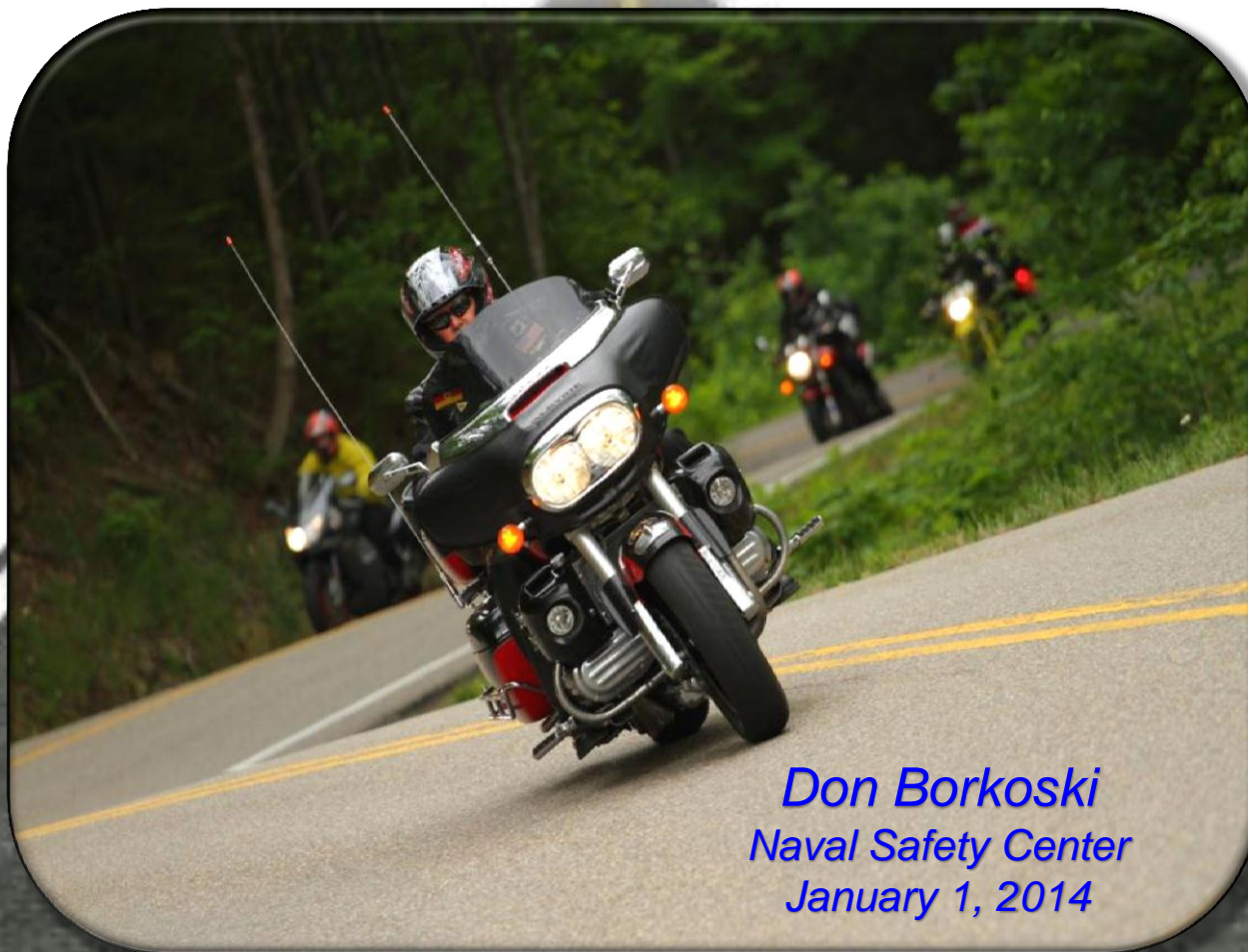




USN Group Ride Handbook



*Don Borkoski
Naval Safety Center
January 1, 2014*



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Intro

- Group Rides or Road Trips are fun but challenging.
- **Road Captains** should coordinate **Pre-Ride planning**.
- Good plans are flexible.
- Large groups should be divided into **packs** of 5 or less.
- Every group and pack should have a **lead and sweep rider**.
- **Communication** (Coms) is vital on and off the road.
 - Primary Coms: Hand signals and vehicle lights
 - Alternate Coms: Radios and cell phones.
- Stay together as much as possible.
- Plan for separation at signal lights or in traffic.
- Every rider should know the **Re-group plan**.
- Agree on **Pit-stop plan** including distance or time between each.
- Respect each other and participate in groups decisions.
- Each rider is individually responsible for themselves.





Pre-Ride Organization

- ❑ All rides need some level of prior planning and may be simple for day trip or involved for overnight trips that may require meetings, training, inspection and communications with command leadership.
- ❑ Receive command approval and provide feedback on all command rides regardless of the length.
- ❑ Assign enough Lead and Sweep Riders
- ❑ Plan meetings for training on responsibilities, hand signals, maneuvers, group ride etiquette and planning for long distances or larger group rides.
- ❑ Prepare and provide each member of the group with a Riding List to include rider and passenger names, cell numbers, radio frequencies and home contact info.
- ❑ Determine routes noting tolls, construction and detour options. Plan Pit-stops and overnight stays, events, shopping, gas, food, and nature calls.
- ❑ Provide each member of the group with a copy of the route for out-of-area or extend rides.
- ❑ For overnight stays, plan cost sharing, reservations, entertainment etc. Recommend payment up front.
- ❑ Plan bike TCLOCS and PPE checks prior to rides.
- ❑ Load Share and inspect each others load security.
- ❑ Discuss and plan for weather, cancelation, emergencies, mishaps or mechanical failures.





Road Captains

Road Captains are experience riders who understand the dynamics of group rides and assist with leading and managing the ride.

- Commands are encouraged to develop a Personal Qualifications Standards (PQS) Check list for Road Captain Certification.
- Safety officer, CMC or other leadership in the command should communicate closely and stay in contact with the Road Captains for every sponsored command ride.
- Pre an Post ride briefs should be a minimum requirement.





Ride Leader(s)

The Group Leader(s) and Group Sweep are road captains that manage the entire ride. They coordinate planning, meetings, and the ride.

Group Leader usually rides in the very front but may share that position with other road captains. Group Sweep always rides in the back but may move forward to communicate with the Group Leader.

- Coordinate ride meetings, route planning, training, bike inspections, command approval, load sharing and security.
- Assign responsibilities to others for large or overnight rides.
- Chair discussions and voting at any time before, during or after the ride.
- Manage safety and enforce compliance with group agreements and rules of the road.
- Assign and train Pack Leads and Sweeps
- Ensure every rider is briefed on hand signals, group etiquette, rules of the road, PPE, contingency plans, mid-ride departures, etc.
- Receive Chain of Command approval and keep command duty office informed of the ride progress for official group rides.
- Adjust the Plans as Necessary





Pack Lead and Sweep Responsibilities

Pack Leads and Sweeps are road captains for sub-groups of 5 or less riders. Each Lead and Sweep must know the route and be able to assume the Group Lead or Group Sweep position of responsibility in the event of a separation.

Lead (First Rider)

- Be Experienced
- Able to Make Safe Decisions
- Follow the Route or Alternate
- Follows the Plan
(as much as possible)
- Sets the Tone & Speed
- Identifies Hazards with the Road, Traffic, Weather, etc.
- Communicates Changes Early
(Speed, lane changes, etc.)
- Listens to Team Members

Sweep (Last Rider)

- Be Experienced
- Controls General Conduct of the Ride
- Ensures that the Team is Abiding by the "Rules"
- Identifies Hazards with Bikes, the Road, the Riders, Traffic and Emergencies
- Secures lanes for the Team
- Drops-Off to Offer Assistance to Team Members
- Keeps Lead Informed
- Prevents Drifting



Wing Man Responsibilities

Every rider should buddy up with a wingman, especially for less organized rides.



Wing Man

- Help your partner with mechanical or medical issues.
- Help your partner catch up with the group.
- Two riders are more visible than one. Staying in groups of two or more improves safety dramatically.
- If separated one can get help while the other waits in a safe location.



Rider Responsibilities

Every rider is responsible for their own riding first!

Rider

- Be responsible for your own riding first.
- Follow Group etiquette.
- Support your wingman
- Attend and contribute to meetings, training and inspections.
- Be courteous to other vehicles on the road.
- Never assume the right-of-way
- Know your escape route





Passenger Responsibilities

Riders are responsible for their passengers!!!



Passenger

- Make sure your passenger has the right PPE
- Explain to your passenger how to lean in a turn
- Warn your passenger about starting, shifting and stopping momentum
- Show your passenger where and how to grip you and or your bike
- Make sure your rider can reach the foot pegs or floor boards
- **DANGER: sportbike passengers and passengers on bikes without a rear seat stop, pack, or sissy bar can easily slide off of the seat and bike!!!! Take precautions!!**
 - Wear a belt or unzip pockets to provide passengers with something to grip
 - Use a rubber non-slip seat pad or double sticky tape on the passenger seat.
 - Discuss signal to slow down immediately



Support Vehicle Responsibilities

Stopping on the side of the road is Hazardous !

- Follow the Sweep a safe distance back when riding normally
 - (3 Seconds or more)
- If passing the pack for any reason, use flashers and tap horn to warn riders and always pass on the left
- If stopping for a side-lined rider:
 - Pull behind the rider if possible
 - Stop while you can still see some road between you and their rear tire
 - Angle your tires to the side of the road
 - Keep flashers on at all times
 - Exit vehicle from the door away from traffic if possible
 - Use flares or triangles if necessary
 - Notify Emergency services, road-side assistance, or the riding group **as planned or as needed.**



Ride Agreement



- I am Responsible for my own vehicle operating decisions
- I agree to adhere to the group rules and decisions
- I will not jeopardize those around me by riding irresponsibly
- I will not force others to ride at my faster pace or longer distances
- If I am uncomfortable riding, I will notify my Lead or the Road Captain.
- I agree to stay with my "Wing Man" if separated or delayed for any reason.
- I agree to meet at the Re-group location if separated.
- I agree to maintain Group Riding Discipline while part of the group.
- I am Responsible for my Insurance, Drivers License, Motorcycle Condition, and Trip Costs
- If I choose to leave the Group, for any reason, I will notify the Road Captain at any Pit Stop.
- I will continually help Identify Hazards for my own and the Groups safety



Group Leader Signature & Date

Rider Signature & Date



The Ride Plan

- Plan the Route (and alternate)
- Plan the Breaks (each 1 to 2 Hours)
- Plan the Speed (to slowest rider)
- Plan the Teams (3 to 5)
- Distribute Contact Info Sheet
 - Cell Numbers
 - Radio Channels
- Plan the Start
 - Avoid Rush Hours
 - TCLOCS Daily
- Plan the Stop (10 hour riding day max)

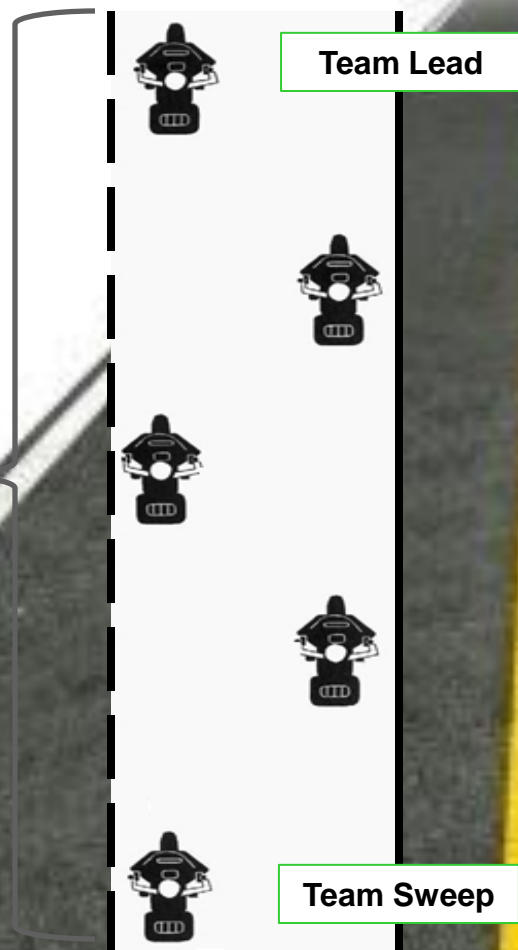




Packs

Safety and Flexibility are Greatly Improved by Identifying Packs of 5 or less riders

GROUP



Team Leads and Sweeps must know the Route, Rests and Stops.

1. Team(s) separated from the Group by a Traffic Signal, or Heavy Traffic:
 - Group Continues at a slower pace to allow Team(s) to catch up or meet at the next scheduled Rest
 - Separated Team(s) Catch up or meet at the next Rest
2. In the Event of a Break Down or Unplanned Stop:
 - Only the Team with the Stricken Rider should pull over to render assistance.
 - Following Teams close-in with the Group
3. If some Teams **choose** to separate, they should discuss this at a Rest or Stop and should always re-assemble at the End of the Day.



Packing and Load Sharing

- ✓ Don't overload your bike
- ✓ Take only what you need
- ✓ Follow a Check List
- ✓ Attach gear securely
- ✓ Use waterproof bags
- ✓ Take a Kick Stand Puck
- ✓ Save space for return trip
- ✓ Take a spare empty Bag
- ✓ Take Rain Cover(s)
- ✓ Adjust Tire Pressure for heavier load
- ✓ Include passenger in the plan
- ✓ Distribute items throughout the group when each rider does not need their own.





Load Share List



ITEM:	ASSIGNED:
<input type="checkbox"/> Flashlights	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Duct Tape	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Jumper Cables	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> GPS/Map	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Grip Extenders	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Screen Cleaner	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Sham-wow	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Safety Wire	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Rope or Strap	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Sewing Kit	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____

1Jan 2014

ITEM:	ASSIGNED:
<input type="checkbox"/> Tire Plug Kit	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Tire Pump	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Tire Gage	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Fuses	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Multi-tool	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Tool Kit	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Road Reflectors	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> 20W50 Oil	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Bottle Gas	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> First Aid Kit	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Starter Fluid	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____

Group Ride



Personal Packing List

For the Ride:

- Credit Card & Cash
- Saddle Cushion
- Ear Plugs
- Water/Camel Back
- Cell Phone/Charger
- Rain Gear
- Ziploc Baggies (Gallon)
- Emergency Toilet Paper
- Sun Screen / Chap Stick
- Tylenol / Antacid
- Helmet Bungee for "layers"
- Eye Drops (Analgesic)
- Glasses/Sun Glasses
- Chaps or Heavy Pants
- Extra Hoodie or Jacket Liner
- PPE
- Bike Lock



Hotel:

- Reservations



Camping:

- Reservations (if required)
- Sleeping Bag/Pad/Pillow
- Tent / Bivvy
- Camp Stove / Fuel
- Pot / Pan
- Plate/Utensils
- Drink Cup/Bottle
- Towel
- Utility Cord
- Food bags (Trash/Food etc)
- Sponge / Dish soap
- Meat Tenderizer for stings
- Lamp / Lantern / Batteries
- Instant Coffee / Creamer / Sugar



Personal:

- Layered Clothing
- Socks / Undies / Bras
- Shower Shoes
- Toiletries
 - Tooth Brush
 - Tooth Paste
 - Shaving Cream / Razor
 - Deodorant / Cologne
 - Brush / Comb
 - Feminine Products
 - Soap / Shampoo
- Medicines / Vitamins
- Antihistamines (Allergies)
- Eye care Products
- Nail Clippers / File
- Foot Spray / Powder
- Baby Powder





Communications (Coms)

- Hand/leg signals
- Vehicle lights
- Emergency Flashers
- Radios
- Cell phones
- Horn beeps
- Cones
- Emergency Flares/triangles
- Flashlights
- Rag on gas tank or windscreen





Coms: Hand Signals

RULES

- Always use hand signals (not just lights).
- Everyone pass signals back
- Always shift from front to back (Except for Sweep)
- Riders behind are responsible for staying clear of bikes in front of them.

HORN SIGNALS

1-Short: I'm OK/YES

1 Long: Watch Out!
Emergency! May pull over/swerve/1-finger wave
(Back-off regroup when clear)

2-Short: No/Can't Comply

3-Short: Need Fuel/Stop

POLICE - STATE TROOPER (TAP TOP OF HELMET)

HAZARD IN ROAD



SLOW DOWN



SINGLE FILE



DOUBLE FILE



PULL OFF ROAD



FUEL STOP



STOP



SPEED UP



YOU LEAD



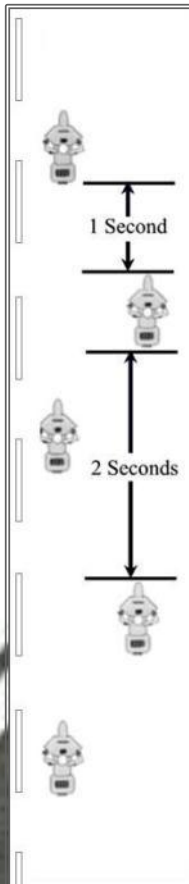
TURN OFF SIGNAL





Maneuvers: Formations

STAGGERED



Standard Formation

- Side by Side not permitted in many states
- Opening gap every four riders is more comfortable
- Group should stay in one lane to allow traffic to pass safely
- “Inside riders should turn fog and bright lights off
- Open Group to allow merging traffic to pass through

SINGLE FILE



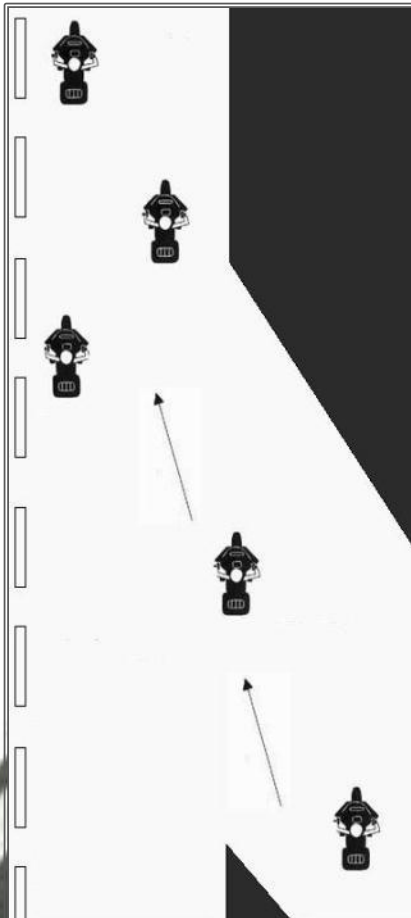
Maneuvering Formation

- two seconds minimum!
- Gap may be more in aggressive turns and narrow roads
- Traffic can generally not pass
- Exits that blend onto new road may require group to break up and re-form
- Riders signal early in this formation
- Each Rider can use the entire lane in this formation



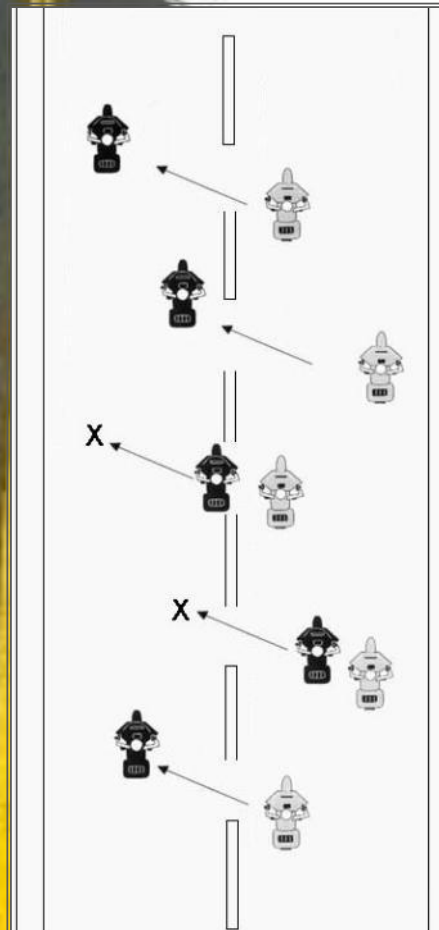
Maneuvers: Lane Shifts

MERGING



- Enter as quickly and safely as possible.
- Don't get fancy, just get out safely.
- Don't attempt to block a lane. It is dangerous!
- Each bike picks out their merge point in traffic and safely moves into it.
- Expect to merge between "other traffic."
- Regroup down the road as traffic permits.

LANE CHANGE

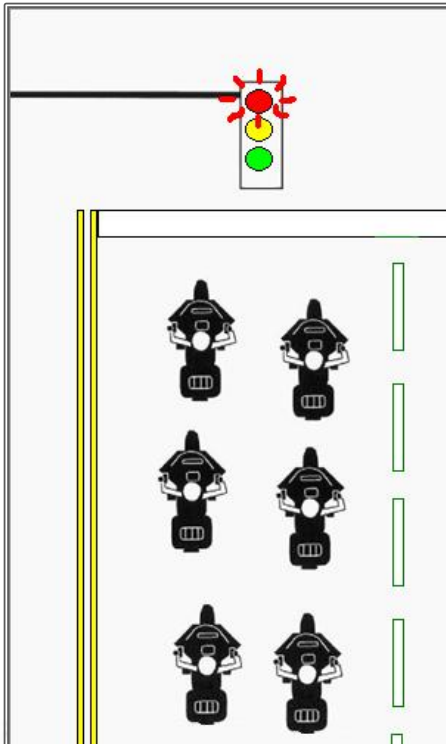


- Lead will Signal for lane change.
- Everyone Pass signal back.
- Sweep should move over as soon as possible to clear the lane.
- Lead will change lanes keeping same left track.
- Change lanes IN ORDER !!!
- Left and Right Track Pairs may shift together.
- Moving Right, the second rider should move first and the Lead and third rider will follow.



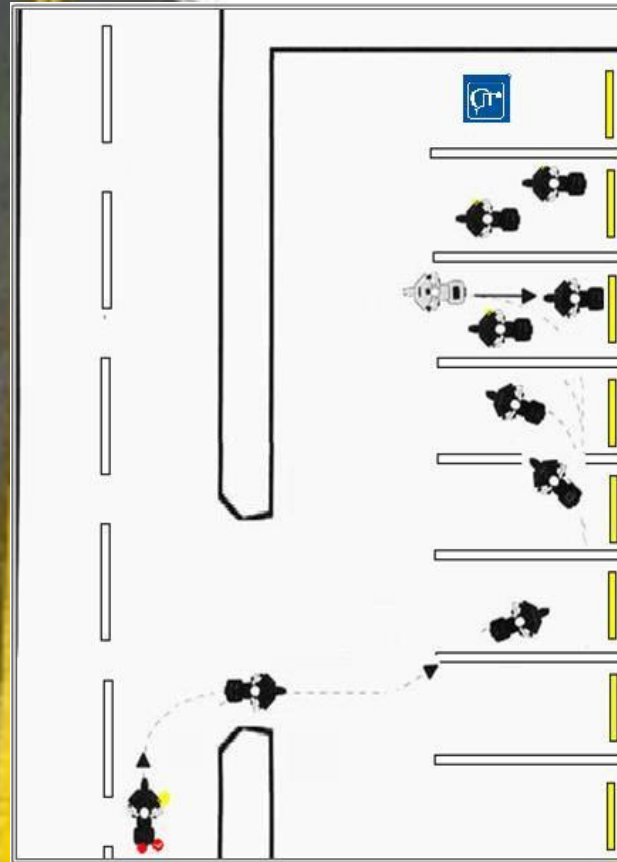
Maneuvers: Pit-Stops

TRAFFIC LIGHT



- Close up.
- Take off in order.
- Reform stagger formation on green.
- **Do not run red light!** Continue with two groups until second group catches up
- **Do not block intersection!**
- **Never assume the right-of-way in an intersection !!**

PARKING LOT



- Enter as quickly as possible
- Lead goes to far end and others follow.
- **Clear the road as soon as possible!**
- Two bikes to a spot
- Wait to dismount until near bikes are in spot
- Back in to allow smooth departure.



Ride Day

- Arrive at the starting location early.
 - Arrive with a full tank of gas!!!
- Position the motorcycles in teams.
- Place or assign leads and sweeps.
- Pre-ride TCLOCS prior to start.
- New guests must agree to the rules.
- Review hand and horn signals.
- Review group riding formations.
- Position radio operators strategically
 - Select CB channel and do a radio check
- Make every effort to start on time!
 - Delays may be prudent but avoid them if possible.





T-CLOCS

- Each rider should do a thorough T-CLOCS weeks before the trip.
- T-CLOCS one last time just before leaving.
- Unknown problems crop up on long trips. Consider Motorcycle Road side assistance through your insurance company or AAA.



T-CLOCS Pre-Ride Inspection

ITEM:		T -- TIRES & WHEELS	✓
Front Tire	Tread wear, Age cracks		
Front Wheel	Spoke tension; rim cracks or dents; Wheel Bearings(no freeplay, no leaks)		
Front Brake	Leaks, wear, cable, bleed valve, hardware		
Rear Tire	Tread wear, Age cracks		
Rear Wheel	Spoke tension; rim cracks or dents; Wheel Bearings(no freeplay, no leaks)		
Rear Brake	Leaks, wear, cable, bleed valve, hardware		
ITEM:		C -- CONTROLS	✓
Brake Lever	Lever condition, attaching hardware, Adjustment knurl		
Clutch Lever	Lever condition, attaching hardware, Adjustment knurl		
Throttle	Smooth rotation, Full return, Freeplay(1/8 inch)		
Brake Pedal	Bends, Rubber, Cable, Smooth operation		
Shift Lever	Bends, Rubber, Cable, Smooth operation		
Handle Bar	Tight, Bearings (no freeplay), Grip condition		
Horn	Installed and operational.		
ITEM:		L -- LIGHTS	✓
Battery	Terminals, electrolyte level, Security		
Reflectors	Cracks, hardware		
Headlamp	High and Low beam, lense cracks, hardware, button		
Brake Light	On, Bright, lense cracks, hardware		
Right Turn Lights	Front and Back On, Blink, lense cracks, hardware		
Left Turn Lights	Front and Back On, Blink, lense cracks, hardware		
License Plate	Light, hardware, Registration Date		
Wiring Harness	Hardware, Chafing, Routing, Condition		
ITEM:		O -- OIL & OTHER FLUIDS	✓
Fuel	Fluid level, condition, Filter check		
Engine Oil	Fluid level, condition, service if necessary		
Transmission Oil	Fluid level, condition, service if necessary		
Drive Shaft	Fluid level, condition, breather hole, service if necessary		
Clutch Oil	Fluid level, condition, service if necessary		
Radiator Fluid	Reservoir level, condition, service if necessary		
Fork Oil	Seal Leaks, proper rebound and compression		
Shock Oil	Seal Leaks, proper rebound and compression		
Air Filter	Clean or replace		
ITEM:		C -- CHASSIS	✓
Frame	Look for cracks, peeling paint, corrosion, hardware security		
Swingarm	Nut Cotter key, Free movement, bearing(no freeplay)		
Chain/Belt	Cracks; Wear; Stretch Limit; Slack 3/4" to 1 1/2", Check MOM		
Sprockets	Wear; Security; Teeth not hooked, or excessively worn		
Fastners	Security; rusted or missing bolts or nuts; cotter keys; safety wire		
ITEM:		S -- SIDESTAND	✓
Centerstand	Cracks; Wear; Spring; Smooth Operation		
Sidestand	Cracks; Wear; Spring; Smooth Operation		



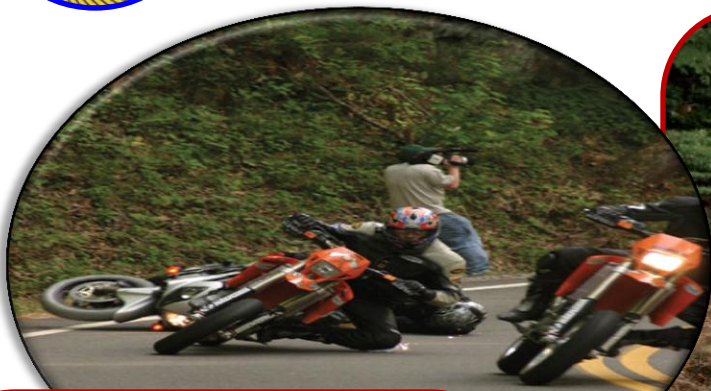
Group Ride Etiquette

- Group should ride at slower speeds than normal to ensure adequate reaction time for riders to the rear.
- Group should stay right unless passing or allowing traffic entry from access ramps
- Allow other vehicles on the road to pass through the group (preferably between Packs)
- Do not crowd riders near you.
- Do not cross the back tire of the rider in front of you in the same lane (regardless of state law).
- Remain in ranks unless you must pull over or pass to communicate with the Road Captain or Lead.
- Do not drift back, just to accelerate back to the group.
- Always repeat/pass hand signals
- Do not violate traffic lights, signs and other rules of the road.
- Do not use high beams or fog lights behind the lead riders.
- In the group always use your brakes to slow so following riders see your lights.





Ride Day: Expect the Unexpected





Homeward Bound



- Don't get complacent on the ride Home.
- Most group mishaps occur on the return trip.
- Avoid the tendency to drive longer periods between stops.
- Plan for smaller groups as you are closer to home.
- Plan for groups to separate as riders go in different directions.
- Plan for a Hot-Wash meeting shortly after the trip.





Hot Wash



- If splitting up on the return trip, plan a final meeting to debrief
- If ending the ride together, debrief right after dismounting while everything is fresh
- Share post-ride lessons learned during the mentor meetings and with other groups
- File post-ride lessons learned for the next ride



Navy Rider's Creed



*I am a United States Navy Sailor. In the service of my country, I fly or hover in the skies, cruise the seven seas, or dive beneath the oceans. I survive **many** dangers because I am finely trained, manage my risk, and I am well equipped. I am a patriot and a consummate professional.*

But the most dangerous activity that I undertake is riding my motorcycle.

Riding is unforgiving of mistakes and bad judgment. My motorcycle has the power to throw me, crush me and propel me at deadly speeds. It exposes me to weather, being impacted by other vehicles, and tempts me to break the law.

The Navy has prepared me to identify these and other risks and mitigate them through proper training, heightened awareness, preventive maintenance and good judgment. I chose to apply this survival strategy to my riding.

I owe it to my family, to my country, and myself.

- I will continue to train and improve my motorcycle knowledge and skills.*
- I will always wear the proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).*
- I will never assume the right-of-way.*
- I will ride within my abilities and will vigilantly identify and avoid hazards.*
- I am often invisible to others on the road and it is up to me to be seen or remain out of harms way.*
- I will not exceed safe or legal speeds and I will not ride under the influence of alcohol or drugs.*
- My passenger may not fully understand the risks of the ride and it is my responsibility to protect them.*
- Two coaster sized patches of rubber are all that holds me and my bike to the ground. I can not rely on fate, but must control that tenuous life line by riding within my abilities and vigilantly monitoring and adapting to conditions.*
- I will mentor and consider the advice of my rider shipmates because together we will keep each other safe.*

Like the service to my country, I ride for the freedom, the adventure and the camaraderie.

I am a Navy Rider and it is my duty to RIDE SMART !

By Don Borkoski February 2014



*Ride like your life depends on it,
because it does !*

