

## Memorandum

To: Snell Certified Manufacturers  
Subject: Snell Certification and Custom Fitted Helmets  
Date: September 9, 2013

A few years ago, a manufacturer came forward with a proposal for custom fitted auto racing helmets. The essence of the proposal was that scans of clients' heads would be applied to cutting a cavity into a standard blank helmet. Since the scan would match a particular client's head shape, the client would get an optimal fit. Since these were to be auto racing helmets and would be produced in quantities of four or more fitted to a single individual, a workable Snell policy for certification and enforcement was developed in which conditional certification would be awarded initially but afterwards, single samples of actual custom fitted units would be tested for compliance before units could be produced and sold with Snell certification labels. The tests were thought sufficient to assure compliance. Since these custom fitted helmets were to be high end items and clients were expected to order several units at a time, this policy did not seem too burdensome. But no custom fitted helmets were ever certified under this rubric.

However, more recently another manufacturer proposed something similar for motorcycle helmets except that clients were expected to purchase only single units. Requiring that two units be cut and that one be tested at Snell to obtain authorization to label the other for the client would be prohibitive. The delays and the anticipated expense would kill any chance of success.

This policy described in the addendum is already in effect. Manufacturers who wish may develop and submit headgear for certification. However, this policy should not be considered the Foundation's last word on the matter of custom fitted helmets. We invite suggestions for improvements for this policy as well as for alternative policies which may be better suited to other approaches to custom fitted helmets.

Snell Memorial Foundation