See and Avoid

See and avoid is an aviation term included in the world's aviation lexicon as a method for preventing a collision. Maybe it is an excellent time to integrate the phrase into the motorcycling lexicon as well.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's[1] data coupled with research from the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute[2] indicate up to 65% of motorcycle crashes resulting from the rider's inability to make good decisions while riding. The data is contradictory to the prevailing thought about a rider's ability to manipulate controls. As riders, our judgment, not our riding skills, causes injury and death on the roadway.

See and Avoid requires the rider to actively search for potentially hazardous conditions, especially in areas where we deal with the many potential crash-causing factors like multiple intersections or urban traffic. More importantly, the onus of situational recognition is attributed to the rider's visual scanning and the development of good judgment, perceptual skills, and self-awareness.

See and Avoid also allows motorcycle riders the opportunity to continually employ the many active strategies described in the Motorcycle Safety Foundations Basic RiderCourse[3] like Search Evaluate Execute, Rider Radar, Lane Positioning, Search Setup Smooth, and trap identification. Active Strategies help us to determine the valuable Safety Margins, Escape Paths, Lead Time and Distances, No-Zones, Blind Spots, and Total Stopping Distance available while riding.

Seeing and avoiding can help us be more responsible for our own actions and understand how our decision-making is the most crucial part of surviving the ride.

References:

1. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. (2019, July). *Traffic safety facts 2017 data: Motorcycles.* (Report No. DOT HS 812 785). Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/812785

2. Oliver, L. (2016, November 21). What Virginia tech learned about how and why we crash our motorcycles. Revzilla – Common Tread. Retrieved from https://www.revzilla.com/ common-tread/ what-virginia-tech-learned-about-how-and-why-we-crash-our-motorcycles

3. Motorcycle Safety Foundation (2016). Basic RiderCourse: Rider Handbook. Author.

Biography:
Dr. Donald Green, a lifetime motorcyclist, has more than 30 years' experience in training, experiential learning, and organizational management. His eclectic background in leadership, organizational change, and quality assurance systems have been critical to his rider education role.

Certified by MSF since 2010, Don is an Army Veteran of the Iraq War and commissioned officer/helicopter pilot and a graduate of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. Don's formal education includes an Ed. D. in Adult Education Leadership, an M.S. in Adult Education, and a B.S. in Computer Science.