

December 16, 2022

Ann Carlson
Acting Administrator
U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administrator
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Acting Administrator Carlson:

We and many of our constituents are troubled by recent media reports of self-driving or autonomous vehicles involved in fatal crashes with motorcyclists. This summer, three separate incidents made news when motorcyclists were struck and killed by vehicles believed to be in self-driving mode. While certainly the crashes in California, Florida and Utah all have unique circumstances, the one common denominator appears to be self-driving cars and their ability to recognize, respond and react to motorcycles and their riders.

While we are pleased that the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has launched an investigation into the crashes, we nevertheless have additional concerns which we hope you can now address.

1. Are self-driving automakers required to have their technology specifically account for motorcycles and motorcyclists? If not, why?
2. Do these crashes represent a statistical outlier or are motorcycles overly represented in the crash data involving self-driving cars?
3. Are other roadway users including bicyclists and pedestrians accounted for differently by this technology? If they are how does that differ from requirements surrounding motorcyclists?
4. Are there discrepancies between manufacturers' self-driving technologies in how they identify motorcyclists and, if so, does NHTSA evaluate those differences?
5. Should motorcyclists take extra precautions when sharing the road with this new technology?

The nearly 10 million motorcyclists on our nation's roadways deserve the same consideration as all other roadway users. Motorcycles play a key part of our transportation network. In a time of growing energy and economic uncertainty, motorcycles allow for fuel efficient and affordable transportation. For over a century motorcycling has been an iconic part of the fabric of America. Let's protect this very American tradition and ensure our roads remain safe for motorcyclists.

We look forward to your response to this request.

Sincerely,

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