

DID YOU KNOW???

MOTORCYCLE ABS NOW REQUIRED IN INDIA – NO ACTION IN U.S.

Do you ride a motorcycle? If you do, does it have antilock brakes? It should! India has joined a growing number of countries that require antilock braking systems (ABS) on motorcycles – an important step for highway safety that U.S. regulators have yet to take, says the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) in their May 24, 2016 edition of “Status Report”. ABS prevents wheels from locking up, allowing riders to brake fully in an emergency. It's essential safety equipment for motorcycles. The technology cuts fatal motorcycle crashes by 31 percent and insurance claims for rider injuries by 28 percent, according to new research, says the IIHS. Based on those findings, IIHS and the Highway Loss Data Institute (HLDI) petitioned the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) in 2013 to require ABS on new motorcycles. The agency hasn't responded to the petition. Meanwhile, other countries are moving forward. India's rule, announced in March, will require all new motorcycles with an engine displacement of more than 125 cc to have ABS beginning in April 2018.

In the European Union, new models over 125 cc must have ABS as of this year, and carryover models must have it next year. The same requirement will take effect in Japan in 2018 for new models and 2021 for carryovers and in Taiwan in 2019 for new models and 2021 for carryovers. In Brazil, mandatory ABS for motorcycles with 300 cc engines or greater is being phased in through 2019.

What do all of these countries know that we don't? "Motorcycle ABS saves lives, and it's good to see highway safety regulators around the globe recognizing that fact," says Adrian Lund, president of IIHS and HLDI. "We hope NHTSA will be next, so that all riders in the U.S. can benefit from this technology, too."

Despite the lack of a U.S. mandate, motorcycle ABS has become more widely available in recent years. Nearly half of 2015 model motorcycles registered in the U.S. had standard ABS, while another 23 percent had it available as an option. That's a big jump since 2008, when it was standard on just two percent of motorcycles and optional on 22 percent, according to the IIHS.

Nearly 4,300 motorcyclists were killed in the US in 2014, accounting for 13 percent of all crash deaths. The IIHS says a motorcycle ABS requirement could put a big dent in overall fatalities, which, according to preliminary 2015 data, are on the rise.

ABS has been standard on cars for many years in the US and has proven their benefits in vehicle safety. Then why does it take what seems like forever to enact legislation to increase a proven safety device for motorcycles? Come on, US – let's get with the program!

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