

MotoCAP: One year on

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Abstract

The Motorcycle Clothing Assessment Program (MotoCAP) was launched in September 2018 to improve motorcyclists' safety by providing riders the ability to choose gear based on its relative protection, which should result in increased availability of more protective gear on the market. One year on from the launch, this paper considers the performance of clothing currently on the market, and how consumers and industry have responded to the program.

Background

The Motorcycle Clothing Assessment Program (MotoCAP) was launched in September 2018. It is an Australian/New Zealand program that provides motorcycle riders with an independent rating that indicates how motorcycle protective clothing is likely to perform in a hot weather and in a crash. This enables riders to compare the relative protection of products when choosing gear.

The purpose of the MotoCAP rating scheme is to reduce trauma to motorcyclists by:

- Informing the public of the relative performance of motorcycle protective clothing, which will
- Increase demand for effective motorcycle protective clothing, thereby
- Improving the supply of effective motorcycle protective clothing.

The program is administered by Transport for NSW on behalf of a consortium of fourteen private and government organisations across Australia and New Zealand with an interest in road safety. Testing and rating of products is conducted on behalf of MotoCAP by the Deakin University Institute for Frontier Materials.

One year on from the launch of MotoCAP, the paper will explore whether the performance of gear currently on the market has justified the need for MotoCAP, and how successful the program has been.

Findings from MotoCAP

A review of gear rated following the launch of MotoCAP has highlighted the need for such a program to better inform consumers and encourage industry to provide high performing garments. Findings of note include:

- A dearth of suitable clothing for females, with little dedicated gear on the market, and much of the gear tested performing poorly.
- Poor performance in both protection and thermal management of textile riding jackets, with none tested scoring higher than two stars in either category.
- The safety performance of a number of leather jackets and denim pants bears little correlation with their retail price.

Consumer response

For MotoCAP to achieve its aims, consumers need to use the ratings when choosing to purchase gear. Consumer response, received through social media and emails via the website contact page, has been overwhelmingly positive to MotoCAP, welcoming it as much needed and eye-opening.

Furthermore, consumers appear to be spending more time on the ratings for higher performing gear, with the pages for the highest rated jackets and pants receiving the most page views.

Industry response

One of the goals of MotoCAP is to influence industry and encourage them to invest more resources into improving the performance of their products. The MotoCAP consortium is starting to see evidence of this.

MotoCAP has been approached by a number of motorcycle gear start-ups looking to build a brand known for well-performing products. They are now working with Deakin University Institute for Frontier Materials to improve the performance of their products.

MotoCAP has also been contacted by more established members of the industry sector looking to commission ratings of products they expect would perform well.

Findings

The launch of MotoCAP has been well received by the public, and has stimulated industry to investigate how to improve the performance of their garments. The ratings to date have shed light on the wide range in the performance of gear on the market, allowing consumers to choose better performing gear at reasonable prices. To date, MotoCAP has proven a useful tool to encourage better protection of motorcyclists.