners have been identified as the rider training program administrators and training providers. These sponsors most often are state funded safety programs, but MSF RETS also includes manufacturer specific training, retailer operated courses, military programs and independent training sites.

It is also essential to the health of MSF RETS that consideration is given to the needs of delivery partners that may fall outside the day-to-day arena of rider education and training, such as policymakers and motorcycle industry stakeholders. Information from RETSORG, the participant database and the national evaluation model will be used to provide a comprehensive picture of activities relating to motorcycling and rider training.

Program Standards and Recognition

For programs using the MSF curricula and education programs, the MSF uses an agreement and recognition process known as the Rider Education Recognition Program (RERP). The purposes of RERP are to establish program and safety standards for training, establish a collaborative relationship with MSF and its delivery partners, and to

ensure quality assurance measures to enhance training. Also, RERP provides additional provisions such as a system for distributor free-loan motorcycles to be used for training purposes, a national toll-free number for course referrals, promotional assistance, completion cards for qualification of graduate insurance discounts, license waivers and tuition reimbursements when available from distributors, and competitive rates for course insurance.

RERP-recognized sponsors agree to use MSF's most recent curricula and related products, only use MSF certified RiderCoaches for instruction, properly maintain motorcycles and facilities to ensure participant safety, ensure participants wear proper protective gear when on a motorcycle, and notify MSF of proposed changes or additions to form and/or structure of *RiderCourses*. Additionally, sponsors agree to participate in MSF-generated data collection and to monitor courses regularly to ensure compliance with safety and educational training standards.

Awards Program

The Motorcycle Safety Foundation awards program is designed to support the celebration of the best the motorcycle safety education and training community has to offer. Nominations are accepted throughout the year in many categories. Primary award categories include the premier award of excellence, rider education for delivery partners, state programs, RiderCoach and RiderCoach Trainers, dealers, licensing entities, military programs, and various support personnel or programs true to the mission of safety and excellence. Nominations are encouraged and award winners announced in *Safe Cycling*, MSF's quarterly publication.

Evaluation

Program evaluation is the application of research methods to perform a systematic assessment of a program and to lead to effective decision making for program improvement. A primary function of formal evaluative processes is to determine whether the program's stated goals and objectives are being achieved. Through assessing various stakeholders, evaluation should answer the question of whether the intended results have been achieved through the implementation of a new program.

The MSF evaluation plan is designed to look at the entire MSF RETS. A comprehensive evaluation system is envisioned to systematically collect and report many types of data from a variety of sources, which MSF with assistance from delivery partners such as state administrators, pulls together to: 1) monitor the health of the MSF RETS and 2) publish findings and results on the Internet so states, delivery partners and individuals can also access and utilize contemporary data to promote motorcyclist safety and enjoyment within their own areas of influence.

There are several goals of the evaluation system. Some are to identify opportunities for expanding and improving motorcycle safety programs, monitor the quality of motorcycle safety education and training as well as collateral programs such as licensing and public

information campaigns, monitor the quality of training and satisfaction of MSF certified RiderCoaches, acknowledge delivery partners who foster effective and efficient learning environments, track changes in RETS and supporting structures, and demonstrate safety and cost effectiveness in rider education and training.

Core indicators are placed into five broad categories. Additionally there will be a single category called “environmental factors” that will be used to stratify and compare similar programs. Categories and indicators are as follows:

Availability of Training. This includes such items as ease of registration and affordability of courses and training opportunities. Also evaluated will be the timeliness of course offerings and accessibility for all relevant stakeholders.

Activity of RiderCoaches. RiderCoaches can have an influencing effect beyond the conduct of courses and training opportunities. Many are involved in community efforts on behalf of motorcyclist safety, and their level of commitment should be recognized and favorable results replicated wherever possible. It’s important to know the level of commitment as well as the length of service as these indicate a level of satisfaction.

Program Outcomes. It is important that RETS produces safe and successful outcomes. Besides ensuring that participants are satisfied and that stakeholders perceive significant value-added, the demand for training must be satisfied and efforts should ensure that overall system goals and objectives are achieved. As much as possible, appropriate best practices identified in the system should be integrated into licensing processes and well as other community safety efforts.

Creativity and Collaboration. One of the best ways to expand offerings is to create an awareness of existing programs and establish outreach programs to ensure maximum effectiveness. MSF RETS affects a diverse population and there are many different approaches in promoting motorcyclist safety. Public awareness is a key factor, not only for potential program participants but for the overall safety of users in the highway transportation system. As much as possible every effort must be made to make mutually-beneficial connections with public and private entities.

Effective Resource Utilization. A major goal of MSF RETS is the effectiveness and efficiency in achieving its mission and vision. More efficiency means more safety training and more safety messages, and will ensure that the demand for motorcyclist safety programs is met.

The evaluation plan will unfold concomitant with the Courses, Training Opportunities and Other within the Rider Education and Training System. Along with other broad social measures and program specific outcomes, it will provide guiding data in defining, analyzing and improving system features and enhance the overall effectiveness of motorcycle safety countermeasures in the United States.

Summary

The Motorcycle Safety Foundation is the leader in championing the safety of the motorcyclist in many ways. The Foundation develops and maintains the highest quality, research-based rider education and training curricula, establishes national certification standards and provides technical assistance for training and licensing programs, actively participates in government relations, research and public awareness, and works in powerful partnerships with other motorcycling and public organizations toward improving and enhancing the enjoyment and safety of motorcycling.

MSF has embarked on a significant renewal endeavor to improve the education and training processes related to motorcyclists and its certified RiderCoaches. It reinvented its entire motorcycle safety rider education and training system by significantly updating and improving its curricula and certification programs and processes. Developed over the period of several years and continually analyzed, improved and expanded, the MSF RETS uses proven and cost-effective approaches to promote motorcycle safety, ensure a positive image of motorcyclists, and provide a superior riding experience.

As with any system, MSF RETS is comprised of many features and components in a complex and dynamic environment. As best practices emerge and as new research and information become available, it will be incorporated in this system as long as it improves the safe and responsible use of motorcycles and supports an increasingly safe riding environment.

This paper presented a snapshot of the developmental aspects of MSF RETS and laid out the template for the system's Courses, Training Opportunities and Other areas of rider development opportunities. MSF RETS represents a challenging yet extremely rewarding opportunity to translate a remarkable vision into a dynamic system with opportunities for motorcyclist learning, growth and renewal.

For further information, visit the Motorcycle Safety Foundation website at www.msfsf.org. For updated information related to the MSF Rider Education and Training System, contact Training Systems, Motorcycle Safety Foundation, 2 Jenner, Suite 150, Irvine, CA 92618.

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