

KEEP YOUR HEAD ON A SWIVEL !!

Mark Welch — Safety Officer



Hello HOG family !

You may have heard the expression “keep your head on a swivel” before and wondered why it is so important when riding your motorcycle. Many people

ride with their head and eyes looking straight ahead and rely on their peripheral vision to watch for objects or activities to their sides.

It is better than not being aware of your surroundings, but your peripheral vision has its limitations.

There are basically three parts of your line of sight:

1. **Peripheral vision (blue)**
2. **Useful field of view (green)**
3. **Central vision (red)**

Most people have about a 5-degree field of central vision. That is the area in your sight where you can clearly identify objects. Peripheral vision can exceed 90 degrees on either side, but it is important to note that although you may be able to see the object in the corner of your eye, it must be in that 5-degree central vision for you to identify the object.

Since we are talking about peripheral vision, helmets are designed so that they will not interfere with peripheral vision so you cannot use that as an excuse to not wear one!

Many internal issues can reduce your field of vision. Cataracts, glaucoma, or an eye injury are just a few. If your field of vision is less than 140 degrees, you have tunnel vision. It does not mean you cannot ride, it just means you must be even more diligent in searching for hazards.

Moving your head and eyes while you ride will not only help you in identifying hazards, but it will also keep you from being lulled into a relaxed state where you are unaware of your surroundings and may even be falling asleep. Look at your mirrors, the roadway ahead of you, your dashboard, the roadway ahead of you, the sides of the road, the roadway ahead of you, etc. You can also practice paying attention to objects you can pick out in your periphery when riding.

The lesson that should be learned here is that to see hazards and identify ways to avoid them, we must put important information in our 5-degree cone of central vision.

By the way, I am going to prove to you what I have just said at our upcoming HOG meeting! See you there. (Pun intended.)

ATTGAT,
MARK

