



The Newsletter of the Snell Memorial Foundation, Inc.

This is the fifty ninth of the Foundation's newsletters to the helmet manufacturing industry. The fifty eighth was sent out in March, 2012. Comments and items for inclusion in subsequent issues are invited.

Manufacturers' Meeting

The Foundation's annual manufacturers meeting will be held the morning of February 14, 2013, in conjunction with the Indianapolis PowerSports Expo. Snell certified manufacturers are welcome to attend. Other interested parties may contact Ed Becker or Ms. Hong Zhang and request an invitation. The precise time and location will be emailed to invitees later.

Snell 2015 Draft Standards

Drafts for Snell M2015 and SA/K2015 are in preparation and are expected to be ready for distribution to Snell certified manufacturers and other interested parties for comment shortly after the new year.

Please remember that these are draft standards; based on the advice and recommendations of the industry and the scientific community, the final versions may differ considerably from these first drafts. Snell is looking for all the protection a rider or a driver might reasonably be expected to wear on his head. In a sense, these drafts are the opening play in a safety auction. The final versions will be set according to the most protective and plausible recommendations received.

Snell Certification and Enforcement

We've gotten some questions on the thinking behind the different impact severities and criteria set for Snell certification and enforcement testing. The intent is to assure that uncertainties in test measurements do not interfere with the orderly administration of Snell programs. Once a model is certified, helmet units identical to those passing certification testing ought always to pass enforcement testing. A technical brief explaining the procedures has been posted on the Snell website.

Helmet Swap Program

The helmet swap program conducted jointly by the Snell Safety Education Center, the Livermore Police Department and the California Highway Patrol appears to have been a success. These organizations cooperated in a program funded by the California Office of Traffic Safety to trade Snell/DOT compliant motorcycle helmets for non-compliant headgear. The swaps were conducted at several different motorcycle venues and meetings; in all, 164

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new, Snell/DOT compliant helmets were exchanged for non-compliant, obsolete or damaged headgear. There will be a follow-up survey to learn just what use is being made of these new helmets.

Snell has received several inquiries regarding similar helmet swap programs in other states.

If it appears that the swap program actually results in the increased usage of effective motorcycle helmets, the effort will be worth repeating.

ECE 22-05

Ed Becker presented on motorcycle helmet standards at the recent IFZ conference held in conjunction with the Intermot motorcycle and accessories show in Cologne, Germany, last October. The gist of the presentation is that ECE 22-05 is inadequate. It demands less impact protective capability than the current US requirement, DOT, and the procedures allow “holes” in a helmet’s coverage in which the impact protection falls far short of even the low minimums that might be expected. Motorcyclists can and should wear better headgear. Becker’s paper and presentation are available on the Snell web site.

Low Velocity Impact Research

There has been much discussion of helmet performance in low severity impacts. Many in the industry think an advantage in injury reduction might be had by sacrificing some of a helmet’s high severity capability to increase shock attenuation in lower severity strikes.

Snell will conduct a series of tests to determine the response of a broad range of helmet models and types throughout a range of impact velocities. Although this effort will not answer the basic question of injury reduction, it may demonstrate the performance of current headgear and also establish whether a helmet’s low velocity performance might be inferred from tests conducted at higher velocities.

Submissions for Certification

All the helmet samples in any single submission for Snell certification must be structurally

identical. In particular, the shells, retention systems and liners must be exactly alike. In the case of Snell 2010 standards in which additional samples may be required for testing on the smallest appropriate head form, manufacturers are encouraged to configure these additional samples with thicker fit pads but the helmet shells, liners and retention systems must be identical to those of the other samples in the set. This includes liner density. For example, if the helmets incorporate EPS impact liners, the same EPS density must be used for all the samples in the set.

When submitting helmets for certification testing, please make sure that all the helmets are complete and in ready-for-use condition. All the samples should have all the necessary face shields, peaks (eye shades) and other accessories included with them. Lab managers may grant one-time exceptions to this policy but exceptions will be rare. If an exception is necessary, ask in advance, before sending samples.

Comments and Suggestions

Please direct any comments, suggestions or complaints about any aspect of the Snell programs or services to Ed Becker.

Contacting Snell

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