

## Group Riding Tips

### Participating in a Ride

- Make sure your bike is in good operating condition.
- Arrive for the ride with a full tank of gas.
- Arrive on time so you can participate in the pre ride meeting, and familiarize yourself with the route and scheduled stops.
- If you're a new rider or new to group riding let the road captain leading the ride know, so you can talk about where you would be most comfortable riding at.
- When the group makes a gas stop fill up even if you don't think you need fuel. Also before leaving each stop make sure all luggage and lids are secure.
- Use all hand signals and turn signals.
- Remember a group of motorcycles is not a single vehicle. Be courteous and allow other vehicles to enter and exit the highway and change lanes. Generally other vehicles will not want to ride in the middle of a group of motorcycles and will get out of the group as quickly as possible.
- If you would have a problem on the ride or need to leave the ride contact one of the road captains and let them know.

### Riding Formation

- Riding side-by-side is not recommended. This does not allow either rider adequate space to maneuver if you would need to.
- Ride in a staggered formation. The lead bike in the left side of the lane, while the second bike stays 1 second behind in the right side of the lane then the third bike in the left side of the lane 2 seconds behind the lead bike and so on. By increasing this by 1 or 2 more seconds will help keep things safer and minimizing risk in bad weather and unfamiliar areas. If the leader gives the signal for single file the group should form a single file and remain there until the leader gives the signal to resume staggered formation.
- While waiting at a traffic light or stop sign, riders should close up the formation and wait side-by-side. When the light turns green, riders should pull away one-by-one and establish staggered formation.

- If someone would leave the ride, while riding in staggered formation do not try to fill the gap. Wait until the group comes to a stop and then the gap will be filled.

## **Passing**

- Remember just because the leader of the group changes lanes does not mean you are clear to change lanes. When changing lanes or passing always look in your mirrors, do a head check and use hand signals and turn signals.
- Remember a group of bikes is not one vehicle so do not pass like a snake.
- Passing on two-lane highway, pass one at a time and only in marked passing zones. After completing the pass, the lead rider should return to the left lane position and continue at a passing speed to leave room for the next rider. Then the next rider should move to the left position and watch for a safe chance to pass, then return to the right position after passing, and open up room for the next rider. The rest of the group should follow the same pattern.
- Passing on interstates or freeways. If in a group larger than six riders try passing in units of six as long as you are not interfering with the flow of traffic. If you look in your mirror and see a vehicle approaching fast hold up and let them go on around. If there is a lot of heavy traffic you may need to pass two at a time. When passing two at a time every rider in the left side of the lane is the lead rider, the lead rider should stay in the left hand lane until the second rider signals he is clear to move back over to the right hand lane after completing the pass. When passing a semi-trailer truck consider passing two at a time. This will allow for more flexibility if the truck does something unexpected and evasive action is required.
- After completing any pass maintain your passing speed so the rest of the group will have room to complete their pass and move back over.
- Remember courtesy is important, let other vehicles enter and exit the highway and change lanes if they would need to.

## **Roadside Emergencies**

- If a member of the group has mechanical difficulties or is involved in an accident, the tail three Road Captain or Officers should pull over. But if there are not any available the tail three rides should pull over to help. The rest of the group should proceed to the next safe spot to pull over and wait. If there is a medical emergency one of the three that stopped should call 911. After the three that stopped makes an evaluation of the problem and has it under control, they should contact the rest of the group by cell phone or one of the three should ride ahead and inform the rest of the group on the

situation. It is the Road Captain or leader of the ride responsibility to designate the three tail rides at the start of the ride and to make sure they have each other's cell phone number.

JUST REMEMBER RIDE YOUR OWN RIDE AND DO NOT PUT YOUR SELF IN A SITUATION WHERE YOU ARE NOT AT EASE. YOU ARE NOT JUST RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR SAFETY, BUT YOU SHARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF SAFETY WITH OTHERS IN THE GROUP.

Ride Safe and Have Fun

Bob Butler, Safety Officer