

# Road Captain Guidelines



**Santa Maria  
HOG Chapter  
#1403  
Santa Maria, CA**

December 14, 2024

# Revisions Page

<b>Date</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>May 11, 2011</b>	<b>Original</b>	<b>Established document</b>
<b>July 1, 2011</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>Updated release forms with alcohol policy</b>
<b>August 10, 2011</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>Minor text changes made throughout the document; more detail added in responsibilities areas; redefined RC candidate requirements.</b>
<b>December 8, 2012</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>Annual Review completed, minor wording change to para. 17 on page 20</b>
<b>December 7, 2013</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>Annual Review completed; minor change to ride briefing attachment; Planning a ride attachment added; new HOG logo added</b>
<b>December 6, 2014</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>Annual Review completed, para. 16 and 17 updated</b>
<b>October 16, 2015</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Additional information added for Lead Road Captain throughout document; updated release forms and alcohol policy</b>
<b>October 29, 2016</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>Page 20, para. 16, changed 'in December' to 'During the last quarter'.</b>
<b>November 4, 2017</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>Annual Review completed with no recommended changes</b>
<b>November 10, 2018</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>Annual Review completed with no recommended changes</b>
<b>February 2, 2019</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>Updated hand signals information and examples</b>
<b>December 21, 2019</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>Updated para. 6, 9, added hand signals, updated Pre-Ride checklist, and added H.O.G. National Injury Report</b>
<b>December 21, 2020</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>Annual Review completed with no recommended changes</b>
<b>December 18, 2021</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>Corrected spacing issues in several paragraphs: updated para. 17</b>
<b>December 17, 2022</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Updated information on Pages 6, 7, 9, 12, 16 – 21, 24, 26; added 27</b>
<b>December 16, 2023</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>Grammar cleanup; para. 4.1 updated; Pre-ride briefing updated to coincide with pre-ride briefing card</b>
<b>December 14, 2024</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>Annual Review completed with no recommended changes</b>

**Disclaimer:** The material presented here is for information only and does not constitute a legal or binding document or contract. Application of the group or individual riding principles described are at the risk of the individual rider.

## **1. Introduction**

Congratulations on your decision to become a Santa Maria H.O.G.<sup>®</sup> Road Captain. As a Road Captain, you will make an important contribution to the *success* of our Chapter's safe riding program. In order to have fun riding in a group, we must be safe, and that means having good, well-qualified Road Captains. By volunteering, you have already demonstrated that you have the best interests of our Chapter at heart. This manual will help you develop the skills necessary to become a competent and fully qualified Road Captain.

## **2. Objectives**

The Mission of our Chapter is to Ride & Have Fun. The Road Captain plays a critical role in accomplishing this mission by making every effort to assist with the safety of our members and guests on Chapter rides.

As Road Captain, you have three basic objectives:

1. Assist with the safety and welfare of all individuals within the group, and any surrounding motorists or pedestrians.
2. Lead the group to its destination in a well-organized, disciplined, and safe manner.
3. Avoid hazardous situations.

## **3. Road Captain Responsibilities**

The Head Road Captain will maintain a roster of Qualified and Proficient Road Captains and will designate mentors to aid in training and recruiting new Road Captain Candidates. The Road Captains and Candidates will meet with the Primary Officers during the month of December to plan the ride calendar for the upcoming riding season. Additionally, Road Captains and Candidates will usually meet quarterly (or at least semi-annually) with the Head Road Captain to discuss any necessary ride calendar adjustments and general Chapter related business. It is expressly noted that Road Captains share no responsibility or liability for actions of others that may be deemed irresponsible or occur due to inadequate rider skills.

The Road Captain has accepted the responsibility of planning, leading, and supervising a safe ride that will be enjoyed by all members of the group regardless of their riding experience. The Road Captains number one priority is the group. The leadership of the Road Captain will provide an example of riding style and conduct to provide an example to the group so all will conduct themselves in a safe manner and enjoy the ride. The Road Captain's role of leading the group is much more than just getting everyone to a destination and back.

The Road Captain's primary concern is the safety of the group. Although he/she is not personally responsible for the actions of the members during the ride, he/she is responsible for setting a safe and good example for the group to follow. As a Road Captain of the chapter, his/her actions could create a liability to himself/herself and the Chapter.

### **3.1. Road Captain / Lead**

**Riding Position:** The Lead, in most cases, is one of the Road Captains. The Lead / Road Captain is positioned at the front of the group on the left side. This position is maintained for the duration of the ride.

#### **Specific Objectives:**

1. Lead the group to and from the designated destination / termination point.
2. Manage all aspects of the ride.
3. Give direction to all Road Captains in order to maintain a safe and enjoyable ride for everyone.
4. Utilize the Road Captains to anticipate, and adjust accordingly, all adverse changes in traffic, roadways, weather, and the individuals of the group.
5. Effectively communicate your intentions to the group with the use of standard hand signals.
6. The Lead Road Captain needs to avoid jackrabbit starts from stop or traffic signs, or sudden burst of speeds on the open road. This can cause huge holes in the group and will cause riders to hurry to catch up and then readjust their speed and bunch behind the Lead Road Captain. This starts to create an accordion effect to the riders in the middle and becomes annoying and unsafe.
7. The Lead Road Captain will set a safe speed that creates a comfortable and enjoyable ride for the group and will always attempt to keep the group together that includes the Sweep. This does not mean that the speed will be that of the flow of traffic.

#### **Specific Responsibilities:**

1. The Ride Plan. The success of a ride depends upon prior planning. The Road Captain should pick a destination or route that will be of interest to the majority of the group. The Road Captain needs to layout the following:
  - Map out the route
  - Be familiar with the current road conditions
  - Consider weather variations or extremes due to time of day or elevation changes

- Know anticipated travel time and mileage
- Plan for fuel based on most restrictive motorcycle in group
- Rest stops with consideration for riding experience of group
- Meal stops
- Return time
- Remember HOG is a family organization and your planning will need to consider appropriate locations for both genders and children at all stops

2. Pre-determine (and pre-ride if possible) the intended route for the ride.
3. We encourage all Road Captains (if more than one is on the ride) to do a briefing prior to the group pre-ride briefing so the route and details can be discussed.
4. Designate riding positions to all Road Captains.
5. Determine if the group needs to be split into smaller groups.
6. Assemble the group at least 10 - 15 minutes prior to departure time for group full pre-ride briefing of the details of the ride and review hand signals per the pre-ride briefing card as well as additional information that might be pertinent to the ride. Advise the riders of the ride termination point for the ride. Upon conclusion of the review, announce departure time ("Five Minute Call")
7. Immediately after the "Five Minute Call" proceed to the line-up area and take the Lead Position.
8. Road Captains should enter the highway at less than the posted speed limit and gradually increase their speed as dictated by current conditions in an effort to keep the group together.
9. As dictated by current road, weather and other conditions, the ride Lead Road Captain will determine the group riding formation, i.e., single file or staggered, and indicate such with the appropriate hand signals.
10. With the use of standard hand signals, warn the group of any upcoming hazards or emergency conditions.
11. Keep the group together including the Sweep by adjusting speed up or down as needed.
12. Perform an annual review of these guidelines when the new Executive Board takes office and advise them of any changes.

13. Cancellation of the ride/event (In the event of cancellation, the Lead Road Captain will be responsible for being present at the ride/event departure point to direct any arriving members for a period of 15 minutes before and after the original departure time).

### **3.2 Assistant Road Captain**

**Riding Position:** The Assistant Road Captain's position is in the middle of the group. This position is maintained throughout the ride unless otherwise directed by the Lead.

**Specific Objectives:** Assist the Lead in leading the group and managing all aspects of the ride.

**Specific Responsibilities:**

1. Actively participate in the pre-ride briefing.
2. Immediately after the "five-minute call" proceed to the line-up area and take the position in the middle of the group.
3. Assist the Lead in his determination if the group is prepared to depart.
4. Maintain proper spacing at all times.
5. When directed or when the circumstances require, take the lead position.

### **3.3 Sweep Road Captain**

**Riding Position:** The Sweep is second in authority of the group ride. The Sweep position is the last position in the group. This is maintained throughout the ride unless otherwise directed by the Lead. At any time during the ride, if any motorcycle should join the group, the Sweep will maintain the last position in the group. The Sweep will also be the eyes of the Lead Road Captain watching for merging lanes and positioning himself to "Close the Door" on other vehicles that may otherwise find themselves trying to merge into the group. The sweep will also normally change lanes before the formation when it is safe to do so, to secure the lane so the formation can move into it. This may not be possible in all situations.

## **Specific Responsibilities:**

1. Actively participate in the pre-ride briefing.
2. Immediately following the "five-minute call" monitor the traffic to allow the group to safely enter the roadway.
3. Communicate with the Lead when it is safe to move the group.
4. Anytime an individual rider in the group must pull out of the group (whether moving down the road or at a gas/rest stop), and gives a thumbs down signal, the Sweep will also pull out to assess the situation. Provide aid in any way possible. Communicate the situation to the Lead as soon as practical.
5. Protect the group from the rear with all lane changes.
6. Ensure all other riders continue with the planned route.
7. Direct traffic away from incident/accident and administer first aid to any injured parties.
8. Call 911 if necessary.
9. Remain with the disabled vehicle to provide any needed assistance if necessary.
10. You may be asked to coordinate the transport of the vehicle to a repair facility and assist the rider with necessary transportation if able.

### **3.4 Return route way home – The Road Captain will:**

1. Reiterate safety as discussed during initial briefing,
2. Verify that riders are familiar with their return route,
3. Lead the return group ride when necessary, and
4. If possible, try and return to the starting point as a group.



## 4. Road Captain Safety Equipment

### 4.1. First Aid and Tool Kits

All Road Captains will carry a first aid kit that they are issued, and it is suggested that they carry a basic tool kit.

### 4.2. Communication

Clear and precise communication is critical during the pre-ride briefing as well during any critical incident. A few good tools to have on hand include the following information and documents.

1. The Pre-Ride checklist or briefing card.
2. Accident report forms
3. Disposable camera (*digital, if available*) or cell phone
4. List of Road Captains Cellular Telephone Numbers
5. The HOG Road Road-Side Assistance Number (888-443-5896)
6. If available, consider using rider to rider communication systems within the group and between Road Captains.

## 5. Meeting Place & Time

To qualify as a chapter event an activity must be sponsored and approved by both Santa Maria H.O.G.® and / or Santa Maria Harley-Davidson at which time it will be added to the Chapter calendar. All approved events shall originate at Santa Maria Harley-Davidson or other designated departure point (Pappy's, AG K-Mart, 166 exit, etc.).

We encourage all Road Captains (if more than one is on the ride) to do a briefing prior to the group pre-ride briefing so the route and details can be discussed. Any Chapter member(s) can request rides; however, it is the responsibility of the Road Captain to facilitate and coordinate all aspects of rides. If a non-Road Captain leads the ride, it is the responsibility of that member to plan all aspects of the ride and have Head Road Captain approval prior to the ride date.

Local rides with multiple groups going to the same location should use the same route used by the planning Road Captain. This would occur if the group were too large and could be a safety concern. The planning Road Captain will establish the appropriate

departure times for each group to assure the integrity of the smaller group concept, which is consistent with established safety protocols (written or unwritten).

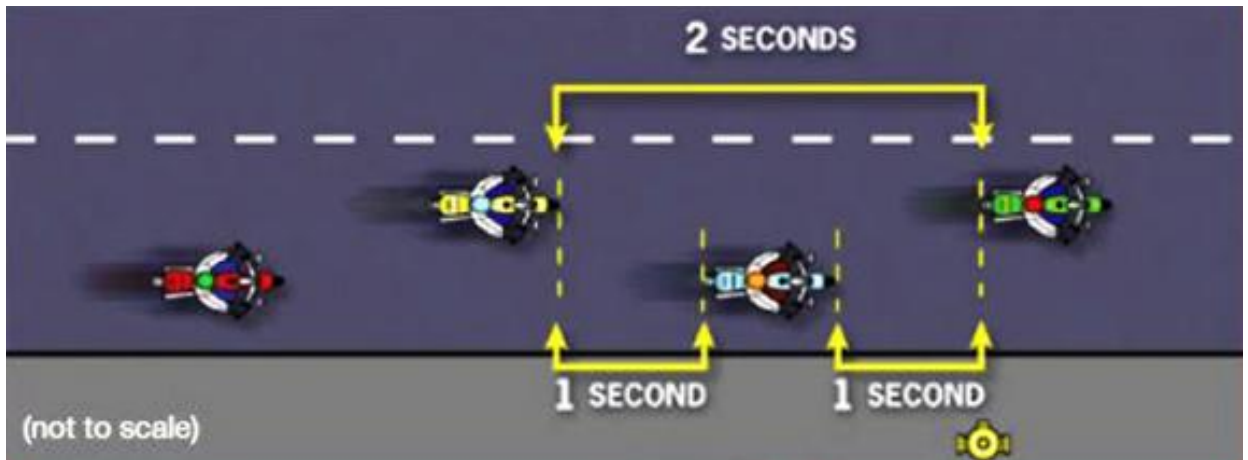
Out-of-town overnight trips can have more than one ride plan, which may involve multiple Road Captains going to the same destination. All approved events shall originate at Santa Maria Harley- Davidson or other designated departure point (AG K-Mart / Starbucks, 166 exit, Chevron Station on Santa Maria Way, etc.). Each Road Captain will lead their group as one ride and will play an integral role with the ride planning and related pertinent information for their ride.

## **6. Pre-ride Briefing**

Prior to each ride, the Road Captain will conduct a briefing for the entire group. During this briefing the Road Captain will review the route to the final destination, planned stops as applicable, procedure for return ride (i.e., on your own, organized groups, and routes home if needed) and if necessary, break the riders into groups for safety. Breaking the group up into smaller groups will be at the discretion of the Road Captain for the ride. Road Captains and Sweeps will be identified during the pre-ride briefing in addition to other Road Captains present for the ride. The Road Captain shall conduct the pre-ride briefing utilizing the briefing sheet or briefing card covering ALL areas noted on the sheet / card. Any additional information not covered on the briefing sheet / card that is pertinent to the ride will also be provided to the group before departure. The briefing should be done as expeditiously as possible. The following talking points should be covered prior to every ride. (See attached Pre-Ride Briefing)

## 6.1 Riding Positions

1. **Staggered Riding** – 1 sec interval minimum, alternating lane positions.

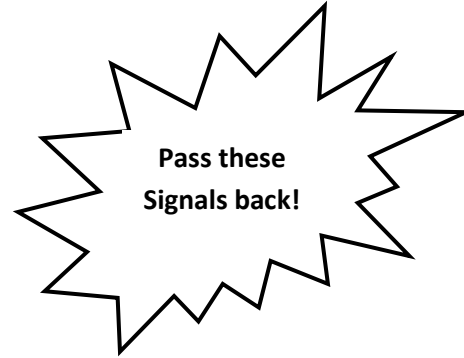


2. **Stop Signs** – double up, proceed through as pairs and then return to normal staggered formation.
3. **Stop Lights** – stop if the light turns red, regardless of your position in the group. Proceed on green when the way is clear.
4. **Lane Changes** – pass signal back, each rider is ultimately responsible for their own safety. If possible, on multiple lane highways, the Sweep should secure the lane. 'Dynamic' lane changes should not be made while riding in a group as this could cause an unsafe situation for other riders. (See Section 9 for additional information)
5. **Passing traffic** – single up while passing, use your own judgment. The Road Captain in the passing lane indicates no oncoming traffic. Return to your own lane and proper formation as soon as possible. (See Section 10 for additional information)

**Warning: Passing may only be done where legal to do so!**

6. **Hand Signals** (see Basic Signals are list on pages 21 - 23)

- a. Single file
- b. Staggered
- c. Right turn
- d. Left turn
- e. Slow down
- f. Start your engine
- g. Speed up
- h. Road hazard Right
- i. Road hazard Left
- j. Tap out if need be
- k. Need fuel
- l. Group broken



7. **Accident or Breakdown Procedure**

Recognizing the variables that will surface with each accident or breakdown, the Road Captain and Sweep will be called upon to use their best judgment in analyzing and responding to each situation. The guidelines below are provided as an aid in assessing and reacting to those situations.

Other considerations: There are some other problems that commonly arise in an accident situation, which you should be prepared to handle.

- Distraught spouse, family member, or loved one
- Combative person (s)
- Hysterical / frustrated person (s)
- Other people/bystanders who want to be helpful

8. **The Road Captain**

- 1) Will continue to either the next planned stop, or to a safe location that will accommodate the remainder of the group.
- 2) Contact the Sweep and obtain the information regarding the accident/breakdown.
- 3) Determine what action to take after discussing the situation over with the Sweep.

## 7. Riding Formations

The basic formation for Chapter rides is normally the staggered formation. Environmental conditions will dictate when the Road Captain places the group in a single file formation.

Environmental considerations may include, but are not limited to:

1. Road width
2. Presence of frequent or tight curves (the twisties)
3. Road conditions (construction, sand or gravel, potholes, etc.)
4. Weather

## 8. Traffic Lanes

The group will stay in a single traffic lane whenever possible. In an urban environment, the Lead Road Captain should consider the distance to the next turn on the ride route and the direction of that turn when deciding which lane to utilize.

## 9. Lane Changes

A lane change refers to maneuvering the group into a new travel lane where the direction of traffic in the new lane is the same direction of travel of the group. Lane changes may be performed for a wide variety of reasons including passing slower traffic, maneuvering the group into a lane where the traffic speed is the same as the group wishes to travel or in preparation for turning onto an intersecting roadway or exiting a freeway. Lane changes should be kept to a minimum and, whenever possible, but keep in mind sometimes this is dictated by traffic.

Lane Changes – When traveling on divided highways it may become necessary to change lanes to avoid hazards or to pass slow moving traffic. Lane changes will **ALWAYS** be initiated by the Lead Road Captain. Ideally, our approach to lane changes is to have the Sweep Road Captain capture the new lane and allow the traffic clear between the Sweep Road Captain and the Lead Road Captain before moving the Group to the new

lane. Members of the group should follow the Lead Road Captain. We always change lanes from front to back after the Sweep Road Captain has captured the required lane.

'Dynamic' lane changes should not be made while riding in a group as this could cause an unsafe situation for other riders.

When passing a 'big rig' or vehicles with trailers it is important to allow a 'cushion' in front of the vehicle to be passed. It may be necessary to accelerate as you pull back into the lane to allow others behind you a safe passing 'cushion'.

**NOTE: IF A LANE CHANGE IS REQUIRED AND THE TRAFFIC DOES NOT PERMIT A LANE CHANGE WITH THE SWEEP RIDER BLOCKING, THE LEAD ROAD CAPTAIN MAY INITIATE THE CHANGE WITHOUT WAITING FOR THE SWEEP RIDER. ALL SUBSEQUENT RIDERS SHALL THEN FOLLOW INTO THE NEW TRAVEL LANE, AS IT IS SAFE DO SO, ALLOWING SPACE FOR OTHER VEHICLES/RIDERS AND THEN REFORM.**

## 10. Passing

Passing refers to maneuvering the group into a traffic lane where the direction of travel is in the opposite direction the group is riding.

**WARNING: PASSING MAY ONLY BE DONE WHERE SAFE AND LEGAL TO DO SO!**

When the group encounters slower moving traffic and the Lead Road Captain determines there is enough room for the group to start passing safely, the Lead Road Captain shall maneuver into the oncoming traffic lane and accelerate past the slower traffic.

Each subsequent rider, in turn, should also maneuver into the on-coming traffic lane and accelerate past the slower traffic, then return to the initial traffic lane making sure there is enough room for the rider behind them to move into the lane.

## 11. Rubber-Band (“Yo-yo”) Effect

Reaction time for a motorcyclist when confronted with an unexpected threat is, on average, about one second. If the need to react is anticipated (such as when a turn has been announced), then riders can usually react within about half a second after the bike ahead begins to react. When a group of riders change speeds very gradually, however, it usually takes two or three seconds for a rider to recognize this and begin to change his speed to maintain his position in the group.

This doesn’t sound like much time, but experienced group riders manage their risks reasonably well with a minimum one-second interval between each bike and a minimum two-second interval between bikes that are traveling in the same track. When the group has more than six bikes in it, however, gradual changes in speed within the group can become tricky.

When a Lead Bike begins to accelerate, the second bike doesn’t instantly start to travel at the faster rate. Instead, a gap grows between them while the second bike is reacting -- and it continues to grow until the second bike is fully up to the increased, stable speed of the Lead Bike. Clearly, once the speeds are the same, the gap will remain the same size. However, since most groups prefer to keep a one-second minimum interval between bikes (two seconds between bikes in the same track), the new gap caused the Lead Bike’s acceleration may be larger than is desired. When this occurs, the second bike must go faster than the first one for a brief time in order to “catch up.”

If we assume that the Lead Bike speeds up from 60 to 70 mph over a period of two seconds, the second bike will have to ride at 75 mph for two seconds (after his reaction time passes) in order to close the gap. Then he/she will take another one second to decelerate back to 70 mph to create a gap of the proper size. If there were only two bikes in the group, this example is easy to follow. But when the group is larger, and the bikes involved are riding further back in the pack, the “rubber band” effect can be especially dangerous to all bikes from the middle of the group to the Sweep bike.

For example, the third bike in the group has this problem: About two seconds after the second bike has begun to accelerate, the third bike responds. Now, however, the second bike is moving at 75 mph rather than at 70 mph like the Lead Bike. The third

bike must use even more effort to catch up to the second bike than the second bike did to match his speed to the Lead Bike's new speed if the gap is to stay relatively constant. He/she will have to move at 75 mph for four seconds, not two, to catch up. The fourth bike will have to accelerate to 80 mph!

In a group of only six motorcycles, the last one will find the gap between himself, and the fifth bike has grown to 143 feet before it begins to close, once he starts to speed up, given these average reaction times. And it will be at least 11 seconds after the Lead Bike first began to accelerate before the sixth bike does so.

Now, imagine what happens in the group if, while this is taking place, the Lead Bike must apply his brakes! This rubber-band effect becomes extremely important if the Lead Bike happens to make an abrupt and major change of speed at certain critical moments, such as when approaching a sharp turn or a tricky curve. Those who ride as Lead Bike, or near the lead bike for their group should be aware of the importance of avoiding sudden changes in speed, if possible, to reduce the risks to those following.

The rubber-band effect can be reduced by following these guidelines:

- Lead Bike changes speed more gradually.
- All riders watch farther ahead than just the bike immediately in front of them in order to notice and to react quicker to changes in speed.
- All riders restrain the impulse to "crank it up" in order to quickly re-establish normal spacing.
- Lead Bike does not increase speed within 15 seconds of entering a curve which may require braking or some slowing down to maneuver it safely.
- All riders abandon the one-second spacing rule when riding twisties.

## **12. Hand Signals**

Hand signals will be used to maneuver the group, change formation, or point out hazards. (See Basic Signals are list on pages 21 - 23)

Hand signals should be given in a timely manner. Not so early that they are meaningless, and not so late that they become unnecessary.



Normally, the Road Captain will initiate all hand signals except for pointing out hazards. Any rider in the group, in any position, upon becoming aware of a hazard, should point out the hazard to all riders that follow.

When the Road Captain issues a hand signal, he or she should hold the hand signal for enough time to alert the riders behind the Road Captain of an important instruction/notification. Each subsequent rider will maintain the hand signal until the rider behind acknowledges receipt by also performing the hand signal. The Sweep will perform the hand signal to acknowledge receipt to the rider in front of the Sweep.

***CAUTION: DO NOT MAINTAIN OR PERFORM ANY HAND SIGNAL IF SAFETY REQUIRES TWO HANDS ON YOUR HANDLEBARS***

## **13. Road Captain Selection Process**

Any Santa Maria H.O.G. Chapter member can lead a ride.

A Ride Plan must be approved by the Chapter Head Road Captain prior to initiating the ride. The member (Ride Leader) must find a Chapter Road Captain to go on the ride and that Road Captain will review the Ride Plan that has been approved by the Chapter Head Road Captain and the Road Captain will be in the #2 position on the ride. The Road Captain will perform the pre-ride briefing in accordance with the established pre-ride briefing.

A member is ***not*** automatically considered to be a Road Captain Candidate just because that member leads a ride or attends Road Captain Meetings.

The Chapter Road Captains will observe riders on Chapter rides and demonstrate the skills necessary to be a Road Captain Candidate. The observing Road Captain will make their recommendation to the Head Road Captain. The Head Road Captain will make contact with the perspective Candidate to see if the member is interested in being a Road Captain. If so, the Candidate will be assigned a mentor from the cadre of qualified Road Captains.

# 14. Road Captain Candidates

Candidate Prerequisites:

Obtain the approval of the Head Road Captain per paragraph 13.

Attend Rider's Edge Group Rider Orientation administered by the Chapter Safety Officer(s) when (one is scheduled) and Road Captain Training administered by the Head Road Captain and / or Chapter Safety Officer.

Be active and hold current membership in both National H.O.G. ® and the local Chapter.

It is desired that a candidate attends a California motorcycle riding course and have a certificate (if applicable) such as an Advanced Riders Course.

Once an individual has been accepted as a Road Captain Candidate, he or she must demonstrate the following skills to become a fully qualified Road Captain:

1. Demonstrate the skills necessary to act as a Road Captain including the following (can be completed as a part of the Road Captain Training):
  - a. Follow the sweep during a group ride.
  - b. Sweep group ride with a Road Captain observing.
  - c. Follow the lead during a group ride.
  - e. Lead group ride with Road Captain observing.
  - f. Notice / Discuss unsafe / improper group riding techniques.
  - g. Accomplish a lane change from the sweep position.
  - h. Plan the route for **one ride** and conduct the pre-ride brief during the calendar year. This may be a one-day ride or a multi-day ride.
  - i. Negotiate a group through an urban environment.
  - j. Demonstrate proper acceleration technique and good speed control.
  - k. Execute proper lane changes in both urban and highway environments.
  - l. Demonstrate discuss the ability to recognize the experience / riding capabilities of the entire group.
  - o. Demonstrate knowledge of the proper use of hand signals.
2. Demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the ***Santa Maria HOG Group Safety Handbook*** and the ***Road Captains Guidelines***. This could be done by either written or oral examination at the discretion of the Head Road Captain.

## **15. Road Captain Mentoring Process**

The mentor is responsible for training / preparing the Road Captain Candidate and will ensure that he or she is familiar with the Road Captain Guidelines as well as the Santa Maria H.O.G. ® Safety Handbook. The mentor should prepare the Candidate to lead a Chapter Ride in the lead position, assistant Road Captain position, and Sweep position to understand all facets of being a Road Captain per paragraph 14.1.h, include practice riding sessions that may include additional Road Captains that will include various routes and road conditions, and select random destinations and have the Candidate develop a ride plan to that destination whether it be a one-day ride or a multi-day ride. These are only examples of how to prepare a Candidate for their classroom training and road test evaluation.

Completing the classroom training and road test evaluation is not an instant approval to become a Road Captain. If a Candidate is disapproved by the cadre of Road Captains participating on the road test evaluation, then he or she may choose to continue their training with their assigned mentor and then complete the road test evaluation once again. If the Candidate completes the road test evaluation and is approved by the cadre of Road Captains, then the next step will be approval by the Chapter Head Road Captain.

## **16. Road Captain Appointment**

Appointment to become a fully qualified Road Captain resides with the Chapter Head Road Captain. In addition to successfully completing the objective training, the Chapter Head Road Captain, with input from the cadre of qualified Road Captains that participated on the road test evaluation and the Candidates mentor, and taking into account the candidates' ability to think clearly, organize / plan rides, and make good decisions, have the right temperament to take constructive criticism as a tool to improve their Road Captain skills, and if he or she finds the candidate capable, then the Chapter Head Road Captain will award the Candidate his or her Road Captain patch making the Candidate a fully qualified Road Captain.

To the newly awarded Road Captain, keep in mind that there is more to being a Road Captain than just wearing a patch once it is awarded. He or she must continue to grow as a Chapter Road Captain and it is desired that the new Road Captain lead more than just the minimum required rides annually, participate in other scheduled chapter rides and assist the ride lead Road Captain, and continue improve their own riding skills.

The Road Captain patch will be awarded to the candidate at a monthly Chapter meeting.

## 17. Head Road Captain Appointment

During the last quarter of each year (or sooner when elections are completed) the Director will be tasked with appointing the Head Road Captain for the following year. Pivotal to that appointment are Organizational skills, promotional skills, people skills and a thorough understanding of the Road Captain Guidelines within. The Head Road Captain and assigned Road Captains will continually observe riders during chapter rides for potential Road Captain candidates throughout the year based on riders demonstrated riding skills, participation of chapter rides, demonstrated leadership abilities and communication skills. Road Captains will not necessarily be carried over into the next year and this decision will be made between the Head Road Captain and the Director. Factors could include the number of rides with no noted problems from riders during chapter rides, quarterly meeting attendance and other meetings/events that may be required, safety issues, support during rides not led by RC, and other determining factors noted by fellow Road Captains that will be discussed between the Head Road Captain and the Director.

## 18. Maintaining Qualifications

To maintain active Road Captain status each Road Captain will be required to **plan a ride twice a year**. It is *recommended* that each Road Captain attend at least one function a month (when scheduled), be it a ride, Road Captain meeting or other Road Captain duty. Additionally, it is highly *recommended* that Road Captains attend the Advanced Rider Course at least every two years. Road Captains will attend at least two of the four quarterly meetings that are scheduled during the calendar year. Also, as a part of two of the scheduled meetings Road Captains will be required to make one of the two scheduled Road Captain Refresher training rides (if conducted/scheduled) that will consist of a Road Captain and/or Road Captain candidate group ride.

**Probation:** If a Road Captain is unable to schedule a ride during the calendar year that Road Captain will be put on probation for a **period of 4 months into the new calendar year**. If the Road Captain fails to schedule and complete a ride(s) during this period, then they will no longer qualify as a Chapter Road Captain. If this instance occurs with having to complete a ride during the first four months of the new calendar year it does not relieve the Road Captain from completing their two (2) rides during that New Year. In other words, the Road Captain would now complete two (2) rides during that year as a minimum.

## 19. Guideline Annual Review

On an annual basis, the Head Road Captain and Road Captains will review these guidelines for possible revisions and updates. The Head Road Captain or designee will solicit comments and / or concerns from the Primary Officers and the Dealer Sponsor before any final revisions are implemented.

### Group Riding – Common Hand Signals



**Single File** – Hand raised high above the head with the index finger pointed upward.



**Staggered** – Hand raised high above the head with the two finger victory sign given and rotating the wrist.



**Right Turn** – Left arm out to the side bent at the elbow and hand or fist pointed upward.



**Left Turn** – Left arm straight out to the side with open hand or pointing to the left



**Hazard on the Right** – Motion Left hand above your head and move back and forth to indicate a hazard is on the right such as a bicyclist or a motor vehicle is on the right side.



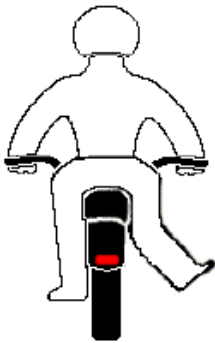
**Slow Down** – Left arm outstretched and downward with hand flat, palm facing down moving in a downward motion



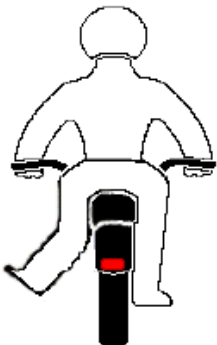
**Start Your Engines** – Left arm raised up high above your head with index finger pointed upward and moving in a circular motion.



**Speed Up** – Left arm outstretched and downward with hand flat, palm facing up moving in an upward motion.



**Road Hazard Right** – Extend your right leg toward the road hazard pointing with your foot.



**Road Hazard Left** - Extend your left leg toward the road hazard pointing with your foot.



**Need Fuel** – Point to the gas tank



**Tap Out** – If you need to leave the group for any reason then tap on your helmet up and down, motion over your head and point to the right, and if everything is good then give the thumbs up as well. If you are having a problem then do not indicate the thumbs up and your buddy and the Sweep Road Captain will pull off with you.



**Group Broken** - Hand raised high above the head formed in a fist and the signaling arm is straight. Maintain this position until the rider in front of you gives the signal. This signal needs to reach the Road Captain leading the group so he knows to either slow down or to safely pull the group over. You may honk your horn to get the riders attention in front of you to assist in getting this signal passed to the front. Anytime you pass through an intersection you should look in your rear view mirror to see if anyone behind you gets stopped at the intersection. If every rider in the group gets in the habit of checking their mirrors after an intersection they will see the Group Broken signal and pass it forward to the leader.

# Santa Maria HOG Chapter #1403

## Pre-Ride Briefing

- Welcome Riders.
- Does anyone need to TAP OUT if not up to this ride.
- Introduce additional Road Captains and Sweep.
- Is your bike in good shape for this ride?
- Define destination and route to be taken.
- Identify and determine fuel stop and rest stops.
  
- Identify termination / destination and return plans.
- Review lane changes and passing procedures.
- Review Hand Signals as necessary.
- Review Group Riding techniques
  - Staggered riding and following distances.
  - Single file ~ 2 second interval
- Review Buddy System (bike 1-second behind).
- Accident / breakdown procedure
- If the group gets split up (traffic lights, etc.)
- Auxiliary lights on by the Sweep and all other rider headlight on low beam
- Identify those who know CPR / First Aid
- Does anyone have special needs? (Medical, other)



# ROAD CAPTAIN'S GUIDELINES

## Ride Planning

The following information is suggested when preparing for to lead a ride.

- Plan out your route and where you would like to go for your ride and try and stick to it....do not change in the middle of the ride without letting riders know about the change
- Plan for gas and comfort stops
- Plan for your stops to eat (if needed)
- Plan for hotel stays to include information about the hotel, cost, phone numbers and where restaurants are in the area
- Plan total miles and for overnights plan on mileage per day
- Plan on stops of interest along the route
- Plan on recommended necessities that riders should consider for the ride (rain gear, winter gear, etc.)
- Review road conditions with State Transportation services
- For longer multi day rides consider having a ride meeting before the actual ride and pass out information about the ride
- Pre-ride your route if possible. This may not be possible for longer rides.
- DO NOT get in a big hurry on the ride.... always make it a comfortable pace for all riders and attempt to keep the group together including the Sweep.
- The flow of traffic does not dictate the speed that you need to travel to try and provide a safe ride for the group
- Provide Ride Rating for the ride (Complex, Moderate to Complex, Moderate, and Easy) per page 27

**IF YOU PLAN WELL.... THE RIDE WILL GO WELL!  
IT IS ALL ABOUT PREPARATION**



# CHAPTER INCIDENT REPORT

Mail or fax completed form to:  
**Harley-Davidson Insurance**  
222 W. Adams, Suite 3100  
Chicago, IL 60606

**FAX:** 800-699-2142 •**PHONE:** 888-690-5600 •**EMAIL:** *dealershipinsurance@hdfsi.com*

Chapter Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter #: \_\_\_\_\_

Reporting Chapter Officer Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Best time to call: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Injury: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Injury: \_\_\_\_\_

Name, address, ages of person(s) injured:

Names, addresses, telephone numbers of persons who saw incident. Attach extra sheets if necessary.

When, where, how injury occurred. Attach a separate sheet if necessary.

Type of injury. Check appropriate boxes.

Fatal	Head	Neck	Back/Spine	Arms	Legs	Internal Injuries	Amputation	Other

Name, address, phone number of person(s) having pictures of accident scene:

Name, address, phone number of responding police department and complaint #:

**ATTACH A PHOTOCOPY OF EACH INJURED PERSON'S SIGNED RELEASE FORM (REQUIRED).  
ATTACH THE POLICE REPORT IF AVAILABLE. ONLY POLICE SHOULD TAKE WITNESS REPORTS.**



## RIDE RATING SYSTEM

**Complex** – Endurance needed. Many tight turns on two-lane roads with possible uneven pavement and elevation changes for several miles at a time. This is not for the Novice or New Rider. If you are not comfortable and/or confident on tight, twisty canyon roads, this ride is not for you. Requires above average motorcycle skills. You may also be subjected to high (90° +) temperatures. Advance Rider Course skill a plus and advisable. This is not for faint of heart as this is not your grandmother's easy ride to go on. This ride will test your skills and endurance. Know your own limitations and make a wise choice.

**Moderate to Complex** - Some complexity to the ride with moderate turns and elevation changes. Fewer stretches of road with these turns and elevation changes. Good riding skills required with rides under your belt that involved staggered and single file riding for long periods of time. Endurance needed. Many tight turns on two-lane roads with possible uneven pavement and elevation changes for several miles at a time. This is not for the Novice or New Rider. If you are not comfortable and/or confident on tight, twisty canyon roads, this ride is not for you. Requires above average motorcycle skills. You may also be subjected to high (90° +) temperatures. Advance Rider Course skill a plus and advisable. This is not for faint of heart as this is not your grandmother's easy ride to go on. This ride will test your skills and endurance. Know your own limitations and make a wise choice.

**Moderate** – Some complexity to the ride with moderate turns and elevation changes. Fewer stretches of road with these turns and elevation changes. Good riding skills required with rides under your belt that involved staggered and single file riding for long periods of time.

**Nice and Easy** – Nice and easy pace, sweeping turns with some hairpin turns and elevation changes. This ride won't wear you out. Good for the Novice or New Rider to the group and a good ride to work on group riding skills.