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HANDBOOK 2012



**Arriving at Stops**

All riders must follow the lead bike and the bike in front of them. The leader may do a large loop into the parking lot – this is done to ensure that all bikes in the group are off the traveled part of the roadway for group safety. Riders should follow around and park and depart in the same order to keep the same riding position. This looks very impressive and shows professionalism to observers.

**For Mention of Rain**

Road Captain's should make it quite clear that in the event of sudden rain, sleet or hail, that the group will only pull off to suit up when there is a safe spot to do so. It is far too dangerous to pull off on gravel or at underpasses on a major highway. Ensure that the speed decreases and rider spacing increases as conditions warrant. It is better to declare, if it looks like rain, that riders suit up early.

**Tap-Outs**

If a member(s) decides he/she is to leave the group early, it should be brought to the attention of the Road Captain's as soon as possible. The exiting rider(s) should then be repositioned at the rear of the group to minimize disruption and confusion in the group. The rider shall tap on the helmet with an open hand and remove their bike from the staggered formation. The Tail Gunner resumes and follows up with realignment of remaining members.

**Emergency Stop**

A closed fist tapping the top of the helmet indicates a rider has an emergency and is warning that he/she will be pulling over. The Tail Gunner should be the only bike to pull off to assist the individual. Multiple bikes pulled over could be a hazard being too close to the traveled portion of the roadway. The rest of the group should not stop, but follow the lead bike to where the Road Captain deems it the safest to stop the group away from any traffic dangers.

**Tail Gunner**

The Tail Gunner is like a Road Captain who rides in the last position in a group. The Tail Gunner must secure a lane for the rest of the group during lane changes into faster traffic. Usually this is the most experienced rider in a group, for the Tail Gunner is the rider who stops to assist a rider who has mechanical trouble, loses control, or drops out of a ride for some other reason. The Tail Gunner should be prepared to render first aid to a downed or disabled rider in a group. If at all possible, the Tail Gunner should have a co-rider who can assist with traffic control if a serious problem arises. If there are multiple groups on a ride, there will be multiple Tail Gunners.

**Road Captain's Job: Preparing for a Group Ride**

When a number of motorcyclists are invited for a group ride, the riders and their co-riders gather at the staging area, often without knowing their specific destination or route from that point on. The Road Captain for that ride will have a route prepared and will usually have checked the route within the past week or know the route well, in order to look for construction and road surface problems and other situations which might affect the safety of those who are to participate. The Road Captain will appoint other Road Captains or Tail Gunners if multiple groups are required.

**Road Captain's Responsibilities**

The Road Captain will before each ride, conduct a short riders' meeting to identify him/herself and the Tail Gunner(s), and to review group riding guidelines briefly. He/she should explain the staggered formation and the 2 second distance that is to be maintained between riders in the same track. He/she should also explain the 'move up to fill up' procedure and the use of 'drop-back' riders when the group is split. The Road Captain should also alert the riders of potential hazards on the ride, review hand signals and answer any questions about the ride. The Road Captain may also ask if there are any inexperienced riders and ask that they place themselves near the front of the ride group where they can ride under 'observation'. These items are described in detail in the sections that follow.

## Pre-Ride Meeting

- Introduce yourself and any other assigned Road Captains and Tail Gunners
- Let them know who is trained in First Aid
- Go over SCRC Approved Hand Signals
- Riding Formation (Staggered)
- Pull ahead to fill up gaps
- Newer Riders should be up front
- Keeping up to the flow of traffic
- Drop-back riders when group gets split
- Follow the bike in front (Lane Changes)
- Pre-Ride meetings should be done before all rides

## SCRC Rides are 100% Alcohol Free

We must insure for the safety of our members that it is clear that all SCRC Rides are Alcohol Free. If a member decides to consume alcohol, he/she will not be permitted to rejoin the group for the remainder of the ride. There is NO EXCEPTION to this rule!

## SCRC Approved Hand Signals

- Right Turn
- Left Turn
- Stop or Slow (Same Hand Signal)
- Single File
- Return to Staggered Formation
- Road Obstruction- Left and Right Foot
- Tighten up the group formation
- Turn signal left on
- U Turn
- Emergency Stop
- Loose Gravel (Corners)

### Full Tank and Empty Bladder

This should be stressed and posted in the ride summary to remind the riders that the posted departure times are for a reason. Some starting locations may not have fuel or restroom facilities readily available.

### Conduct

Be as courteous as possible all of the time. It is very important to handle conflicts in private, not in a public forum. No one likes to be singled out in public or in view of the rest of the riding group. Recognize some of the signs of agitation and avoid harsh words. Remember, you are looked upon as leaders by the other members. If a serious situation arises, please consult with one of the Club Officers for advice before proceeding.

### Rider Conduct

No reckless, inconsiderate or dangerous behavior should be permitted at any time. Any riders not adhering to this rule should be spoken to and may be asked to leave the group immediately. We should all be portraying a positive image to other motorists and pedestrians at all times. Excessive speed, cracking the throttle to show off, loud pipes and other obnoxious behaviors should not be permitted. Respect the community to assure we can be invited back.

### Highway Traffic Act

We are all subject to the laws and regulations in all jurisdictions that we operate our motorcycles in. Speed limits, Stop lights and all other traffic signs are to be obeyed. Rolling stops are not permitted and all individuals are responsible for their own actions in these situations.

### Ride Starts and Stops

Road Captain's should observe entry and exits for obstructions. When planning a route it may be easier and safer to turn right out of a stop and go around the block and come to a traffic light rather than making a left hand turn.

**Assess the Size of the Group**

Find a comfortable manageable number of bikes for your group (9 – 15 is a good size). Split the group with separate Road Captains to ensure group safety. Planned routes should be discussed with all the Road Captains. Do not designate a fast and a slow group, but do keep the newer and slower riders in one group to have them gain confidence in group rides.

**Announce Road Captains**

Designate and announce Road Captains and their positions in the Pre-Ride briefing. This will allow new members to become acquainted with them. Announce who is trained in First Aid and the location of your First Aid Kits.

**Drop Back Rider**

All members need to understand the importance of the Drop Back Rider. If the group separates due to traffic or any other reason, and the group makes a turn, the last rider in that group will remain on the corner as a marker for the rest of the following group. Again if another turn is made, the last rider in the group will remain on the corner, all this time the leader will observe this and reduce the group speed allowing them to catch up. Always stress that there will no need to race to catch the group, and if performed properly the group will be back together quickly and riding safely.

**Ride Reporting**

At planned stops have your Road Captain's report on how the hand signals are being performed. Does a member need a reminder to keep the signal up a bit longer? Are all signals being passed back, or do they stop at a certain individual? Keep all reminders pleasant, not personal.

**Following the Flow of Traffic**

Explain to your group that for safety reasons, on certain roads, it may be possible that the group will have to travel at slightly over the posted speed limit. This will keep most other motorists from trying to pass a group on a two-lane road. Keep in mind that not all speedometers are calibrated accurately and the speed taken off a GPS unit might be more accurate to judge proper speed.

**Right Turn** – Left arm bent 90 degrees with thumb pointing in the direction of the turn.

**Left Turn** – Left arm straight out and pointing finger in the direction of the turn.



**Slowing down** – Left arm straight out at 45 degree angle from body and palm facing back. You may raise and lower your hand slightly to emphasize the signal.

**Stopping** – Left arm bent at 90 degrees with clenched fist pointing downward. You may raise and lower your hand slightly to emphasize the signal.



**Single File** – With the left arm extended straight upward and the index finger pointing up, the group will position themselves behind the Road Captain.

**Return to staggered formation** – Left arm extended with small finger and thumb extended. You may rotate your hand slightly to emphasize the signal.



**Road Hazard Left Side** – The left side hand or foot is extended to point in the direction of an upcoming Road Hazard on the Left Side



### **Following the Bike in Front**

- It is important to tell members to follow the bike in front of them
- It may be that the Road Captain will put the group in single file
- This may be because of road obstruction, lane changes or other reasons the Road Captain deems to be safest for the group
- It is important to remember that in single file the space between riders is still 2 seconds
- The Road Captain should have a 4-second visibility of the road ahead. Any less than this, they should consider putting the group into single file.

### **Checking Out The Curves**

On any stretch of curvy road and in any corner, a group may ride in single-file momentarily, to enable each rider to corner at his own speed and to have as much room as possible for manoeuvring. This is especially important to riders with little experience in a group, as they may “wobble” or be nervous about making turns with another bike to their side or riding close behind them. This is an accepted variance to staggered formation; usually the Lead Bike will not signal for single-file at each corner or turn but will expect the riders to choose their own path of travel.

### **Group Lane Change**

To move a group over to the left or right lane the Road Captain will give the appropriate hand signal and bike turn signal. All riders must remain behind the Road Captain. Once the Tail Gunner receives the signal he/she will ‘secure’ the lane desired. It will be the Tail Gunner’s decision when it is safe to occupy the lane. Once the Road Captain recognizes the captured lane, he/she moves over then is followed by the rest of the group.

### **Assess Riding Skills**

Newer or slower riders should be positioned near the front of the group behind the Road Captain. This will eliminate the ‘rubber band’ effect generally felt by riders at the rear of the group. As newer individuals become more used to group riding they can be positioned further back in the group.

**Special Signals and Situations**

- Turn Signal Left On
- No turns on red lights
- Personal Riding Space (Owning your lane)
- Rules for Emergency Vehicles
- Tap out (leaving the formation)
- Securing right or left lane (Lane Change)
- Full tank, empty bladder
- Concerns before, during and after the ride

**Riding**

**Riding Formation**

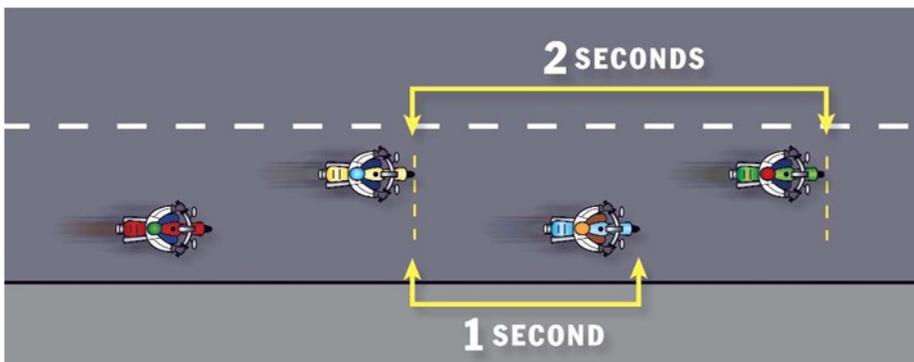
We ride in staggered formation

Ride leader at front in left track

All bikes will be two seconds behind the bike directly in front and one second behind the bike in the opposite track.

Ensure the riders know they have the complete lane on straights as well as in corners

**Staggered Formation**



**Road Hazard Right Side** – The Right Side hand or foot is extended to point in the direction of an upcoming Road Hazard on the Right Side

**Tighten Up Formation – Part 1** – Left arm extended outward and upward the Road Captain will spread their hand and fingers fully open. **Part 2** – The Road Captain will then close the hand into a fist and may repeat this action several times to emphasize the signal.



**Loose Gravel or Slippery Surface** – The hand or foot on either side is extended out and down, then 'circled' to indicate loose gravel or slippery debris.

