



The Newsletter of the Snell Memorial Foundation, Inc.

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

Manufacturers' Meeting

The most recent manufacturers meeting was held the morning of February 14, 2013, in conjunction with the Indianapolis PowerSports Expo. The next meeting is currently planned to take place in October, 2014 in conjunction with the AIMExpo in Orlando, Florida.

Snell M2015 Standard

Snell M2015 has been finalized. Although there are a few technical changes, it is essentially equivalent to M2010. In particular, the face shield penetration test remains as it was. Certification testing for M2015 is under way. Manufacturers are invited to submit samples of

current and new helmet configurations for consideration. M2015 will take effect October 1, 2014 but units meeting requirements may be sold with M2010 labeling in advance of that date.

Snell SA/K2015

SA/K2015 is still in draft. The first draft proposed a number of advances in test requirements which elicited much response from current Snell certified helmet makers. A second draft is planned for early October. This draft is expected to be much closer to the final standard which is hoped to be ready shortly after the new year. SA/K2015 is planned to take effect on October 1, 2015, a full year after the effective date set for M2015.

Snell Helmet Model Names

The point of Snell certification is to identify helmets which meet Snell standards. For this reason, Snell demands that the brand/model names of certified helmets be distinctly different from the manufacturer's non-Snell models. Although this had not been a problem until recently, we have been getting queries and complaints from riders in Europe. They have seen promotions and ads for Snell certified helmets posted by North American retailers on the internet but were disappointed when the helmets they purchased and took home turned out to be non-Snell configurations with the same name.

Snell is seeking a reasonable solution to this problem. Helmet makers with same named Snell and non-Snell configurations are encouraged to

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contact Ed Becker to discuss the scope of the problem and likely measures to resolve it.

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. A follow-up survey will be conducted to learn just what use is being made of these new helmets. If it appears that the swap program actually results in the increased usage of effective motorcycle helmets, the effort will be worth repeating. Snell has received several inquiries regarding similar helmet swap programs in other states.

Custom Fit Helmets

A new policy for certifying custom fit helmet configurations has been posted on the Snell web site. It differs from a previous custom fit policy proposal from late 2009. However, the point is, as always, to assure that these custom fit headgear will provide all the protection we demand of current, Snell certified helmets but with the minimum burden to the helmet maker.

HPE Laboratory

The HPE lab in England is seeking new quarters. Paul Walker has suspended testing operations for the interim. We all hope to see him back in business soon.

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 has completed a series of tests on Snell and non-Snell certified helmets which were donated by their manufacturers or purchased from distributors and retailers. Although this effort cannot answer the basic question of injury reduction, a statistical analysis of the results indicates that there is no significant difference in the low velocity impact response of Snell

M2010/DOT helmets versus helmets qualified to DOT only. The same analysis also demonstrates that Snell certified helmets transmit substantially lower levels of shock in higher severity impact. Formal reports are in preparation and will be submitted for publication in scientific journals.

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 impact liners must be exactly alike. Particularly, the liner densities must be the same. Otherwise, we consider that we are dealing with more than one model and separate submissions are required.

In the case of current Snell 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, as above, the helmet shells, retention systems, impact liners and impact liner densities must be identical to those of the other 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.

Contacting Snell

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