

Understanding Work-related Traffic Accidents (WRTA) involving motorcyclists with Qualitative Method

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Introduction

Motorcyclists are involved in more than 50% of all traffic injury accidents in Singapore in the last few years. In 2014, work-related traffic accidents (WRTA) were included in MOM's Workplace Safety and Health annual statistics. In 2015, 6 out of 10 WRTA fatalities involved motorcyclists. Not much was known on why these cases happened and what employers and workers could do to reduce such risks. There were also very limited published papers on WRTA involving motorcyclists.

To get a better understanding of the factors related to WRTA involving vocational riders in Singapore, WSH Institute (WSHI) used focus group discussions (FGD) to:

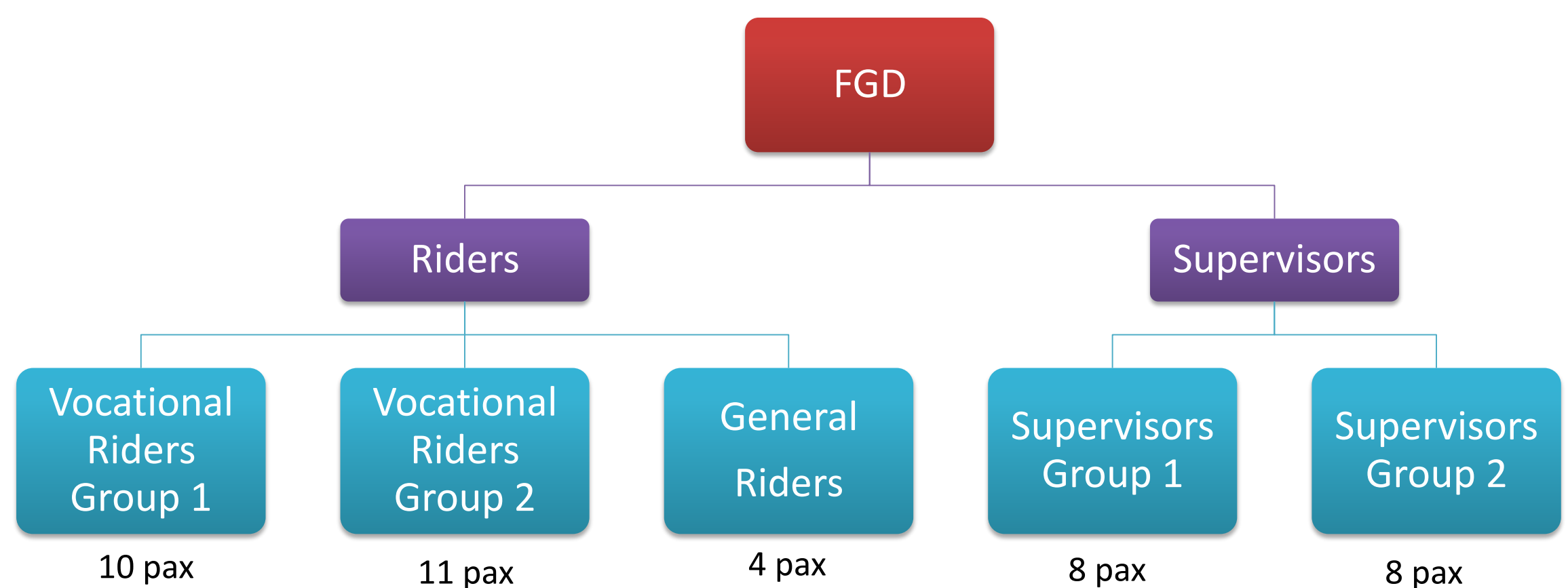
- ❑ Understand the causes of work-related traffic accidents involving vocational motorcyclists; and
- ❑ Explore potential solutions that stakeholders can undertake to reduce these work-related traffic accidents.

Methods

Vocational motorcyclists and supervisors from the Transportation and Logistics and Food and Beverage sectors were invited to the FGD.

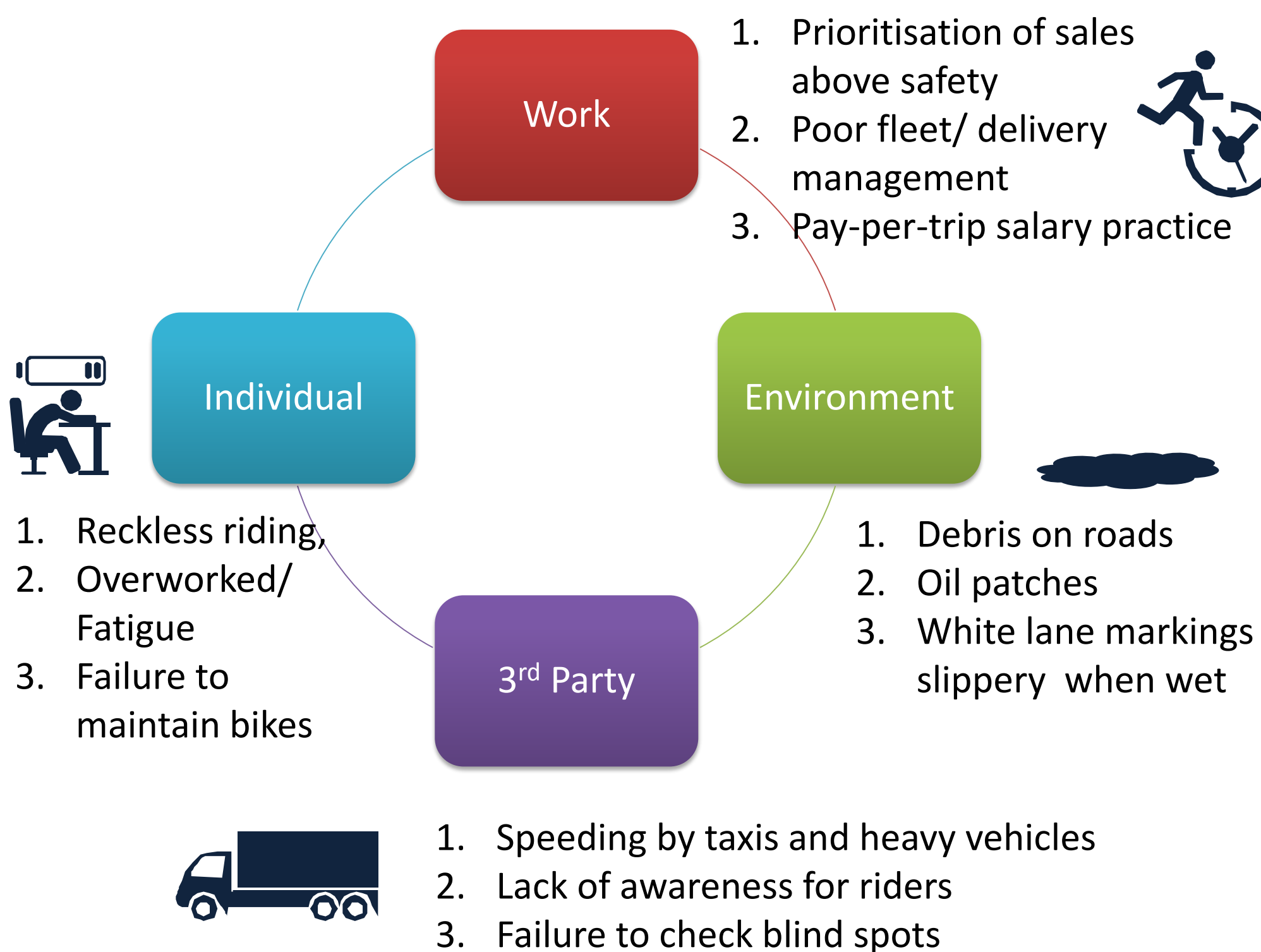
Past WRTA cases from 2012 to 2015 reported via MOM's iReport were analysed. Literature review was conducted in English across 17 WSH Institute subscribed journals, databases and google scholar for keywords on "vocational motorcyclists", "causes to accidents", for the period 1980 to 2015. Only 7 papers were found.

Information from past cases and literature review were used to design the FGD script, probes and training for facilitators and note takers. A Participant's Information Sheet was prepared and shared with attendees. Informed consent for audio recording was sought.



Results

41 participants from 14 organisations attended the FGD. All groups shared that a mix of work, environment, third party road users and individual factors increased the likelihood for traffic accidents to occur at work.



Discussion

Participants were candid in their experiences and perspectives on WRTAs. Although riders and supervisors of fleets looked at WRTAs from different angles, majority of the points they raised corroborated with each other.

Solutions were discussed along the 4 key themes as shown on the right.

Post FGD:

- ❑ Shared report and following up with the Traffic Police in the area of rider education/ engagement plans
- ❑ Shared with Land Transport Authority on feedback on road condition affecting riders
- ❑ WEF 1 April 2016, all Risk Management audits for bizSAFE application are required to check for pay-per-trip compensation and to implement fatigue management programme for vocational driver or rider
- ❑ Trial of intervention to improve rider safety
- ❑ Study the risks of pay-per-trip compensation practices and measures to manage such risks

Riders and their employers, and other road users must have greater awareness of the risks on roads

Employers should do their due diligence to eliminate/ reduce risk to WRTA arising from work they created

Provide/ make mandatory refresher driving and defensive riding courses

Better enforcement of traffic safety violations where industrial vehicles frequent. Enforce Risk Management for WRTA among companies

Conclusion

WRTA is likely caused by a plethora of factors ranging from environment, employers and self. Stakeholders responsible for each layer of factors must step up in their respective areas to collectively make vocational riding a safer occupation in Singapore.



Acknowledgement

The authors would like to thank the FGD participants, as well as all WSHC and WSHI staff who assisted in the session.

On ways to reduce WRTA risks:

- ❖ Participants shared that more visible traffic enforcement in "higher risk" areas could help to deter reckless road use.
- ❖ Employers should assess and manage all risks from vocational riding.