

Road Captain and Tailgunner Guidelines

Prior To Take Off

1. Try to arrive at the meeting place early, with a full fuel tank. The person who sets up the ride is usually the Trip Coordinator and, in most cases, also the Road Captain of Group #1 -- unless he/she gives up that responsibility.
2. As participants begin to arrive, get them in place. If there are trikes, place them at the rear of the group (in front of Tailgunner); place bikes with a trailer and/or sidecar near the front of a group as they take longer to stop and may need more room to maneuver and also help set the pace.
3. If more than 12 bikes show up, ask if there is another Road Captain/Tailgunner on site, and get them to begin setting up another group. The ideal group size is 10-12 bikes. Any trail vehicles / POV's must follow from behind the last rider or last group of riders at a 2 to 3 second interval. No cars or trucks between bikes!
4. Spend some time looking at the bikes that are going to be in your group. All riders should check for loose/hanging parts or anything that might affect the safety of the rider or group. (Check tire pressure)
5. Choose your Road Captain/Tailgunner early and discuss the route that you will be taking and the kind of terrain that the group will be riding through, etc. Make sure that all members of your group know the route. If you know the route in advance you might draw up a map and make copies for all group members.
6. At about 5 minutes prior to the announced departure time, get the riders to mount up so that everybody can leave at the appointed time.
7. Make it clear to all riders that each person is responsible for the safety and operation of their own bike. ONLY RIDE IN YOUR COMFORT ZONE! Never go faster than your guardian angel can fly! Give the riders and option of writing down ICE phone numbers (in the event they are needed) and they will be destroyed at the end of the ride.
8. If the ride will be going through the kind of terrain that some people may have trouble with, ask other Road Captains if they would volunteer to lead a slower group(s). Be sure that the slower group is aware of scheduled stops, so that everyone will have a chance to get together for lunch, etc.

Go over the hand signals with everybody. Make sure that all riders know the route and approximate length of riding time between breaks. We only ride between breaks.

The Takeoff

10. The Road Captain should start out slowly, allowing time for all group members to get out onto the road and into position. Then, increase speed to cruising speed (per designated speed limits). It's not a race!

The Ride

11. Where road conditions permit, ride in the staggered formation. However, if your travel route takes you onto narrower roads or road conditions that indicate a need to change formation, call for single file formation, both by CB / (FRS) radio's and by hand signal. All members of the group should pass the hand signal(s) back to the people behind so everybody knows what is going on.
12. Once on the road, assume the standard staggered file formation positions. The Road Captain's bike is always in the front left track of the lane you are traveling in.

13. When you have a choice of several lanes the Road Captain should plan lane changes in advance. Conditions will occur that call for immediate action, however being aware of what is going on in front and behind the formation may help to minimize the need for immediate actions.
14. The Road Captain should indicate to the Tailgunner that a lane change is necessary and the Tailgunner will secure the lane. Once the lane is secured, members in the formation will move to the appropriate lane and resume their position in the group. The Tailgunner should check to see that all members are looking left/right over their shoulder before making the lane change. All group members should be encouraged to move as a unit, and move with the bike directly in front of them. This makes for a safer and smoother lane change by the group. An individual bike driving across lanes can cause the remainder of the group to have to brake or swerve.
15. Keep the length of a ride down to a reasonable time between breaks. Remember, your co-rider may tire before you do. Riding is not an endurance test... except maybe on an Iron Butt!
16. Keep to the right lane at all times, unless passing or conditions in the right lane warrant staying in the left lane, such as on/off ramps of interstate highways. On divided highways (with 3 lanes on your side), you may want to stay in the center lane, versus constantly changing lanes.
17. If you find your group behind a slow moving vehicle on a narrow two-lane road, you may need to pass the vehicle individually. The Road Captain should announce this fact to the group. Once you are around the vehicle, you should keep in contact with the rest of the group, informing them about passing lanes and traffic conditions. Once the group has gotten around the vehicle, the Tailgunner should inform the Road Captain of that fact. Above all, once you pass, keep moving to allow room for all riders to pass and reform. Give the vehicle you pass some distance!
18. When traveling through towns, the group may get broken up at traffic lights. The Road Captain may pull over to wait, if an area is available. If not, continue on at a reduced rate of speed and maintain visual contact with the stragglers so they know where you are. This is especially important if there is a turn to be made before the group gets back together.
19. If you notice the group is spreading out, or getting sloppy in the formation, don't hesitate to tell the group to close it up or to get the formation straight. This is especially true for the Tailgunner, because he/she has the best view of the group. Remember that the group's safety is as much the concern of the Tailgunner as the Road Captain.

The Breaks / Parking

20. When pulling off of the road or preparing to stop, find an area that will accommodate the entire group. Pull into the area, ride to the end, and swing the front of your bike out. Then back up to the curb. All bikes should follow suit. This makes for a neat formation when parked and leaves more room for other groups or for non-riders to park. Always remember that we want to make a good impression on the general public, and not hogging all available parking spaces is just one more way to do this.

Return Trip

21. When heading back from a ride, there are times when a bike (or group of bikes) will split off from the main group. This split should come before the turn so that you do not have bikes breaking out of formation at an intersection, where other drivers might get confused and pull out in front of one of us. If you know that you will be leaving the group during the ride, position yourself at the rear of the group. As the split is made, make sure that the Road Captain knows who his Tailgunner is.

****Special Note****

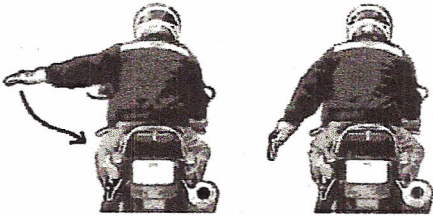
Remember that Alcohol consumption increases the possibility of accidents, moderation or abstaining till the ride is finished is the responsible decision. Friends don't let friends drive under the influence. Give your keys to the road captain's if you become impaired. We are here for each other and safety must come first!

Rider Hand Signals From Motorcycle Safety Foundation

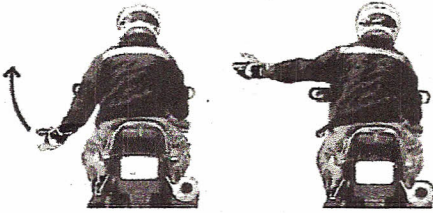
Stop - arm extended straight down, palm facing back



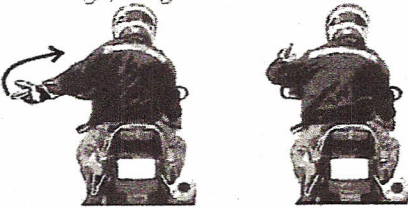
Slow Down - arm extended straight out, palm facing down



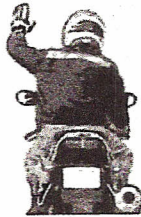
Speed Up - arm extended straight out, palm facing up



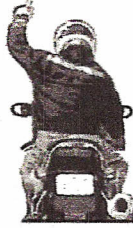
You Lead/Come - arm extended upward 45 degrees, palm forward pointing with index finger, swing in arc from back to front



Follow Me - arm extended straight up from shoulder, palm forward



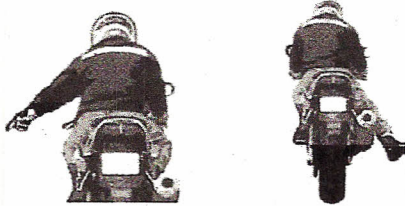
Single File - arm and index finger extended straight up



Double File - arm with index and middle finger extended straight up



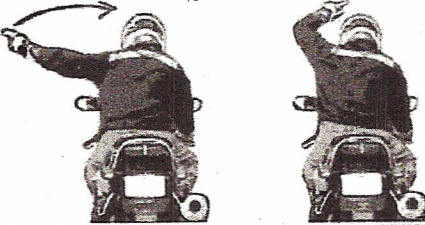
Hazard in Roadway - on the right, point with right foot; on the left, point with left hand



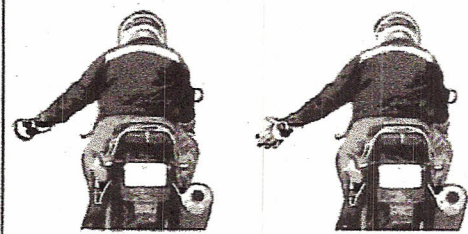
Highbeam - tap on top of helmet with open palm down



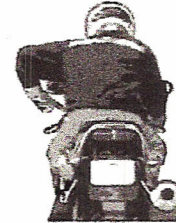
Pull Off - arm positioned as for right turn, forearm swung toward shoulder



Turn Signal On - open and close hand with fingers and thumb extended



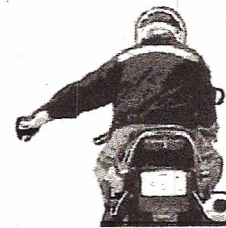
Fuel - arm out to side pointing to tank with finger extended



Refreshment Stop - fingers closed, thumb to mouth



Comfort Stop - forearm extended, fist clenched with short up and down motion



Staggered Riding Intervals

