



### SPTM commends and supports Pune Traffic Police

## Enforcement of Helmet Rule to save lives

**Pune, 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2014:** 'Save Pune Traffic Movement' (SPTM), the movement of Pune citizens working voluntarily with the mission of transforming traffic situation of Pune, appreciated the decision of Commissioner of Police Shri. Satish Mathur and efforts of DCP Traffic Shri. Sarang Awad and his team to enforce the helmet rule.

Pune has very high number of fatalities due to road accidents, exceeding 400 every year. Major contributor to this is the head injuries to the two wheeler riders. To significantly reduce the fatalities and critical head injuries of two wheeler riders, the helmet rule must be implemented. We commend Pune Traffic Police in taking this concrete action on priority and support them fully in this cause of significantly reducing fatalities and critical injuries on road.

Citizens have many misunderstandings regarding usage of Helmets. SPTM methodically analyzed them and consistently made efforts to dispel the myths and encourage usage of helmet through our website, email, newsletters and presentations. Details SPTM's response to major misunderstandings about helmet usage are available since 2012 on SPTM website at this link:

<http://www.savepunetraffic.org/content/sptm-says?q=content/helmet-objections-and-sptms-response>

Summary of major points is given overleaf.

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**SPTM has appealed Pune citizens to choose 'Safety First' approach and be safe in today's traffic conditions. Join SPTM, the united strength of responsible citizens to achieve safe, professionally managed, sustainable Pune traffic.** The organization has more than 3000 members. To join SPTM and give your feedback, please visit their website [www.savepunetraffic.org](http://www.savepunetraffic.org)

**For further details or any queries, please contact:**

Rajendra Sidhaye (98220-67584 / 88880-41000)



### Major objections about Helmet usage and SPTM's response

#### 1. **Helmet limits the Vision and makes you vulnerable**

Opening in the helmet for the eyes i.e. the field of Vision, provided by the helmets, is wider than our eye-span. A little turn of the head provides complete view that a rider needs. The two side mirrors on the handle provide a side-rear view for the rider, just with a quick glance. One needs to ensure before riding that the two mirrors are adjusted properly.

#### 2. **Helmet interferes with hearing**

There is enough gap between the ears as well as neck and the helmet. This column of air is sufficient to ensure that rider does not have any loss of hearing. Scientific studies have shown this to be a fact. Major factor that causes loss of hearing is listening to radio or music by plugging the jacks into ears.

#### 3. **Helmet can cause or aggravate neck pain**

Many people have neck pain, whether they use helmet or not, mainly due to sedentary lifestyle, sitting for long hours in wrong posture etc. and not taking regular exercises. So, one needs to do the needful to prevent the neck-pain and treat it irrespective of helmet usage. But if you must ride a two wheeler, you must minimize the risk to your life and hence follow the helmet rule always.

#### 4. **You can't drive at more than 20 / 30 kmph on Pune roads.**

There are several roads on which the riders easily cross 50 kmph. Moreover if you collide with other oncoming vehicle, effective speed that impacts you is addition of two speeds.

#### 5. **Helmets anyway don't guarantee 100% safety**

Yes, it is essential to drive safely even after wearing helmet! But helmet significantly reduces risk of head injury, which is the highest cause of road fatalities and critical injuries.

#### 6. **My Safety is my problem. Why should others bother about it**

Suicide is also a crime since it impacts family and society. Each person is a national resource. Hence Govt. has authority to enact law to prevent adverse impacts.

#### 7. **Authorities should make roads free from pot holes and .....**

There are many issues regarding traffic and those must be resolved. However, preventing risk to life cannot wait for anything. In fact, other road issues increase risk even more. So, citizens should use helmets whether it is compulsory or not.

Helmet can be surely inconvenient to carry (though, one can use lock & reduce this), and Helmet can be unpleasant to use especially during hot summer months. However, Safety measures to prevent any form of risk do not come free and they can indeed be inconvenient. Ultimately, Safety MUST come above everything else. Helmet law was enacted considering this fact and hence it has to be obeyed as well as enforced.