DSOC
Defense Safety Oversight Council

Motorcycle Mentorship Module 29

Minimizing Hazards

Warning: Incorrect or inaccurate information could lead to tragic results on the road. If a question arises that is not covered in the guide and you don't know the answer from your own experience and training, simply state, "That is a great question, I'll get back to you with the answer."

Your Service Safety Center will help with these types of questions should they arise. Their numbers are as follows:

US Army Driving Directorate: **334.255.3039**

USMC Safety Division: **703.604.4459**

US Navy Shore Safety: **757.444.3520 x7165**

US Air Force Safety Center: **505.846.0728**

USCG Safety Division: **202.475.5206**

U.S. ARMY COMBAT READINESS/SAFETY CENTER

Preface

About: The Defense Safety Oversight Council (DSOC) Motorcycle Mentorship Modules are a set of thirty six (36) facilitation modules designed for the purpose of increasing rider knowledge on various aspects of riding and providing additional capability for self-policing within peer groups. The modules are intended as a mechanism to further decrease motorcycle related mishaps and fatalities within Department of Defense (DoD) by encouraging riders to talk, live, and think about the topic.

Using the Module: The module content enclosed is intended as a facilitation guide to assist you with discussing the topic. However, it is still critical to use your skills and talent to engage participants and develop "buy-in" on this subject from your group. To maximize this, motivate and moderate your participants, control the accuracy of participant feedback, and be mindful of their time.

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2	**Facilitation Guide – A brief overview on conducting a facilitated discussion of a topic**
3	**Module Overview** – This section provides the facilitator a synopsis of the topic, learning objectives, and the suggested environment, props, and handouts for conducting the module
4	**Module Discussion Introduction** – This section provides guidance to the facilitator in opening up the discussion and getting participants talking about the topic and their relevant experiences
4	**Discussion Areas** – This section provides various discussion topics, sample facilitation questions, and factual information for the facilitator to lead the discussion
9	**Wrap-Up** – This section provides guidance to the facilitator on wrapping up the topic discussion
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12	**Handouts** – Figures, pictures, diagrams, etc. to assist the facilitator to better demonstrate a topic idea

Facilitation Guide for DSOC Mentorship Modules

It is recommended that this Mentorship Module be conducted in a facilitation style. Using the information provided in this Mentorship Module, you, as the facilitator, will lead a discussion on the subject. *You should not be conducting a lecture!* The facilitator's role is to help with how the discussion is proceeding. Participants will have much more "buy in" and connectivity with the information if they have input. One of your roles as the facilitator is to control the accuracy of the input and control the time. From the Mentorship Module, generate questions which will lead to group discussion. The more you let the group participate, the more success you will have.

Competencies of a Facilitator:

- Prepare prior to the event
- Make sure everyone gets a chance to participate and help members to express themselves
- Ask rather than tell
- Honor the group, display respect for the members, and acknowledge participant contributions
- Ask for others' opinions
- Listen without interrupting
- Demonstrate professionalism and integrity

The key characteristic distinguishing facilitation from other types of leadership, like scripted training, is that the outcomes are never predetermined in a facilitative setting. Although the background information provided with this Module remains the same, the result will depend on the participants, the knowledge and experience they bring, and the information that they feel they need to take away. The group uses the activities provided by the facilitator to unlock expertise, ensure thorough discussion, stay focused and reach decisions that are better than those any individual could come up with alone.

At the beginning of each Mentorship Event, discuss why the participants are there and what they will receive as a result of participating. Adults have limited time and they want to know "What's in it for me?" A facilitator should make training fun. Encourage humor and laughter in your Mentorship Event.

Principles of Adult Learning:

- ➞ Adult Learners want material that is relevant to them. "What's in it for me?" "What will I get out of this that will make a difference to me?"
- ➞ Adult Learners come to training events with varying amounts of experience. They like to share their experiences. If you have minimal or no motorcycle experience, you can still draw from your group.
- ➞ Even if you have motorcycle experience, you should draw from your group because people tend to remember what "they" said longer than what you said. Information that they "own" is more valuable to them.
- ➞ Facilitators are not always subject matter experts; nor do they need to be. Facilitators may draw on the existing knowledge of the participants and the information provided in these Modules.

Section I: Module Overview

Time Frame: One 30-60 minute facilitator-led discussion

Level of Prior Knowledge: Participants should be able to operate a motorcycle at a novice level and be familiar with basic motorcycle operations.

Synopsis: Minimizing hazards is an essential and potentially life-saving task while operating a motorcycle. Using a mental strategy to separate and prioritize hazards increases our awareness of our surroundings. While separating hazards is a common occurrence, many riders may not understand the hierarchy in decision making processes that is based on past experience. Research suggests that a vehicle operator who develops a safety attitude or mental strategy may significantly reduce the undesirable behaviors that result in crashes, because "… individuals often search for and select information that confirms beliefs and attitudes…" (Bohner, Wanke, 2002). This module is intended to help minimize hazards by introducing a mental strategy and the awareness that training and practice are necessary to overcome hazards in the riding environment.

Learning Objectives:

- How a mental strategy or safety attitude is helpful in managing risk
- Identifying the various types or categories of hazards and how to reduce risk exposure to the different hazards
- Understand that training and practice are extremely important to minimizing factors that lead to hazards and enhancing survivability when riding in traffic
- Describe and provide examples of proper protective equipment (PPE), and recall local regulations regarding exactly what constitutes minimally-accepted PPE.
- Generalize thoughts on how proper motorcycle maintenance helps minimize hazards.
- Participants comprehend facts and knowledge. Participants may offer alternative perspectives, contribute or supplement accurate statements regarding terms, facts, sequential events, and are encouraged to share experiential knowledge.

Suggested Environment/Props/Handouts:

Any comfortable environment, such as classroom, conference room, auditorium, or stadium seating is appropriate

- **Handout 1:** T-CLOCS Inspection Checklist
- **Handout 2:** Motorcycle Riders Survival Checklist

Section II: Module Discussion

Introduction: Facilitate discussion: What do we mean by 'Minimizing Hazards? Why is that important? Can it be applied to other aspects of your life?

Minimizing hazards is recognizing and managing factors that lead to a "hazard", which can lead to a a mishap (crahs) if not addressed on a constant basis during a ride. Minimizing hazdards is a form of reducing risk, both immediate and potential.

Open discussions with participant-centered activities. Have attendees introduce themselves (or each other) and share their current motorcycle make and model. All activities should encourage participant interaction and develop camaraderie and a willingness to participate in discussions. Ask for and encourage participant sharing of experiences related to the module topic.

Sample questions may include:

- ➤ When riding down the street, what is the most important thing to look for?
- ➤ Have you ever seen a motorcycle crash?
- ➤ What hazards accumulated for this crash to happen?
- ➤ Can we learn anything from that mishap?
- ➤ What kind of situations put you as a rider into a reactive mode?
- ➤ How can you avoid having to make emergency maneuvers?

Suggested Discussion Areas:

Discussion Area 1: Risk Management

Facilitation Questions:

- What two things must happen first in order to manage risk?
- How long does it take to assess a potential hazard?
- Would it help if we could predict or anticipate certain common hazards?
- What is the single most dangerous traffic situation for motorcyclists?

Facilitator Facts:

- In order for a motorcyclist to manage risk, he must first recognize that:
  1. Risk exists in almost any situation,
  2. He must decide to accept the risk with the understanding that he does everything he can to minimize that risk.

- Most traffic mishaps allow the rider less than two seconds to take evasive actions – which usually consist of braking or swerving to avoid the obstacle.
- The most common causes of on-road motorcycle crashes are: on-coming, left-turning vehicles; vehicles entering the motorcyclists' path from the right – usually a car making a 'right on red,' or otherwise failing to yield at traffic signals or stop signs; and vehicles entering the roadway from driveways, parking lots or parking spaces, and for military riders single vehicle mishaps on two lane asphalt roads (usually a curve)
- Intersections present the greatest hazard to motorcyclists of any common traffic scenario.
- Professional training is the single most important and reliable factor in minimizing or avoiding hazards. Being cognizant of and practicing what was learned is essential.

Follow-up Question: Now that we know where the majority of traffic crashes for motorcyclists occur should that change how we view those areas every time we approached an intersection?

Discussion Area 2: Types of Hazards

Facilitation Questions:

- Are there different types of hazards? If so, what are they?
- What kinds of hazards occur as a result of the environment around a rider?
- What sorts of threats can originate with other roadway users?
- Does our equipment pose a threat to us at times?
- How do we deal with multiple threats simultaneously?

Facilitator Facts:

- Different types of threats to the safety of motorcyclists include: the surrounding environment; other roadway users – legal or not, human or otherwise; our equipment; and ourselves.
- The surrounding environment such as roadway and surface characteristics, weather, etc. includes traction concerns and personal well-being in the form of dehydration or hypothermia.
- Other users of the road such as riders, drivers, bicyclists, pedestrians, animals can cause a serious mishap in a fraction of a second.
- Our equipment and its ability to protect us (in terms of maintenance and reliability) can become a threat to our personal safety if improperly maintained or parts fail.
- Ourselves: Making proactive decisions to reduce the factors that lead to a hazard; wearing proper protective equipment (PPE), using a mental strategy to identify factors that lead to hazards and dealing with them constantly and properly. Avoid situations that may distract you from maintain your riding strategy, such as riding angry, frustrated, lost, or fatigued, etc.

Discussion Area 3: Training/Knowledge

Facilitation Questions:

- How can a motorcycle rider improve his skills?
- Is good and safe riding a product a mental or physical skill?
- Does training improve both the mental and physical aspects of riding?
- Where can motorcyclists gain new skills and polish existing ones?
- What does 'situational awareness' mean as applied to motorcycle riding?
- How does "What If?" apply to traffic situations?

Facilitator Facts:

- Any physical or mental skill can be improved upon by practice and repetition.
- Riding is more of a mental skill than a physical one. Having a high level of situational awareness can help a rider to see hazards as they develop (become aware of the factors) and avoid them. However, physical skills and capability are important for minimizing undesirable situation
- Formal training such as motorcycle training classes and other training opportunities including on and off-road courses, and track schools (on and off road) all contribute to increasing a rider's skills.
- Motorcyclists must be aware of everything going on 360 degrees around them and what is happening above and below (road surface and weather). Situational awareness is required at all times!
- When riding, a motorcyclist can use 'what if…' to help improve responses. "What if that car fails to see me and pulls out…?" "What if the driver in the next lane comes over into my lane…?"
- Playing the 'What if' game creates a habit of preparing for common traffic scenarios in advance, and being prepared is the key to dealing with those factors before they become life-threatening.
- An old biker truism is: "Ride like you're invisible." Assume other vehicle operators do not see you and prepare accordingly.
- Paying careful attention to surroundings allows a rider to identify individual or multiple threats. Prioritizing and/or separating "factors" on the road is important in order to effectively deal with them safely (individually and linked together as they form hazdards).

Discussion Area 4: Equipment Part I - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Facilitation Questions, Part I (PPE)

- What is proper Personal Protective Equipment for riding a motorcycle?
- Do you wear it each time you ride?
- Do you know anyone who does not?
- Do you know anyone who has been involved in a crash while not wearing protective gear?

Facilitator Facts:

General consensus is that proper riding gear consists of:

- A United States Department of Transportation (DOT) compliant helmet,
- An outer jacket made of leather or cordura (or equivalent abrasion resistant material) with armor or padding at impact points (shoulders, elbows, spine),
- Sturdy, full fingered gloves (preferably motorcycle specific),
- Sturdy long pants (preferably motorcycle specific leather or ballistic nylon, canvas, or denim… in that order of strength and durability). An exception is motorcycle-specific Kevlar lined denim riding pants which have very good abrasion resistance characteristics roughly equivalent to ballistic nylon.
- High-visibility garments and helmets contribute significantly to motorcyclist's conspicuity and may improve rider presence by other roadway users. High-visibility colors including: High-Visibility Lime Yellow, International Safety Fluorescent Orange, and Fluorescent Red are very visible under most light conditions. Retro-reflective material helps with being seen in very low light conditions when other vehicles are employing their lights. Riders must understand increased conspicuity does not guarantee detection and perception by other roadway users – the safe rider uses increased conspicuity as a supplementary safety strategy. Rider safety attitudes, crash avoidance strategies, and protective motorcycle riding gear better serve the motorcyclist.

A person falling from the top of a three story building will hit the ground at approximately 22 miles per hour (~32 ft/10 Meters per second). Most motorcycle crashes happen at between 35 and 45 MPH. Given the opportunity to prepare in advance, most people would wear extensive protective gear prior to this happening. Why not dress that way while on a motorcycle?

No one leaves the house planning to have a serious motorcycle crash, mishaps occur when least expected. Dress for the crash, not the ride: ***ATGATT; All The Gear, All The Time.***

Facilitator notes:

1. Military and DoD personnel are required to wear PPE although details vary by branch of service, region and command. Be aware of exact and specific requirements at your location! Questions on this subject will often come up during this discussion.)
2. Allow (or provoke) some conversation regarding crashes without gear. It helps you to make your point.
3. Avoid helmet rights and helmet law conversation. If a discussion persists, redirect by stating most (if not all) industry safety agencies include a helmet as integral part of the PPE ensemble… and move on.

Discussion Area 5: Equipment Part II – The Motorcycle

Facilitation Questions:

- How important is the condition of the motorcycle in being able to manage hazards?
- What hazards might actually be accentuated or caused by motorcycle condition?
- What is the best way to check a motorcycle prior to any ride?
- What is 'TCLOCS' and what do the individual letters stand for?
- Where can we find information on an individual motorcycle's maintenance needs and requirements?

Facilitator Facts:

- A motorcyclist can be safe in his/her riding strategy, but could be limited by the safety of the motorcycle they are riding.
- Tire inflation and condition are critical factors in motorcycle safety. Tire under-inflation is the number one cause of tire failure. Other areas such as improperly adjusted suspension, loose, dirty, and stretched chain, bad brake components or fluid levels, improper throttle adjustment and chassis condition (worn bearings and seals, improper adjustments) are also critical to motorcycle safety.
- The Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) 'TCLOCS' pre-ride checklist is a checklist that details important and critical components and systems on the motorcycle for inspection and observation in regard to the motorcycles general mechanical safety (Handout 1, 'TCLOCS Checklist' attached). It is most often referred to due to its easy-to-remember abbreviation.
- The Motorcycle Owner's Manual (provided by the manufacturer with the bike when new) will contain a complete list of scheduled maintenance. An facotyr or aftermarket shop manual appropriate to the specific motorcycle model will also give detailed instructions on how the maintenance should be performed.Replacements may often be purchased through a local dealer.

Wrap-Up:

Close out the discussion by reviewing the following prime learning objectives:

- ➤ What must happen in order to manage risk?
- ➤ In what way are practice and training important to a rider's survivability in traffic situation?
- ➤ What constitutes proper PPE at this location?
- ➤ How important is motorcycle condition to rider safety?
- ➤ How important is rider training?

Provide participants with **Handout 2: Street Riding Survival Checklist**

Suggested Wrap-Up Discussion: Ask participants how they would apply the knowledge they gained from this discussion to their ride home or their next ride. What opinions or preconceptions about Minimizing Hazards/Managing Risk may have changed?

Distribute copies of the DSOC Motorcycle Mentorship Module Evaluation form to all participants and request that they deliver or mail the completed form to the Command or Command Safety Office for processing.

Remind everyone to ride safe, and see you at the next Mentorship Meeting.

DSOC Motorcycle Mentorship Feedback Form

Presenter Name:	Date:
Topic/Title:	Unit Number:

Please review each statement below and check the response that closely matches your experience in the Mentorship Module today:

1. Please rate the presenter's performance:

☐ Prepared ☐ Not Prepared | ☐ Engaging ☐ Not Engaging | ☐ Led Discussion ☐ Lectured

Comments:

2. I was given opportunities to participate in the module's discussion

☐ Never ☐ Only Once ☐ 2-4 Times ☐ Many Times Throughout Discussion

Comments:

3. With regard to my personal riding experiences, this discussion was:

☐ Relevant ☐ Not Relevant | ☐ Interesting ☐ Not Interesting

Comments:

4. This discussion topic has provided me with specific learning points that I can use to be a safer, better informed rider

☐ None ☐ One Idea or Fact ☐ 2-4 Learning Points ☐ 5 or More

Comments:

5. I would be interested in participating in other Motorcycle Mentorship Module discussion topics

☐ Never Again ☐ Willing to Try Another Module ☐ Would Like to Do Modules Regularly

Comments:

Thank you for your participation. Please make note of any other suggestions or comments below (continue on the back if needed):

Deliver or mail this completed form to the Command or Command Safety Office for processing. Please do not return this form directly to the Module Presenter.

Resources

Continued Reading:

Ienatsch, Nick (2003). *Sport Riding Techiques: How To Develop Real World Skills for Speed, Safety, and Confidence on the Street and Track.* Phoenix, AZ: David Bull Publishing

Kunreuther, Howard and **Useem, Michael** (2010). *Learning from Catastrophes: Strategies for Reaction and Response*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Wharton School Publishing

Motorcycle Safety Foundation, (2005). *The Motorcycle Safety Foundation's Guide to Motorcycling Excellence,* 2nd Edition. Irvine, CA: Whitehorse Press

Parks, Lee (2003). *Total Control – High Performance Street Riding Techniques*. St. Paul, MN: Motorbooks International

Pridmore, Reg (2004). *Smooth riding, the Pridmore way.* Center Conway, New Hampshire: Whitehorse Press

Ropiek, David (2010). *How Risky Is It, Really?: Why Our Fears Don't Always Match the Facts*. New York: The McGraw-Hill companies, Inc

Definitions: *(As defined for purposes of this module.)*

PPE: Personal protective equipment

TCLOCS: Checklist for pre-ride motorcycle inspection. Stands for:

Tires and wheels

Cable and controls

Lights and other electrics

Oil and other fluids

Chassis, suspension, frame

Stands, side stand or center stands

Handout 1: T-CLOCS Inspection Checklist

Source:
Motorcycle Safety Foundation

T-CLOCS ITEM	WHAT TO CHECK	WHAT TO LOOK FOR	CHECK-OFF	
T-TIRES & WHEELS				
Tires	Condition	Tread depth, wear, weathering, evenly seated, bulges, embedded objects.	Front	Rear
	Air Pressure	Check when cold, adjust to load.	Front	Rear
Wheels	Spokes	Bent, broken, missing, tension, check at top of wheel: "ring" = OK — "thud" = loose spoke	Front	Rear
	Cast	Cracks, dents.	Front	Rear
	Rims	Out of round/true = 5mm. Spin wheel, index against stationary pointer.	Front	Rear
	Bearings	Grab top and bottom of tire and flex: No freeplay (click) between hub and axle, no growl when spinning.	Front	Rear
	Seals	Cracked, cut or torn, excessive grease on outside, reddish-brown around outside.	Front	Rear
Brakes	Function	Each brake alone keeps bike from rolling.	Front	Rear
C-CONTROLS				
Levers and Pedal	Condition	Broken, bent, cracked, mounts tight, ball ends on handlebar levers, proper adjustment.		
	Pivots	Lubricated.		
Cables	Condition	Fraying, kinks, lubrication: ends and interior.		
	Routing	No interference or pulling at steering head, suspension, no sharp angles, wire supports in place.		
Hoses	Condition	Cuts, cracks, leaks, bulges, chafing, deterioration.		
	Routing	No interference or pulling at steering head, suspension, no sharp angles, hose supports in place.		
Throttle	Operation	Moves freely, snaps closed, no revving when handlebars are turned.		
L-LIGHTS				
Battery	Condition	Terminals; clean and tight, electrolyte level, held down securely.		
	Vent Tube	Not kinked, routed properly, not plugged.		
Headlamp	Condition	Cracks, reflector, mounting and adjustment system.		
	Aim	Height and right/left.		
	Operation	Hi beam/low beam operation.		
Tail lamp/brake lamp	Condition	Cracks, clean and tight.		
	Operation	Activates upon front brake/rear brake application.		
Turn signals	Operation	Flashes correctly.	Front left	Front right
			Rear left	Rear right
Mirrors	Condition	Cracks, clean, tight mounts and swivel joints.		
	Aim	Adjust when seated on bike.		
Lenses & Reflectors	Condition	Cracked, broken, securely mounted, excessive condensation.		
Wiring	Condition	Fraying, chafing, insulation.		
	Routing	Pinched, no interference or pulling at steering head or suspension, wire looms and ties in place, connectors tight, clean.		
O-OIL				
Levels	Engine Oil	Check warm on center stand on level ground, dipstick, sight glass.		
	Hypoid Gear Oil, Shaft Drive	Transmission, rear drive, shaft.		
	Hydraulic Fluid	Brakes, clutch, reservoir or sight glass.		
	Coolant	Reservoir and/or coolant recovery tank — check only when cool.		
	Fuel	Tank or gauge.		
Leaks	Engine Oil	Gaskets, housings, seals.		
	Hypoid Gear Oil, Shaft Drive	Gaskets, seals, breathers.		
	Hydraulic Fluid	Hoses, master cylinders, calipers.		
	Coolant	Radiator, hoses, tanks, fittings, pipes.		
	Fuel	Lines, fuel valve, carbs.		
C-CHASSIS				
Frame	Condition	Cracks at gussets, accessory mounts, look for paint lifting.		
	Steering-Head Bearings	No detent or tight spots through full travel, raise front wheel, check for play by pulling/pushing forks.		
	Swingarm Bushings/ Bearings	Raise rear wheel, check for play by pushing/pulling swingarm.		
Suspension	Front Forks	Smooth travel, equal air pressure/damping, anti-dive settings.	Left	Right
	Rear Shock(s)	Smooth travel, equal pre-load/air pressure/damping settings, linkage moves freely and is lubricated.	Left	Right
Chain or Belt	Tension	Check at tightest point.		
	Lubrication	Side plates when hot. Note: do not lubricate belts.		
	Sprockets	Teeth not hooked, securely mounted		
Fasteners	Threaded	Tight, missing bolts, nuts.		
	Clips	Broken, missing.		
	Cotter Pins	Broken, missing.		
S-STANDS				
Center stand	Condition	Cracks, bent.		
	Retention	Springs in place, tension to hold position.		
Side stand	Condition	Cracks, bent (safety cut-out switch or pad equipped).		
	Retention	Springs in place, tension to hold position.		

Handout 2 – Street Riding Survival Checklist

Note: This list is not in order of priority.

- ☐ Look 20-30 seconds (two city blocks) into your intended path of travel to prepare for anything that might develop into a hazard or limit your mobility
- ☐ Always be able to stop in the distance you can see
- ☐ Maintain no less than 2 seconds following distance between you and the vehicle in front of you.
- ☐ Increase the 2 second following distance whenever possible
- ☐ Increase your following distance for any less than ideal conditions such as bad weather
- ☐ Make conspicuity and your ability to see top priority (See and Be Seen)
- ☐ Maintain a safe speed that maximizes control, maneuverability and time to react
- ☐ Maintain your hazard avoidance skills at a high degree of proficiency through training and practice
- ☐ Make sleep and stress management a high priority pre-ride practice to reduce poor judgment and impatience on the roadways
- ☐ Always assume the "other guy" is going to make the worst possible move imaginable—remain prepared for anything
- ☐ Make it a habit to always look behind you when you slow down or change lanes
- ☐ Add 5-10 more feet between you and the vehicle you stop behind in case you need to maneuver
- ☐ Always downshift to first and remain in gear when waiting at a stop light
- ☐ Shift to the proper gear to keep your bike in its most efficient power band, so your bike will be ready to get you out of dangerous situation quickly
- ☐ Slow down for intersections and cover your controls—4 seconds before the intersection
- ☐ Keep your eyes scanning and your head and eyes moving to find threats (head on a swivel)
- ☐ Always assume that the other driver does NOT see you
- ☐ Communicate your intentions (lights, signals, eye contact when possible, etc.)
- ☐ Play "what if" scenarios during your ride
- ☐ Ride to create escape route options; search for open spaces
- ☐ Turn reading traffic and cars into a game
- ☐ If you cannot see in front of the vehicle in front of you, change lanes or drop back until you can
- ☐ Stay clear of drivers that suddenly reduce their speed. Most likely they are confused and their next move will be unexpected.
- ☐ Identify out-of-state plates—they might make wrong moves at interstate exchanges
- ☐ Always yield the lane to a tailgater. Their next move may be a dangerous one.
- ☐ Awareness is like any skill; it can be improved and developed through practice. Look for what is important or different.
- ☐ Do not travel at the same speed as vehicles next to you. Never ride in another vehicle's blind spot.

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MILITARYRIDER
THE RIGHT SKILLS>THE RIGHT TRAINING>THE RIGHT ATTITUDE

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