



The Quarterly Newsletter of the Snell Memorial Foundation

This is the twenty first of the Foundation's quarterly newsletters to the helmet manufacturing industry. The twentieth was sent out last August. Comments and items for inclusion in subsequent issues are invited.

SMSA Meeting

I attended the annual meeting of the State Motorcycle Safety Administrators (SMSA) this last August in Portsmouth, Virginia. This is one of those rare safety organizations in which the people participating are all members of the population at risk. Except for a very few interlopers like myself, the attendees were there because they love and live motorcycling.

Their main concern is ridership. The majority of the members ride often and teach motorcycle skills in formal classes to new riders. When they're not teaching or riding, they deal with state and federal administrators to assure that motorcycling continues as a part of the American traffic mix.

I urge everyone and particularly Snell Certified motorcycle helmet manufacturers to look into this organization and to support their activities. Most of the next generation of motorcyclists will be spending some time with an SMSA member and will benefit greatly from the experience.

Bicycle Helmet Notice

Manufacturers of helmets certified to B-95, B-90 or N-94 must obtain Snell Certification to either B-90A, B-90C, B-95A, B-95C or N-94A in order to continue Snell labeled production after December 31, 1998. For an explanation of these 'A' and 'C' designations, please see the items **Bicycle Helmet Program Restructure** and **'A' and 'C' Testing** included below.

Many helmets have already been tested and certified to these 'A' and 'C' requirements. Whenever possible, we have applied the modified procedures to helmets acquired for Snell's RST program. The test results for those helmets include an explicit statement confirming that the helmet model has demonstrated its compliance with Snell and CPSC.

Please check your correspondence or contact this office to determine the status of your Snell B-90, B-95 and N-94 headgear.

New B-90 Labels

There is a new version of the B-90 label for manufacturers producing helmets for sale in the United States. The new label is the same size and color as the older label and is printed on the same stock. It is marked 'B-90A' and includes many of the warnings and statements required by the US CPSC bicycle helmet safety standard.

The older label continues to be valid for all B-90, B-90A and B-90C headgear and will remain available for the foreseeable future. However, manufacturers of B-90A certified helmets may simplify their coming labeling tasks with this new sticker.

Karting Helmet Standard

The Foundation has completed drafting of a new standard which describes headgear for use in kart racing. This K-98 standard includes all the requirements of the SA-95 standard for auto racing helmets except those applying to flame resistance. Headgear currently certified to the Foundation's SA-95 standard meet all the requirements for certification to K-98 and will be added to the lists of K-98 Certified models at the manufacturer's request.

The K-98 Standard is now available in booklet form and also available on the Foundations Internet web site. K-98 Certification labels are available to qualified manufacturers at a fee of \$1.00 each. The label color is light blue.

DOT (FMVSS 218)

Qualification Testing

The Snell California laboratory has just completed installation of equipment and procedures for testing helmets to the requirements of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 218 (the DOT standard). Motorcycle helmets marketed for street use in the United States must meet these requirements but the responsibility for certifying compliance is left to the manufacturer or US importer.

M-95 certification may not, of itself, guarantee DOT compliance. Technical differences between the M-95 and DOT standards require separate testing to establish compliance with both. If an M-95 certified motorcycle helmet is to be sold for street use in the United States, it is the responsibility of the manufacturer or importer to see that the necessary test documentation is maintained and the necessary labeling is applied.

The Foundation does not require DOT compliance for M-95 certification but, as a service to our clients, we are now able to perform the required testing and maintain the test documentation. Certified manufacturers will not be required to submit for DOT qualification testing. However, manufacturers who wish to, may submit samples of their Snell M-95 certified helmets for qualification to DOT or submit samples for both Snell M-95 and DOT certification

This DOT type testing service is only available for headgear in the M-95 certification program. Headgear submitted for both qualifications must first meet the M-95 requirements. Please contact this office for more details.

Bicycle Helmet Program Restructure

The Foundation has restructured the B-90, B-95 and N-94 programs. The restructuring includes a marked lowering of the per helmet cost to the manufacturer. It also improves the efficiency of the programs without compromising the significance or the value of Snell Certification.

Another significant feature of the restructuring is that Snell bicycle helmet certification will, of itself, demonstrate that the helmet model also complies with the requirements of the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

This demonstration is enabled by three new documents:

1. 1998 Augmentation to the 1990 Standard for Protective Headgear for Use in Bicycling.
2. 1998 Addendum to the 1995 Standard for Protective Headgear For Use With Bicycles and to the 1994 Standard for Protective Headgear for Use in Non-Motorized Sports.
3. 1998 Addendum to Standards for Protective Headgear For Children Four years of Age and Younger For Use in Bicycling.

These three documents modify and augment the existing Snell Standards as necessary to demonstrate complete compliance with the performance requirements of CFR 16 Part 1203, the CPSC Safety Standard for Bicycle Helmets.

No special testing will be required for B-95 and N-94 certified helmets in current production and marketed for use by "persons age 5 and older." Our random sample testing of these products over the next few months will document CPSC compliance. However, B-90 certified products and all Snell certified bicycle helmets marketed for use by "persons age 1 and older (extended coverage)" will require certification testing if Snell labeled production is to continue beyond December 31, 1998.

It is hoped that lower unit costs for Snell Certification and the elimination of any additional CPSC testing obligation will ease participation in the Foundation's programs and increase the accessibility of protective headgear meeting the Foundation's high standards for protective performance.

Further information on the restructured programs and modified standards is available on the Foundation's web pages <<http://www.smf.org>> or through our California offices.

Bicycle 'A' and 'C' Testing

Over the next few months, the Foundation's test reports for bicycle helmets may list the Snell standard along with an 'A' or 'C' suffix. The suffix indicates that the standard corresponds to the CPSC Addult (persons age five and over) or Child requirements (persons age one and over - extended coverage).

These suffixes will not be included in the certificates awarded to products passing certification testing.

Snell Web Site

The Snell Foundation World Wide Web Site, <http://www.smf.org>, now includes more than thirty pages of helmet and head protection information. There are descriptions of the Foundation and its certification programs, lists of certified products, links to HTML documents of Snell Standards and drafts and links to other web sites of interest.

One of the primary purposes of the site is to acquaint the public with the importance of selecting and wearing the most effective protective headgear. Once the Foundation tests and certifies a helmet, we want people to wear it. If you manufacture or sell Snell certified helmets and you maintain an Internet web site, please contact Mr. Brown to see about establishing a link.

Gib welcomes comments and suggestions regarding any aspect of the web site.

Ski Helmet Standards

The Foundation has just certified two helmet models to the 1998 Standard of Protective Headgear for Use in Recreational Skiing and Snowboarding (RS-98). The **Vigor Sports** models **S-100** and **S-300** should be available shortly bearing the Foundation's white and green RS-98 certification label.

RS-98 certification signifies significantly greater protection than called out in European Norms to which many popular ski helmets are designed. The Foundation urges skiers and snowboarders to seek out and use appropriate protective headgear and proudly recommends the **Vigor Sports S-100** and **S-300** to their attention.

All manufacturers of ski and snowboard helmets are invited to submit helmet samples for testing. Please contact the North Highlands office for further information.

DOT Rulemaking

The Department of Transportation expects to begin the process of revising its mandatory motorcycle helmet safety standard sometime in early 1999. Although no sweeping changes are expected it behooves everyone involved with motorcycle helmets to participate. The next opportunity may be twenty-five years away.

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