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# USING THE FATAL INJURY SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM AND SURVEYS TO MONITOR MOTORCYCLIST DEATHS AND HELMET USE IN CALI (COLOMBIA), 1996–2009

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**Introduction** In Cali, motorcycles are an important means of transportation and an increasing cause of injuries. The purpose was to examine deaths among motorcyclists over the period 1993 to 2009 and the possible role that various prevention measures may have had on these types of deaths.

**Method** Motorcyclist deaths registered in a fatal injury surveillance system over the period 1993–2009 were analysed along with information on helmet use from annual surveys on helmet use, and other interventions (helmet laws, safety vest, etc.).

**Results** Motorcyclist death rates increased from 18.0 per 10 000 registered motorcycles in 1993 to 26.7 in 1995. In 1996 a helmet law was launched, and the rate in that year decreased to 20.9. The rates have decreased in each year since the passage of the helmet law, with the lowest rate reported in 2006 (9.7). Besides the helmet law, other prevention strategies were also applied, possibly contributing to the reduction in motorcyclist fatalities. In the most recent survey on helmet use in Cali (2002), approximately 80% of motorcyclists reported using a helmet. In the last 4 years, however, the death rates have increased from 9.7 in 2006 to 16.5 in 2009.

**Conclusions** In Cali, the helmet law and other enforcement measures have contributed to reduce motorcyclist deaths. Although most of the motorcyclists are helmeted in Cali, the increasing trend of deaths in recent years indicates the need to explore other factors that may be influencing mortality (eg, drunk driving).