

MISSING IN AMERICA (MIAP)

FUNERAL ESCORT SAFETY COURSE

INTRODUCTION:

As always, training is paramount and escort training is no different. During your funeral escort training, we will go over Group Riding Guidelines and the different types of funeral escort procedures. Even with the most seasoned rider, a good refresher or update will not hurt.

This training will not be an in-depth training session. We will discuss the Group Riding Guidelines and the different types of escort procedures in a classroom setting. Discuss the pros and cons of each. Then go out to a large open parking lot and practice mock group riding techniques and escorts in a controlled environment.

I suggest starting off actually walking through the fundamentals of each, so you riders can see and understand prior to actually getting on your motors. It is easy to stop in the middle of walking through and discussing or answering any questions someone may have. After you are comfortable with this, then practice riding through these mock escorts in a controlled environment.

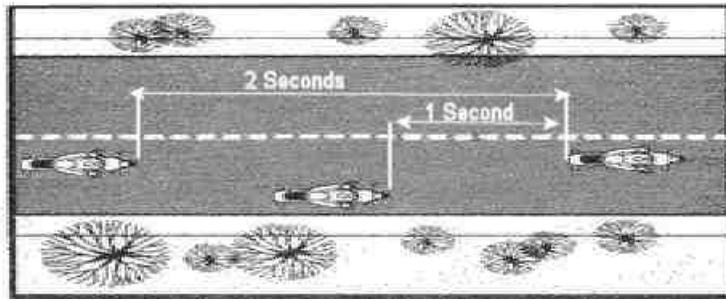
GROUP RIDING GUIDELINES:

- A. ALL GROUP RIDER'S RESPONSIBILITIES**
- B. RIDING FORMATION AND INDIVIDUAL POSITIONS**
- C. SPEED, INTERVALS, AND DISTANCES**
- D. MINIMUM SAFE FOLLOWING DISTANCES**
- E. SAFE LANE POSITION**
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- S. TUNNELS**
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- U. ROAD CAPTAINS**
- V. ROAD CAPTAIN RECOMMENDED QUALIFICATIONS**
- W. ROAD CAPTAIN RESPONSIBILITIES**
- X. TAIL GUNNER**
- Y. ROAD CAPTAIN CHECKLIST**

A. ALL GROUP RIDER'S RESPONSIBILITIES:

- 1 Will observe the objectives and guidelines in order to assure the safety and the welfare of every individual within the group, and any surrounding motorists or pedestrians.
- 2 Will follow the instructions of the Road Captain in all situations, unless those instructions place the rider or any other individual in an unsafe situation.
- 3 Will maintain their motorcycle and other equipment in a safe riding condition.
- 4 Will ride with headlights on.
- 5 Will ride with a "safety first" attitude. The safety of all individuals, whether or not they are a part of the group, is of paramount importance.
- 6 Will ride with a helmet where the state law requires a helmet.
- 7 Will consider the use of other safety equipment: over-the-ankle boots, gloves, protective clothing & helmets.
- 8 Will not ride while under the influence of alcohol or drugs that may impair their riding ability.
- 9 Will always use good judgment.
- 10 Will assess their ability to ride in a group environment - according to these guidelines.
- 11 Recognize that their safety and the safety of those they ride with is solely their own responsibility!

B. RIDING FORMATION AND INDIVIDUAL POSITIONS:



Staggered Riders with 2 Second Interval

- 1 The standard formation will be a double row, staggered, in one traffic lane, under good conditions of road, traffic, and weather.
- 2 The interval will be no less than one second between staggered riders, which will automatically make a 2 second interval between you and the bike directly in front of you.
- 3 Watch for the back of the bike ahead to pass any marker and count off the time until the front of your bike passes that marker.
- 4 Count "One Thousand" for 1 second and "One thousand, Two Thousand" for 2 seconds.
- 5 Many factors contribute to a successful group riding formation:
 - a. Having & following a good set of guidelines - for everyone.
 - b. Paying attention & Anticipation! (Perhaps the most important).
- 6 Road Captain Responsibilities:
 - a. Anticipating & signaling reactions to changes in road & traffic conditions.
 - b. Positioning the group well in advance of the need to exit/turn.
 - c. Giving advanced notice of action via timely signals to the group.
- 7 Group members Responsibilities:
 - a. Watching ahead - what the two bikes immediately ahead are about to do.
 - b. Watching ahead - what might be coming that will cause group reaction.
 - c. Passing back all signals - so everyone can anticipate!
- 8 Consistency:
 - a. Even, steady speeds.
 - b. Controlled, smooth acceleration (no "jack rabbit" starts, hard stops).
 - c. Thinking & acting like the group is a single "vehicle".
- 9 Trust:
 - a. We ride close, trusting that we all will obey the guidelines and not move "rashly".
 - b. We are safest when we ride close, and trust our fellow group members.
- 10 General Information:
 - a. The Road Captain will be at the head of the group, and typically will ride just to the left of lane center.
 - b. The Tail Gunner will ride at the rear of the formation, in either lane position of his/her choice.
 - c. New members, guests, and any riders with little experience in group riding will be positioned at the front of the group, just behind the Road Captain.
 - d. Each rider should maintain his or her starting line up position in the group until arrival at the destination. This allows each rider to become more familiar with the riding style and habits of those nearest him or her in the group, and is particularly important for the new or inexperienced riders.

- e. The Road Captain may signal the group to form a single file formation. The signal is the left arm held overhead with one finger extended. Drop back to a safe following distance from the rider in front of you and move into a single file.
- f. It may be necessary to form smaller groups for safety due to surrounding conditions or local ordinances.
- g. Generally, 30 is the maximum number of riders for a single group.
- h. Generally, there should be a 5-10 minute gap between "split" groups - to prevent reformation into a single group.
- i. There should be a temporary Road Captain to lead and a Tail Gunner to control the second part of the group.
- j. This may mean that the last rider of each group would become the Tail Gunner for that group. If possible, this rider should be another experienced Road Captain or Tail Gunner. If another Road Captain / Tail Gunner is not available, this rider should be briefed prior to the run as to his or her responsibilities in the event this situation should occur.
- k. It is recommended that trikes and bikes with sidecars or trailers be to the rear of the formation and ride single file at all times ahead of the Tail Gunner.

C. SPEED, INTERVALS, AND DISTANCES:

- 1 The Road Captain will establish and maintain a uniform speed:
 - a. Consistent with the ability of the least experienced rider, surrounding conditions, the posted speed limit, the bikes at the ride, and safe riding practices.
 - b. He/she should establish before the ride the abilities of the people and the bikes themselves prior to departure, especially concentrating on new riders, new members and visitors to the ride.
 - c. The Road Captain should continually check his mirrors to insure the formation is in good shape.
- 2 The Road Captains may choose to separate the group of inexperienced riders into a group of their own, consistent with expected or actual conditions. Making sure there is an acting, experienced Road Captain and Tail Gunner to guide them.
- 3 All riders will maintain the same speed to minimize the effect of irregular speeds on riders at the rear of the group.
- 4 When pulling out from a stop sign or stop light and after making a turn,
 - a. An even, steady acceleration is highly recommended. Do NOT "goose" it up to speed limit!
 - b. This will keep the formation together better than speeding up & having to slow back down.
 - c. Do not slow to make sure the formation is following. This will cause a back up & may actually prevent the rear bikes from making it through a traffic light.
 - d. Keep the speed at 10-15 miles below the limit until all have cleared the intersection.
 - e. This will keep the formation together better than speeding up & having to slow back down.
 - f. If the formation is broken up (light change, car interferes, etc), keep the speed to 5-10 miles below the posted speed limit to allow the rest of the formation to catch up.
 - g. You do not need to stop, if the formation is broken up (this is a judgment call based on the road & the traffic flow).
- 5 All riders will maintain a safe distance and lane position between themselves and the rider directly ahead to be consistent with existing road, traffic, and weather conditions.
- 6 See section on **Tips, Experience** for more information on related topics - **Curves**, etc.

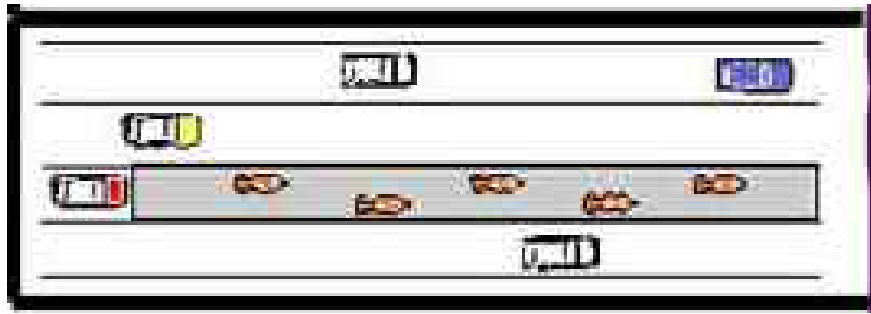
D. MINIMUM SAFE FOLLOWING DISTANCES:

- 1 Within the group, a safe distance is defined as a MINIMUM TWO SECOND DELAY between the rider, and the next rider directly ahead (see NOTE below).
 - a. In staggered formation, use a MINIMUM of a ONE SECOND DELAY between staggered riders.
 - b. In single file formation, use a MINIMUM of a TWO SECOND DELAY between the rider and the rider directly ahead.
 - c. Riders should also realize that by creating a large gap in the formation, that cars will try to move in & split the formation, causing a dangerous situation.
 - d. It also causes problems for the Road Captain when there are large gaps in the formation.
- 2 Too many people get hung up with "there must be only 2 seconds between bikes".
 - a. This is a guideline for average highway riding. The gap should be determined by the speed and road conditions. The gap should be established before the ride for the sections of road to be traveled.
 - b. The faster the speed, the more distance gap there will be. (Use of seconds of gap, means the gap does increase with speed).
 - c. We need to accommodate new group riders by "allowing" a larger gap - until they become comfortable with the target gap - and the trust it means we have in our fellow riders.
 - d. With that said... we also do not want huge gaping gaps in the formation where other vehicles will attempt to break into the formation.
 - e. The gap should be consistent throughout the formation.
- 3 With respect to vehicles ahead of the group, a safe distance is defined as an ABSOLUTE MINIMUM of a THREE SECOND DELAY between the Road Captain, and any vehicle directly ahead of the group (see NOTE below). If a car pulls in front of the formation, make adjustments to keep a good distance.

NOTE: *It's important to keep in mind that a two second interval is a MINIMUM safe requirement in order to react in the event of a potentially hazardous condition. In group riding, a one-second interval between STAGGERED riders is a policy consistent with the recommendations of most traffic and safety agencies.*

NOTE: *STAGGERED motorcycles are considered to be in a "virtual" lane of their own, that is that there is a two-second interval between motorcycles in a direct line. This group riding technique requires all participants to constantly ANTICIPATE an EMERGENCY.*

E. SAFE LANE POSITION:



Safe Lane Position

- 1 A safe lane position is defined as riding immediately to the right or left of lane center. This will keep the riders just off the center oil stain, while maintaining the staggered formation, distance between riders and other obstacles, and providing necessary lane position.
- 2 The Road Captain will attempt to lead the group in a single lane when:
 - a. Traffic flow appears to be most consistent with the speed of the group.
 - b. Using lane changes only when necessary to pass slower traffic or to avoid a hazardous condition.
 - c. To avoid blocking faster surrounding traffic.
 - d. On highways with two lanes in each direction, the group will normally travel in the number two lane, also known as the "SLOW" lane, (See below) allowing faster traffic to pass to left; except when passing slower traffic on the right.
 - e. On highways with three or more lanes in each direction, the group will normally travel in the number two lane (See below), keeping the right lane open for other vehicles entering and exiting the highway, and the left lane(s) for traffic to pass.
- 3 Lanes are counted from left to right.
 - a. The left lane is often referred to as the "FAST" or "PASSING" lane, and is counted as lane number one.
 - b. Remaining traffic lanes are then counted up until the right most, or "SLOW" lane is counted.

F. LANE CHANGES AND PASSING:

- 1 On a multi-lane highway, the double row staggered formation will normally be maintained.
- 2 The Road Captain will hold his or her position and signal for a lane change.
- 3 All riders will hold their positions and pass the signal to the rear. Do NOT move until directed to do so!
- 4 The Tail Gunner will change lanes at the first safe opportunity, protecting the lane for the group, and allowing the Road Captain to see that the lane is clear and protected (or will advise via radio).
- 5 The Road Captain will be aware of when the Tail Gunner has changed lanes by using his mirrors (or will be advised by tail gunner) and make a head check to insure no cars are beside the formation.
- 6 The Road Captain will then change lanes.
- 7 The formation will change lanes using the "follow the leader" approach. The Road Captain will move first, followed by all other riders moving from the front to the rear of the group.
- 8 There will also be times when:
 - a. there is minimal traffic.
 - b. the Road Captain may signal a lane change and move over immediately (after checking to make sure it's clear).
 - c. the formation will change lanes using the "follow the leader" approach, with all other riders moving over from the front to the rear of the group.

NOTES:

- a. NOBODY, except the Tail Gunner, is to change lanes before the Road Captain.
 - b. ALWAYS make a HEAD CHECK before you begin the lane change, and maintain safe distances.
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- 9 When it is NOT possible for the entire group to change lanes as above,
 - a. The Road Captain will signal for a turn, and precede that signal with a signal with one finger extended into the air.
 - b. This indicates that changing lanes as a group is not possible.
 - c. The Road Captain will then change lanes when safe to do so.
 - d. Everyone signals, head checks, and changes lanes front to back, as individuals, when safe to do so.
 - e. Should the group become separated, regroup when it is safe to do so.
 - f. Please use known good safety practices, INCLUDING HEAD CHECKS.
 - 10 Other Lane change techniques exist, and may be used - once they have been reviewed and practiced by all the members of the group:
 - a. Block Lane Change: This method can be utilized interchangeably with the Simple Lane Change. It requires a little more coordination, but it is well worth the effort. It is impressive to observe, and gives the riders a tremendous feeling of "togetherness".
 - b. After the Tail Gunner has secured the new lane, the Ride Captain will activate his Directional Indicator as a signal that he is about to order a lane change.
 - c. As each rider sees the directional signal, he/she also turns his on, so the riders following get the signal.
 - d. The Ride Captain then raises his/her left arm straight up.
 - e. Each rider repeats the signal.

- f. Then, as the Ride Captain lowers his/her arm to point to the lane into which he/she is moving, he actually initiates the lane change.
- g. All other riders lower their arms at the same time and change lanes also. This allows the entire formation to move from one lane to another as a single unit.
- h. Rear Fill-in: This method is sometimes necessary when a long enough gap cannot be maintained in the new lane, e.g. when trying to move from the right lane to the center and vehicles from the left lane keep cutting into the opening.
- i. After the Tail Gunner has secured the new lane, the Ride Captain (usually at the request of the Tail Gunner) will call for the group to fill in the space from the rear.
- j. He signals this by raising his hand to shoulder height and "pushing" it towards the new lane.
- k. All riders repeat the signal, and the last motorcycles move into the space ahead of the Tail Gunner, then the next-to-last motorcycles move in ahead of those, and so on until the Ride Captain finally moves into the space ahead of the entire formation.

G. PASSING:

- 1 Passing when there are multiple lanes in the same directions is really a lane change, handle accordingly.
- 2 Passing on a two-lane road with two way traffic (one lane each way)
 - a. A single file formation should be used when passing other vehicles.
 - b. Passing should be generally treated as a lane change (with a "return" at its end).
 - c. The Road Captain will maintain a steady speed after the slow moving vehicle has been passed.
 - d. Allowing the individual riders room to move back into formation ahead of the passed vehicle.
 - e. If the group becomes separated, merge safely back into the formation,
 - f. Returning to your original position,
 - g. Using known good safety practices.
 - h. Don't feel it's necessary to break the world land speed record in trying to catch up.
 - i. The Road Captain will be aware and adjust accordingly once they are clear of the passed vehicle.

NOTES:

- a. Be certain the road is clear.
- b. Always make a HEAD CHECK immediately prior to initiating any maneuver, which may cause you to cross other road users.
- c. The Road Captain, your mirror, or what you saw just a second ago are NO substitutes for your own eyes and good judgment and common sense!
- d. **YOU, and ONLY YOU, are RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR SAFETY.**
- e. When dealing with our four wheeled friends, you will never win a contest against them.
- f. It won't do any good to be "Dead Right".

H. GAS, FOOD, REST STOPS, PARKING, AND TOLLS:

- 1 Gas, food, and rest stops should be discussed and scheduled prior to departure, if necessary, due to the length of the trip.
 - a. These scheduled stops should be adhered to as much as possible, depending on varying conditions as the trip progresses.
 - b. Deviation from the scheduled stops may be required due to varying weather, traffic, and bladder conditions (availability of gas, rider fatigue, and other unforeseen circumstances).
- 2 Gas and rest stops should be limited to about ten to fifteen minutes, depending on the size of the group. Remember the last rider in the group waits the longest, therefore has the shortest rest period.
- 3 If toll stops are included,
 - a. Toll money should be collected in advance.
 - b. If available, a riding couple should be positioned in the number two slot, with the toll money in the back seater's hands. As the group approaches the tollbooth, the Road Captain will allow this bike to assume the lead position in order to exchange the toll. The Road Captain will reassume the lead as soon as it is safe to do so.
 - c. If a riding couple is not available, it then becomes the Road Captain's responsibility to pay at the tollbooth.

NOTE: Remember to avoid the center of the lane when nearing or passing through a tollbooth. They are usually extremely slick.

I. RADIO USE:

- 1 It is highly desirable to have radio communication between the Road Captain and the Tail Gunner
 - a. If both have radios & full face helmets - they can communicate whenever required
 - b. Communication should be limited to ride control matters - to avoid distraction.
- 2 Small, inexpensive "hand-held" PRS radios can facilitate communication, within limits.
- 3 PRS radios do NOT work well with mikes unless:
 - a. Used with full-face helmets and voice activated mikes.
 - b. And then only if "installed" into the helmet.
 - c. And with relatively expensive mikes.
- 4 PRS radios can be effectively as "BEEP" signaling devices:
 - a. Hang PRS around your neck - readily accessible - volume on HIGH.
 - b. Use left hand to operate the CALL button.
 - c. Use Prearranged set of codes.
 - d. Very few codes for simple communication:
 01. 4 BEEPS - "Emergency".
 02. 2 Beeps - "All Clear or Secured".
 03. 1 Beep - "Attention" or "Roger".
- 5 "Need to Stop" - PRS BEEP Codes:
 - a. BEEPS - Tail Gunner to Road Captain - "Need to Stop - Emergency".
 - b. Response - 1 BEEP - "Roger, will pull us over".
- 6 "Maneuver Coming" - PRS BEEP Codes - Especially handy with large group or curvy road - no direct sight:
 - a. 1 Beep - Captain to Tail Gunner - "Going to Maneuver, watch for hand signal".
 - b. 1 Beep - Tail Gunner to Road Captain - "Okay, I'm alerted".
- 7 "Lane Secured" - PRS BEEP Codes:
 - a. In response to signal for lane change / pass.
 - b. Beeps - Tail Gunner to Road Captain - "Lane Secured."
- 8 "Intersection Cleared" - PRS Beep Codes:
 - a. After turn or stop sign or traffic light.
 - b. Beeps - Tail Gunner to Road Captain - "Intersection Cleared".

J. UNSCHEDULED OR EMERGENCY STOPS:

- 1 Avoid them if at all possible.
- 2 Unscheduled stops can lead to confusion in the group, and confusion can lead to accidents.
- 3 The Road Captain should be informed that a stop is necessary in order to lead the group in an organized fashion to the next convenient and safe place to stop.
 - a. Use radio voice.
 - b. Or PRS BEEP Code (See Radio Section).
 - c. Or use "Engine / Ride Cut" hand signal - passed forward accompanied by horn blowing - requires mirror monitoring by all.
 - d. Any rider with an equipment problem should inform one of the Officers / Road Captain / or Tail Gunner as quickly, and as safely as possible.
- 4 If underway,
 - a. Carefully pull over or drop back to Tail Gunner.
 - b. Use combination of "pass me" and "engine / ride cut" and "pulling over" hand signals.
- 5 When the Road Captain is informed, he/ she will stop the group at the earliest possible moment, when and where, it is safe.
- 6 If a rider must pull over immediately, ONLY the Tail Gunner or assigned formation mechanic will also stop.
 - a. If there is an assigned mechanic, they should be at the rear of the formation.
 - b. The Road Captain should be informed if he or she is not aware of this situation.
 - c. Once the Road Captain is informed, he or she will pull the group over as soon as it is safe to do so.
- 7 Any rider observing a problem with another rider's equipment should inform that rider as quickly and safely as possible. If it appears that a stop is necessary, the Road Captain should also be notified.
- 8 The Road Captain should use good judgment and common sense when choosing a spot to pull over. Try to avoid an area with hazards to motorcycles, such as broken glass, trash, loose sand, gravel, and fresh asphalt.

K. ACCIDENTS:

- 1 If the group comes upon the scene of an accident or if someone in the group is involved in an accident,
 - a. The Road Captain will stop the group at the earliest possible moment (keeping with known good safety practices).
 - b. It may be necessary for the group to disperse and park separately to avoid creating additional hazardous conditions.
- 2 The Road Captain will maintain control and direct other members of the group to provide assistance.
- 3 Members of the group will provide assistance in any practical way possible, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Slow, divert, direct or stop traffic in a safe manner, using flares at the head and tail of the "situation" if available.
 - b. Aid and comfort those involved.
 - c. Call 911 to notify the Police, Ambulance, and or Fire service as the situation demands.
 - d. Maintain order and preserve the accident scene for Police investigation.
 - e. If possible, take photographs.
 - f. If possible, obtain license plate numbers and vehicle descriptions, including driver descriptions in the event of a hit and run violation.
 - g. Obtain names and addresses of witnesses if necessary.
 - h. If possible maintain overall control of the situation until relieved by the proper authorities.

L. HAND SIGNALS:

- 1 Standard hand signals will ALWAYS be used for:
 - a. Changing the formation to a single row and back to double staggered,
 - b. Turns,
 - c. Lane changes,
 - d. Slowing,
 - e. Stopping.
 - f. To point out road hazards to following riders by pointing.
- 2 Turn signal lights will also be used at all times.
- 3 All signals will be relayed to the rear of the group:
 - a. to allow all riders to take appropriate precautionary measures,
 - b. to be aware of changes in speed and direction.
 - c. once the hand signal is given and the person sees in their mirror that it is being passed on, they may return to gripping their handlebars with both hands.
- 4 The only one that needs to "hold" the hand signal is the Tail Gunner until he/she reaches the spot of the maneuver, to keep the following traffic informed.
- 5 Road Hazards:
 - a. This signal can be initiated by anyone spotting a hazard: gravel, road kill, walker beside the road, etc.
 - b. Point at the hazard with left hand or right foot - depending on the location of hazard
 - c. All riders will pass the signal back - and will avoid the hazard.
- 6 Hand signals and turn signals will always be used - even if radios are in use
 - a. Everyone needs to know what is happening (not just those with radios).
 - b. Radios can/ will fail (batteries die, interference, etc).

STANDARD HAND SIGNALS



Ready (or Ready??)
Thumb raised slightly
in front of your body



Start Your Engines
Hand raised and
rotated in a circle



Cut Your Engines / Pull Over!!
Hand slicing across
your neck



Right Turn



Left Turn



Hazard In Road
In left side of lane
Use right foot if to right



Stopping



Slow Down
Palm down, push up & down



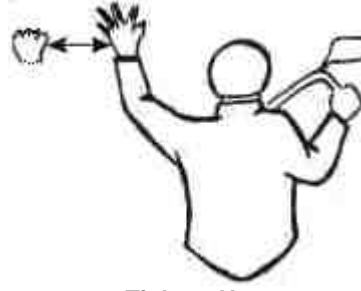
Speed Up
Palm up, pull up & down



Staggered File
Two fingers up
(pinkie, index)



Single File
One finger up
(index finger!!)



Tighten Up
Open, close all fingers
hand held high



Pull Along Side / Pass
Scoop hand up & forward
2-3 times



Back Off / Stay Back
Push hand down & back
forcefully, 2-3 times



Open Up The Gap
Keep stagger as is
Wave fully open hand



Pit Stop:
Gas/Drink/Relief
Repeatedly point to kidney



Pulling Over
Repeatedly wave arm



Turn Off Signal
Pinch thumb, index finger
together & apart

M. SAFETY EQUIPMENT:

- 1 All riders will come to the ride with a well-maintained motorcycle.
- 2 All riders with appropriate riding apparel for the weather conditions.
- 3 All riders are encouraged to bring a well-stocked tool kit on all rides.
- 4 All riders are encouraged to bring a well-maintained first aid kit on all rides.
- 5 The Road Captain should bring the following:
 - a. First aid kit.
 - b. Tool kit.
 - c. Route maps.
 - d. Run information.
 - e. Cell phone (or designate another as 911 caller).

N. TIPS & EXPERIENCE:

Nothing can replace Good Judgment and Common Sense !!!!!

- 1 One Road Captain should scout the route prior to conducting the ride.
- 2 Be aware of places you may have to stop.
- 3 Watch for loose gravel or sand.
- 4 Caution - Arrows & Lines painted on roads become slick when wet.
- 5 Watch for oil slicks around stoplights, stop signs or around areas where cars may have to sit for a period of time.
- 6 Radio link between the Road Captain and Tail Gunner:
 - a. Two way voice Highly Recommended - PRS.
 - b. PRS with simple Beep code is also OK - better than vision only.
 - c. See section on **Radio**.
- 7 If the formation is broken, and there is a turn in the route,
 - a. formation does need to stop as close to the turn as possible,
 - b. allowing the trailing group to see where you turned.
 - c. also, the last person in line wait at the corner to guide the rest back up to the formation. This is the Road Captain's decision based on what they know of the route, the traffic, and safe riding practices and should be covered prior to the ride in the pre-ride brief.
- 8 Summer, asphalt, & kick stands do not mix well, kickstands will sink in & the bike may fall over. Be aware of where you park.
- 9 All riders need to pay attention to the bikes and traffic around them! Nothing worse than a bike hitting another bike in formation because they were not paying attention.
- 10 If you need to speed to get to your destination... DON'T -- you should have made better plans & started earlier. Group rides are supposed to be enjoyable -- NOT racing events.
- 11 So what if the Road Captain makes a wrong turn, sometimes that's how you find that hidden special road!
- 12 If you "must" burn a tank of gas before you stop, you are missing half the fun of riding with a group. The BS sessions at stops are all part of the experience.
- 13 If you know the trip will take 3 hours, plan on it taking 4. Something will always happen to cause a delay. The larger the group, the more time you should allow for rest stops, gas breaks, food breaks, etc.
- 14 One MSF class lesson I think needs to be unlearned - to always stop with one foot on the ground.
 - a. Fine, if it is a small bike, but . . .
 - b. A touring bike should be stopped & held with both feet on the ground.
 - c. Use both brakes to come to a stop.
 - d. Put both feet on the ground.
 - e. Hold your bike stopped with your front brakes.
 - f. When ready to start up, you want to be vertical with both feet in place to help keep you that way.
 - g. Obviously, you do not put feet down until the bike is fully stopped.
 - h. If you must make a fast departure (to get out of somebody's way, for example), it takes more time to do so with one foot down rather than two, because you must take your foot off the rear brake and you must straighten the bike as you depart, so you will have a more erratic start.
 - i. There are always exceptions to the rule, of course.

- j. If you are stopped at a light on a severe incline, your right foot belongs on the brake pedal.
 - k. Similarly, in a panic stop situation you want to stop with your foot still on the rear brake.
- 15 When in the slow or second slowest lane and you approach an on-ramp, do a head check to the right.
 - 16 Equally as important, when approaching an off-ramp, do a head check to the LEFT (and catch that guy who is about to cut in front of you to make his exit).

O. SPACING:

- 1 Too much following distance can be as bad as, and frequently WORSE than, too little following distance.
- 2 If the formation lacks uniformity, then we don't "look" like we are "together" as a group.
- 3 And we are regarded as random individual vehicles, and not like a group or unit trying to function as one vehicle.
- 4 Too much following distance INVITES cars into the formation, splitting it up in traffic.
- 5 If we don't control our lane space the cars WILL take it away from us.
- 6 Be prepared! Non-motorcycling car drivers really do NOT understand what we do when we ride as a group or why.
- 7 If a car starts to blindly move into or through the group - LET THEM IN. We can always re-form the group a little later down the road.

P. NEW TO GROUPS:

- 1 If you are new to group riding or are uncomfortable riding in a group, please let the Road Captain know.
 - a. Excessive following distance defeats the purpose of maintaining an equally spaced stagger formation.
 - b. It is much better for your safety and the safety of the group that you ride individually 1/4 mile behind the group.
 - c. We want to encourage you to be comfortable about making that choice.

Q. DROPPING OUT:

- 1 If you need to leave the ride early, notify the Road Captain AND the Tail Gunner where you plan on leaving.
 - a. If possible be at the rear of the formation (ahead of the Tail Gunner) prior to leaving the group.
 - b. Any bikes following should move up into the standard group riding positions.

R. BLOCKING:

- 1 Remember, the cars on the road have the right of way and blocking is considered illegal.
 - a. Blocking should only be done with prior arraignment with the local law enforcement officials.
 - b. Blockers should ride at the rear of the column - in front of the tail gunner
 - c. The Road Captain should halt the column at all pre-arranged blocking locations.
 - d. The Blockers should then ride up the column and assume their blocking positions.
 - e. This will provide the extra moments needed for the traffic to clear.
 - f. It will also increase safety for all - as the blockers will not have to rush through the formation to get to the blocking point.
 - g. This will keep the formation together and safer.
 - h. If the formation does get split up ... refer to the section on rejoining the formation.

S. TUNNELS:

- 1 Cars are required to turn on lights, but some don't.
- 2 On a cycle, the instant of going from sunlight to darkness is disorientating. Your eyes are not used to the dark.
- 3 The first thing you do is instinctively brake a little.
- 4 The eyes of car drivers as well do not adjust to darkness instantly.
- 5 You and / or the car driver may not even see the yellow line on the road in a tunnel.
- 6 And, bicyclists may be encountered in tunnels as well.
- 7 So, when approaching tunnels:
 - a. Slow far ahead of time,
 - b. Allow more space between riders,
 - c. Get into single file.
 - d. Stay away from the yellow line.
- 8 You may encounter one tunnel after another so maintain this safe riding posture as long as you are in "Tunnel areas".

T. CURVES:

- 1 Many roads in the mountains are switchbacks, with nonstop sharp curves.
- 2 You are riding along at 40 mph, come into the curve and you are down to 15.
- 3 With a tight curve, riders behind you cannot see that you braked, or have little room to brake and slow, so it is easy to get bunched up.
- 4 Stay in single file always,
- 5 Maintain greater spacing between riders.
- 6 Pay attention.
- 7 Many areas on the mountain roads are like riding on the edge of a cliff.
- 8 You miss your turn and you are airborne without a parachute!
- 9 It's not the fall; it's that sudden stop at the end that'll get ya.
- 10 After rains on roads in the mountains, sand, gravel, and mud will be washed down onto the road & can make the curves & corners very dangerous.
- 11 There are many opinions on curves. A lot depends on how sharp the curves are.
- 12 If the curves are not too tight, you may ride in a good even staggered formation, with extra spacing if needed.
- 13 This allows riders to be able to shift in the lane to take a curve better.
- 14 Use the "Open Gaps" signal (**see Hand Signals**) to spread out the gap well before going into curves to allow more freedom for the individual riders to have more space to work with.
- 15 If the Ride Captain sees that the curve may be a little sharp for the group, he/she should anticipate by signaling to slow down before going into the curve.
- 16 If they are sharp curves, proceed single file spaced at least 3-4 seconds apart.
- 17 This gives the rider the option to use as much of the road as they want
- 18 Allows for people slowing down when going into sharp corners.
- 19 Road Captain must be aware of the riding experience of the people they are leading on a ride.
- 20 A pre-ride of the route (when possible) is also recommended.
- 21 It is also up to the individual rider to admit to his/her abilities relative to curves.
- 22 With varied curve skill sets in a group,
- 23 Ride to the lowest ability!
- 24 Or, split into multiple sections -- split up by ability when encountering a long series of sharp curves.

Biggest thing to remember is use good judgment & common sense.

U. ROAD CAPTAINS: CONGRATULATIONS!

You have just volunteered for the most challenging and rewarding position within your group. Once you have been appointed or elected as a Road Captain, you will have joined a very special team that will help plan, organize, and execute your group rides. The following guidelines have been developed to give you a basic understanding of the responsibilities and recommended qualifications expected of our Road Captains and Tail Gunners, and the methods we employ to help ensure everyone's safe return home and have an enjoyable ride.

V. ROAD CAPTAIN RECOMMENDED QUALIFICATIONS:

- 1 Must maintain a current and valid motorcycle driver's license.
- 2 Must maintain current and valid motorcycle insurance, with no less than the MINIMUM required by the state for street riding purposes.
- 3 Recommended maintaining a current First Aid/CPR certification.
- 4 Recommended to have successfully completed a MSF, Experienced Rider Course.
- 5 Must have tact & understanding of people should be a high priority.
- 6 Must display maturity & judgment.
- 7 Remember, you were once a new rider. Deal with problems & issues as you would want to be treated.
- 8 Training:
 - a. To maximize the effectiveness of our safe riding program, it is imperative that each individual entrusted with a responsibility of Road Captain or Tail gunner must receive comprehensive training in order to properly do his or her job. Each job has its own specially tailored training program, which includes both ride training and instruction in familiarity with the ride rules and hand signals.
 - b. Each training candidate will begin with the position of Tail gunner, unless time and conditions merit an exception. Once the candidate has certified as a Tail gunner, they then move into the queue for training as a Ride Captain.
 - c. Training for either Ride Captain or Tail gunner will consist of three rides in the position, with feedback from the training officer, an individual who has already completed the training for that position. The candidate will also receive a series of oral questions regarding the position. Once the individual qualifies for certification, he/she will be awarded the appropriate title and "patch".
 - d. Once a rider is certified for a particular ride position, they may then begin training other candidates for that position.

W. ROAD CAPTAIN'S RESPONSIBILITIES:

- 1 Has full charge of the group until arrival at the destination.
- 2 Lead the group in a manner consistent with the objectives and guidelines as stated herein.
- 3 Exercise his/ her best judgment in situations not specifically covered in these guidelines.
- 4 Brief other assigned Road Captains / Tail Gunners as to route, responsibilities, and other details pertinent to the ride prior to departure.
- 5 Conduct an inspection of all bikes prior to the ride: Lights, turn signals, horns, brakes, tires, leaking fluids, dangling parts.
- 6 Conduct a rider's briefing prior to departure:
 - a. Review ride rules, signals.
 - b. Review route, likely hazards, stops.
 - c. Ensure all are gassed up / topped off.
 - d. Assign formation positions for riders, and for newbies.
- 7 Has the final say with regard to ride termination due to inclement weather, hazardous conditions, or other difficult or unsafe conditions.
- 8 Has the final say on rider positioning and/or participation.
 - a. Will instruct any rider to ride in a specific position within the group, or leave the group entirely, for reasons of misconduct, disorderly or unsafe riding, or faulty/unsafe equipment.
 - b. Common sense and tact should be used.
- 9 Responsible for having a well-maintained First Aid kit on the ride. Will locate other First Aid kits.
- 10 Responsible for having a well-stocked tool kit on the ride. Will locate other tools kits.
- 11 Responsible for having other emergency equipment: Flares, Space blanket (weather protection, shock treatment).
- 12 Responsible for having a cell phone for 911 purposes.
 - a. If the Road Captain does not possess a cell phone, if possible, designate a 911-notification caller within the group.
 - b. Will locate other cell phones.
- 13 Establish and maintain a uniform speed:
 - a. consistent with the ability of the least experienced rider,
 - b. with consideration of safe road conditions, traffic, and weather conditions.
- 14 Initiate all maneuvers within traffic in a "safety first" manner.
- 15 Lead the standard formation of a staggered double row, in one traffic lane.
- 16 Will be at the head of the group, and will ride just to the left of lane center.
- 17 Will maintain a safe following distance:
 - a. Using the MINIMUM 3- second rule between the group and any vehicle ahead.
 - b. This distance may be increased at the discretion of the Road Captain, but will NOT be decreased.
- 18 Will command the group to a single file formation when:
 - a. they cannot maintain visual control of the road conditions ahead over a MINIMUM of a 4 second distance,
 - b. narrow roads.
 - c. mountain/curvy roads,
 - d. traveling directly adjacent to parked vehicles,
 - e. any other condition which may severely restrict the ability of individual group members to perform emergency avoidance maneuvers.

X. TAIL GUNNER:

- 1 Will assist the Road Captain in the performance of his or her duties.
- 2 May be required to assume the duties of Road Captain in his or her absence.
- 3 Responsible for having a First Aid kit on the ride.
- 4 Responsible for having a well-stocked tool kit on the ride.
- 5 Will ride at the rear of the group:
 - a. Except when conditions dictate otherwise.
 - b. Unless required to take on the responsibilities of the Road Captain.
- 6 Will be observant of any hazardous conditions or conduct:
 - a. take immediate corrective action,
 - b. inform the Road Captain at the earliest safe opportunity.
 - c. The urgency to inform the Road Captain is left to the discretion of the observing Tail Gunner.
- 7 Will normally ride where they can see the formation the best.
- 8 Lane protection is the Tail Gunner's added responsibility.
 - a. On the highway, as the group prepares to make a lane change,
 - b. the Tail Gunner will make the lane change as soon as is safe to do so,
 - c. followed by the Road Captain,
 - d. then the remainder of the group.
 - e. In this way, the Tail Gunner protects that lane keeping it clear for the entire group to move into this lane.

Y. ROAD CAPTAIN CHECKLIST:

- 1 Welcome riders and introduce Road Captains.
- 2 Define destination and outline route.
- 3 Determine gas stop requirements.
- 4 Outline itinerary for the day.
- 5 Determine return plans.
- 6 Review riding standards.
 - a. Staggered position and safe distance.
 - b. Entrance and exit.
 - c. Lane changes.
 - d. Single file procedures.
 - e. Hand signals.
 - f. Broken bike procedure.
- 7 Locate cell phones and first aid kits and tool kits.
- 8 Designate 911 notification person.
- 9 Determine riding group by size, skill level, & cruising speed.
 - g. Decide if split is desirable.
 - h. If so, designate split group Road Captains, Tail Gunners.
- 10 Remind everyone to have fun, and to ride safely.

The Group Riding Guidelines information is used with permission of the following website: http://www.sloneservices.com/SilverBack/group_riding_guidelines.htm

ESCORT PROCEDURES:

There are three main types of escort procedures:

- A. The "Reel" or "Shuffle"**
- B. The Leap Frog**
- C. The Bump and Go**

The following is quick synopses of the three different types of escort procedures.

A. The "Reel" or "Shuffle"

This is a standard procedure that allows you to conduct the escort in a safe, organized manner that requires little to no communication between officers. It gives you a standard formation to make escort execution safer for the escorts. The "Reel" or "Shuffle" will start when the lead motor (1st motor on the left) goes ahead and secures a traffic control point. As the lead motor leaves the formation, the # 2 motor (which is the right side of the leader) moves over to assume the lead motor spot. The # 2 motor is responsible for maintaining lateral spacing between motors. All the motors behind the # 2 motor position should be directly in the wheel track of the # 2 motor. The motor officer located in the # 3 motor position (directly behind the lead motor) moves diagonally over to occupy the # 2 motor position. This will continue all the way back. You should keep approximately one and half to two motorcycle lengths between the motorcycles in front of you. The distance should be uniform from front to the rear of the formation.

B. The Leap Frog

This method is where you will secure a traffic control point. You will keep this traffic control point secure as all the motors and vehicles in the procession pass through. Once the entire procession has cleared this traffic control point, that motor will then clear the traffic control point and work his/her way back up the rear of the working motors.

C. The Bump and Go

This procedure is where one rider will secure a traffic control point. A second rider will then enter the traffic control point and relieve the original rider. That original rider will then proceed on to the next traffic control point and either secure it or relieve another rider. Thus you get the bump and go.

You should be familiar with all three types of escorts. The type of escort, whom you are escorting and the environment will determine what type of escort procedure you will implement. I personally don't think you can say one type of escort is better than the other. Bottom line is if it works for you and everyone in the escort understands the procedure you're doing and you arrive safely, that is what we are striving for.

Regardless of what type of escort procedure you're executing, leave a motor or a car in the rear of the procession to secure the rear so no one is passing the procession. This will give your motors plenty of room to pass and work their way back up to the front. If you are securing the rear with a motor, after the procession passes an intersection or traffic control point, the motor that was holding that traffic control point would relieve the tail or rear motor and he/she would work their way back up to the front of the procession. This way the same motor is not stuck in the rear of the entire procession. This process would change each time a traffic control point was passed. When a motor is securing a traffic control point, he/she needs to make sure that they are as visible as possible. Make sure you stop your motor in the most advantageous position you can, without interfering with the procession.

If you are using the "Bump and Go" method make sure that the motor does not leave the traffic control point until the other motor is in the intersection or traffic control point. That way an angry motorist in a hurry doesn't think the procession is over and jumps the gun right out into the procession or another motor coming by.

If you are using the "Leap Frog" method, I suggest you come up with some type of hand signal to give to your fellow riders as they are proceeding passed you in the intersection, to let them know that that traffic control point is secure for them to proceed through. We hold up our thumb, which tells the other motors that this intersection is secure and you may proceed through. If the lead motor does not see a "thumbs up", then they know they need to slow down, that something is not secure.

The "Reel" or "Shuffle" is a very efficient escort procedure and works very well. However, the "Reel" or "Shuffle" is an escort procedure that must be practiced and make sure that all riders understand this procedure. When it comes to a newly assigned escort, let him/her ride in the back and front of who ever you're escorting to observe for several escorts. Let them see how it is done, before you have them as a working motor. Make sure they have a working knowledge of how the escort is supposed to work.

In conclusion, remember to practice escorts, and document it. If you don't document your training it didn't happen. Communicate, communicate, and communicate. I can't say it enough. Don't out ride your ability and always expect the unexpected. Remember whomever you're escorting, "they need you, you don't need them."

Ride Safe.

State Laws governing Funeral Escorts:

You will need to ascertain the laws applicable to your state. They can be found at the MIAP website (or Delphi Forum?).