



# **Chapter E**

# **Road Captain Course**

**Presented by Bob Reagle**

**April 19, 2008**





# Purpose

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- ✓ Teach, Review and Refresh Participants in the techniques for Group Riding
- ✓ To Participate in Knowledge Sharing and Evaluation Scenarios
- ✓ Take a short evaluation examination

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***Make Group Riding Safer and Fun***

***Chapter WA-E Educator***





# Definitions

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- Lead - - The Road Captain who is in the first position in the group of bikes
  - Drag (aka Tail Gunner) - - The Road Captain who is the last position in the group of bikes
  - Trip Coordinator (Ride Director)- - The person responsible for setting up the ride
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# Rider Responsibilities

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- ✓ Show up on time
- ✓ Have a full tank of fuel
- ✓ Have a well maintained bike
- ✓ Perform T-CLOCK before the ride
- ✓ Be mentally and physically prepared to ride





# Road Captain Responsibility (Bike Placement)

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- Bikes with no CBs placed between bikes with CBs
- Trikes in front of Drag (they can stop more quickly than standard motorcycles)
- Marginally safe bikes need special placement
  - *Brake problems behind Leader*
  - *Tires and other issues in front of Drag*





# Road Captain Responsibility (Bike Placement)

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- Ideal number of bikes in a group
  - Three to five

*Note: these are guidelines and safety is the most important consideration*

- Always have a Lead and Drag

*Note: Drag is selected by Leader*







# Road Captain Responsibility (Pre-Ride)

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- Choose your Lead and Drag before the ride
  - Brief riders about:
    - *Route*
    - *Rest and gas stops (there will be bikes with smaller fuel capacity, keep them in mind)*
    - *Road Construction*
    - *Weather*
  - Tactfully find out whether there are any “personal needs” riders in your group(s) who require special attention.
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# Road Captain Responsibility (Pre-Ride)

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- Consider different riding styles and group accordingly. (experience with terrain, distance, bike etc.)
- Go over hand signals (if necessary)
- Make arrangements with Leads and Drags for other groups to leave in ~ one minute intervals







# Road Captain Responsibility (Pre-Ride)

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- Look for obvious safety issues in your group(s)
    - *Remind riders to conduct T-CLOCK if they haven't done so already*
  - Stage your group(s) no later than 5 minutes before departure
  - Make arrangements with Leads and Drags for other groups to leave in ~ one minute intervals
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# Road Captain and Rider Hand Signals

- Process
  - *Lead Initiates*
  - *Riders pass signal back in formation order*
  - *Any rider can ID a hazard*

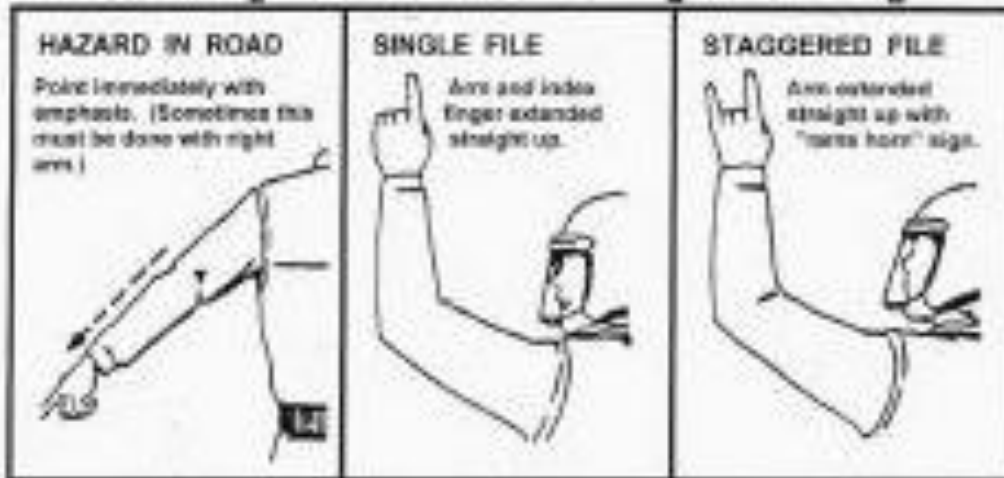
***Please note: whether riders have radios or not, they must know the hand signals for Single File, Staggered File and Hazard***





# Road Captain and Rider Hand Signals

## Hand signals for communicating while riding:

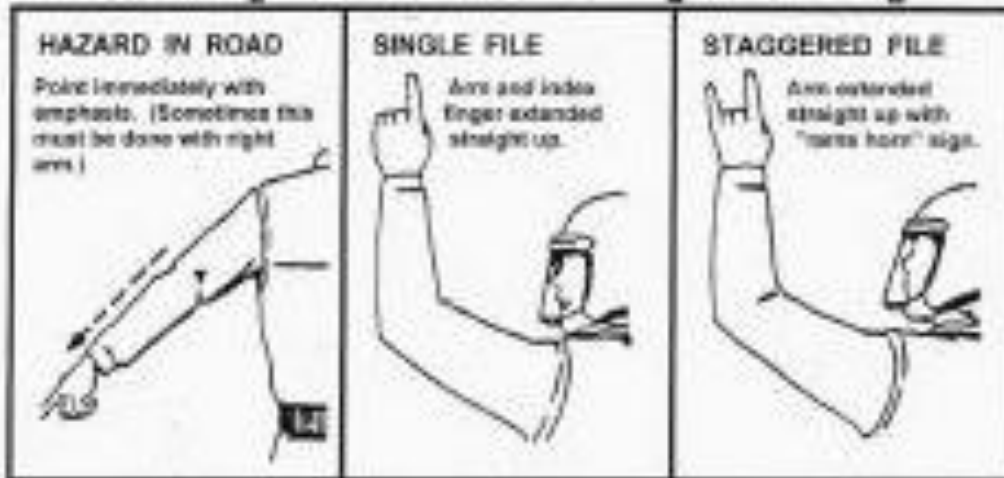




# Hand Signals

## Practical Exercise

### Hand signals for communicating while riding:





# Road Captain Responsibility (Exiting)

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- Start Slowly after finding opening where all bikes can safely exit
- Drag confirms “All Out” when exiting
- Drag confirms through lights, stop signs etc.





# Road Captain Responsibility (Ride)

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- Lead responsible for initiating commands and providing advance notification about intentions (includes hand signals when there are bikes without CBs)
- Try to stay as far right as possible
- Lead and Drag may indicate hazards, however it is responsibility of all riders to do so.
- Drag may request Lead to take an action should a hazard come from behind
- Drag or Lead can ask the group to close up (most likely the drag will do this)







# Road Captain Responsibility (Formation)

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- Lead directs the riders to standard stagger or single file depending on the situation
  - *Standard for general riding*
  - *Single file when approaching, bicycles, pedestrians, horses, entering multiple curves, etc.*
- *Drag and Lead may ask the group to close up (usually the drag)*





# Riders Responsibility (Formation)

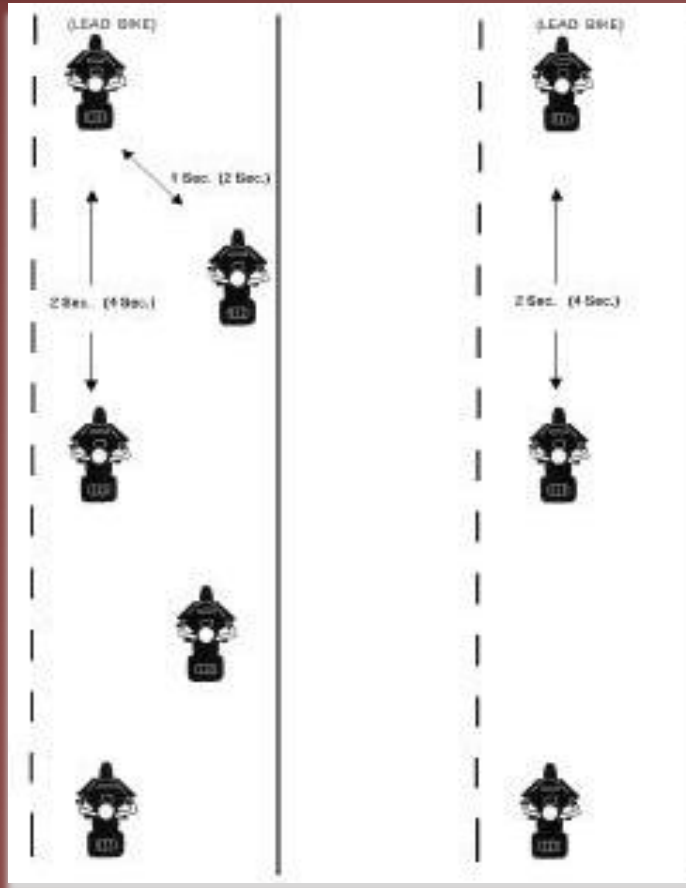
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- Ride in staggered unless directed by Lead
  - *One Second **between** bikes*
  - *Two Seconds **behind** bikes*
  - *Reduces the accordion effect*
- Listen/watch for commands that change the formation
- Maintain proper position





# Riders Responsibility (Formation)



Please note the gap  
increases to four seconds  
during inclement weather





# Road Captain Responsibility (Gaps)

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During a gap (vehicle in group, stuck in traffic etc.)

- *New Front bike is temporary lead until the group reconfigures*
- *Drag calls out the gap and gap position*

***Please note: when stopping close up the formation to create a small gap between bikes***





# Riders Responsibility (General Ride)

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- Follow the directions of the lead and drag
  - Point out hazards with hand signals
  - Pass on command hand signals.
  - Keep your interval
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# Rider and Road Captain (Stops)







# Road Captain Responsibility (Entering Highways)

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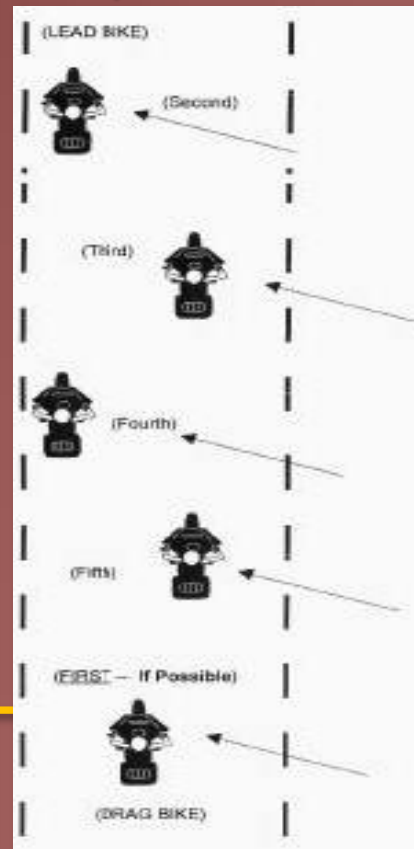
- Be prudent and be safe
  - Plan well in advance
  - Be smooth (it gives motorists more comfort)
  - Be quick as the traffic allows.
- Encourage riders to “ride their own” and meet in a specific lane if you deem it unsafe to enter as a formation.
- Drag is last out.





# Riders Responsibility (Entering Highway)

- You are responsible for your safety ultimately, follow the leader, but with caution.





# Road Captain Responsibility (Lane Change)

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- Leader plans ahead for lane changes
  - Call drag about your intentions
    - *“Moving right, please secure the right lane”*
    - *“Moving left, please secure the left lane”:*
  - Drag checks to see if the lane is clear; moves over and declares “Left/Right lane is secure” (*he may also remind riders to look in the direction of lane change, signal and move “Look left, signal left move left”*)
  - Leader declares it is clear to move to the open lane
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# Road Captain Responsibility (Lane Change)

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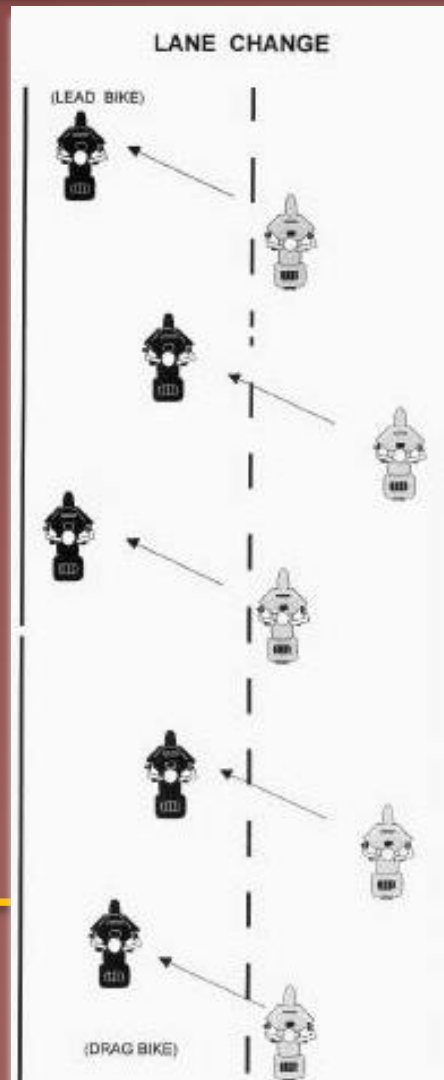
The leader has the discretion to do a “unit” or “front to rear” lane change

- *Unit Lane Change is where there is little or no traffic, (not likely where we tend to ride)*
  - *Front to Rear Lane Change is where the drag holds the lane and each bike in order, from front to rear moves into the lane until all have made the change (typical for Chapter E)*
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# Rider Responsibility (Lane Change)





# Rider Responsibility (Lane Change)

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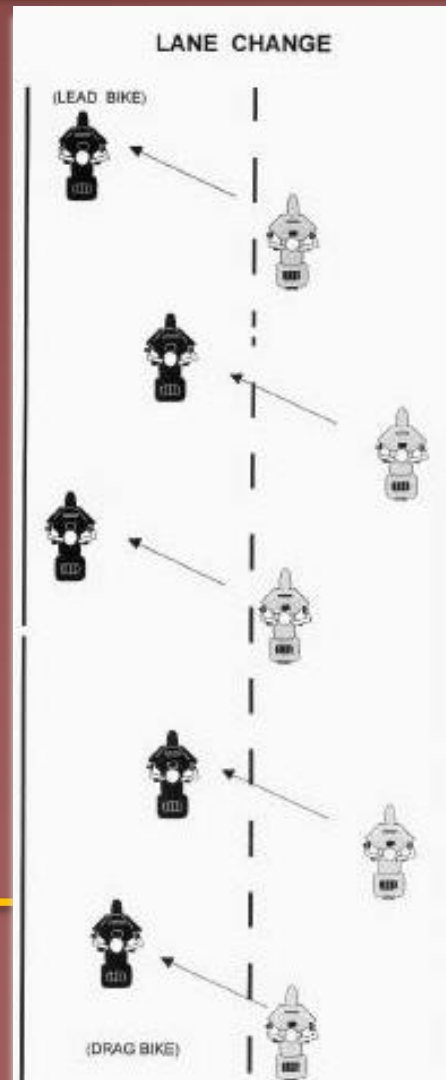
- Pay attention to commands and signals
- Change lanes only when the command is given.







# Lane Change Practical Exercise





# Road Captain Responsibility (Pulling off the Road)

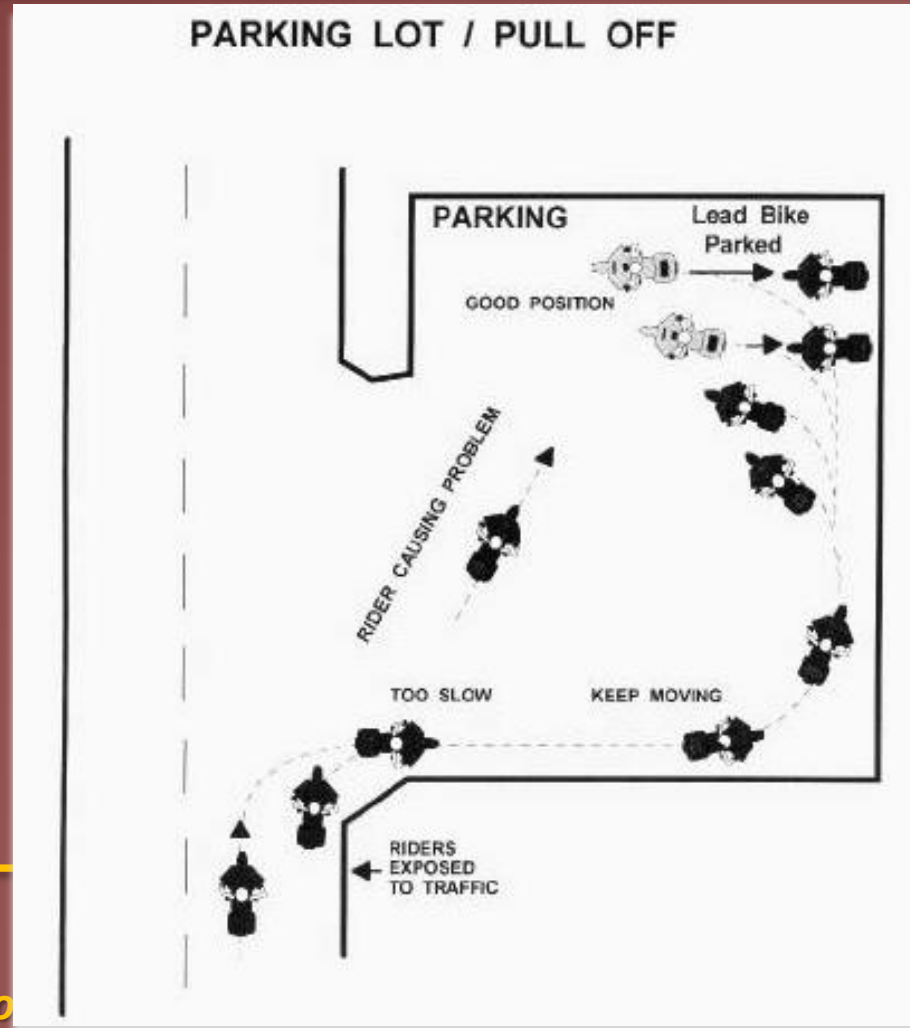
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- Plan well ahead and communicate
  - Look for a large enough area for egress where all bikes can be off the road during maneuver
  - Go as far forward in the space as you can
  - Ensure you line up so you can make a straight out exit
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# Road Captain and Rider Responsibility (Pulling off the Road)





# Rider Responsibility (Pulling off the Road)

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- Follow directions from lead
  - Follow in the same track as the bike in front of you and keep moving
  - Ensure the bike coming up from behind you is stopped before you back your bike into the space
- 





# Road Captain Responsibility (Passing)

- Lead announces intention to pass and why (slow vehicle in lane) with the conditions
- Lead passes (*Lead is not responsible for all bikes to make the pass*)
- Lead keep in contact with group until all have passed
- Drag announces all have passed by declaring “We are a group.”





# Passing

## SINGLE LANE PASS







# Rider Responsibility (Passing)

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- Listen for Lead direction
  - Pass one at a time in group order sequence at your own discretion and when it is safe
  - Reform in formation after pass
  - Leave enough room behind you for the next rider to pass safely
- 





# Road Captain Responsibility (Splitting)

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- Check with riders if they are going to leave the group (split) before the end (usually happens on the way home)
  - Request the split happen before an intersection or turn to minimize confusion for other riders and motorists
  - Leader designates new Drag if Drag splits
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# Rider Responsibility (Splitting)

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- Notify Lead well in advance about your intentions
- Leave the group well before intersections or turns.



