

NTSB Unveils New “Most Wanted List”

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Top 10 critical changes needed to reduce transportation accidents and save lives

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) today announced its new list of the most critical transportation issues that need to be addressed to improve safety and save lives. The new “Most Wanted List” highlights 10 safety issues that impact transportation nationwide. The announcement of the new list came at a press conference in Washington, D.C., in which each of the five members of the Board spoke briefly about the issues on the list.

“The NTSB’s ability to influence transportation safety depends on our ability to communicate and advocate for changes,” said NTSB Chairman Deborah A.P. Hersman. “The Most Wanted List is the most powerful tool we have to highlight our priorities.”

NTSB began issuing an annual Most Wanted List in 1990. The list released today is the first one produced under a revised format developed by the agency over the past several months in an effort to modernize and streamline the list. This year’s list features 10 broad issue areas that the NTSB will highlight in its advocacy efforts during the next year.

The new Most Wanted List can be found on the NTSB’s remodeled website. The effort to update the website began at the end of last year and was revealed today. “Our new website, with a landing page dedicated to the Most Wanted List issues, provides pertinent, easy-to-find information along with videos and NTSB recommendations that support all of the issues on the list,” Hersman said.

The issue areas on the new Most Wanted List are:

- Promote pilot and air traffic controller professionalism
- Address human fatigue
- Promote teen driving safety
- Improve general aviation safety
- Improve motorcycle safety
- Require safety management systems
- Improve runway safety
- Address alcohol-impaired driving
- Improve bus occupant safety
- Require image and onboard data recorders

Motorcycle Safety: What Is the Issue?

From 1997–2009, annual motorcycle deaths doubled from 2,116 to 4,462. On average, 12 motorcyclists were killed every day. Although motorcycles represent only 3 percent of the vehicles on our nation's roads, they account for 13 percent of highway deaths. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, head injury is a leading cause of death in motorcycle crashes. This alarming trend of increased motorcycle fatalities and injuries must be reversed.

What can be done . . .

Using a motorcycle helmet that complies with U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 218 is perhaps the single greatest measure a rider or passenger can take to reduce the risk of injury or death. Helmets meeting this standard are designed with a hard outer shell, an impact-attenuating liner, and a retention system to protect the head, especially the brain. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that helmets are 37 percent effective in preventing fatal injuries to riders and 41 percent effective for motorcycle passengers.

It's also important to look at ways to prevent crashes from occurring in the first place. The National Agenda for Motorcycle Safety contains recommendations that can be implemented by Federal agencies, states, manufacturers, insurance organizations, and advocacy groups to make cycling safer. The NAMS should be used as the basis for identifying the most effective programs for addressing crash mitigation and injury prevention.

More information about the Most Wanted List issue areas can be found at www.nts.gov/mostwanted.

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged with determining the probable cause of transportation accidents and promoting transportation safety, and assisting victims of transportation accidents and their families. For more information, visit: www.NTSB.gov.

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