

# Group Riding Protocol

Safety through predictability



# Why are we Here

## Harley Owners Group

- To ride and have fun
- Live to ride ~ Ride to live
- The largest family in the world

## Today

- Meet some new and existing club members
- Talk about how we ride
- Go for a ride and practice in a safe environment
- Have a coffee, (on the club) and review how it went





# Safety



## **#1: Every rider is responsible for their own safety**

*As a club we improve safety by agreeing how we are going to ride together which means you can rely on the people around you as you are able to predict what they will do*

## **#2: All group riders need to consider the safety of riders around them**

*Harleys are big, powerful, heavy, and usually bloody expensive vehicles so we don't want them to hit each other*

# Discussion Topics

- Club Rides
- Road Captain and Tail End Charlie
- Ride briefings
- Staggered Riding
- Other road users
- Hand Signals
- Corner Marking
- Accidents



# Club Rides



*These rides are organised by the club to encourage HOG members to get together and ride*

## ***They are:***

- Designed for the enjoyment of all and will be planned to be comfortable for all.
- From time to time the club will arrange rides targeted at specific groups such as:
  - Longer or more challenging rides for those who want to extend themselves
  - New member rides
  - Ladies of Harley Rides
- An opportunity to socialise before and after the ride and during breaks and to enjoy a group ride

## ***They are not:***

- A club organised race
- An opportunity for smaller groups to run their own ride in amongst the main ride
- An opportunity for us to jointly scare or intimidate other road users or the public
- An opportunity to “scare the shit” out of each other

# Key People on a ride

## Road Captain

- Plans the ride
- Reviews weather and road conditions before the ride
- Briefs everyone on the ride before heading off
- Leads the Ride
- Makes on the day decisions on changes to the ride
- Sets the pace of the ride

## Tail End Charlie

- Stays at the back – headlight will be on “Full Beam”
- Helps anyone who stops or breaks down
- Works to keep the group together
- Lets the Road Captain know when everyone is ready to proceed
- Takes control at an accident





# Ride Briefings

- These normally start 10-15 minutes before the ride is due to leave, there may be further briefings after stops during the ride
- Led by the Road Captain and will cover:
  - Introductions of Road Captain and Tail End Charlie
  - Outline of the ride including any known hazards or difficult turns etc
  - Reminder of how we ride and signals the Road Captain will use
  - Confirmation that all are comfortable with the plan, (they may choose to talk separately to people new to club rides to provide more information on what they can expect on the ride)

*Ride and  
have fun*

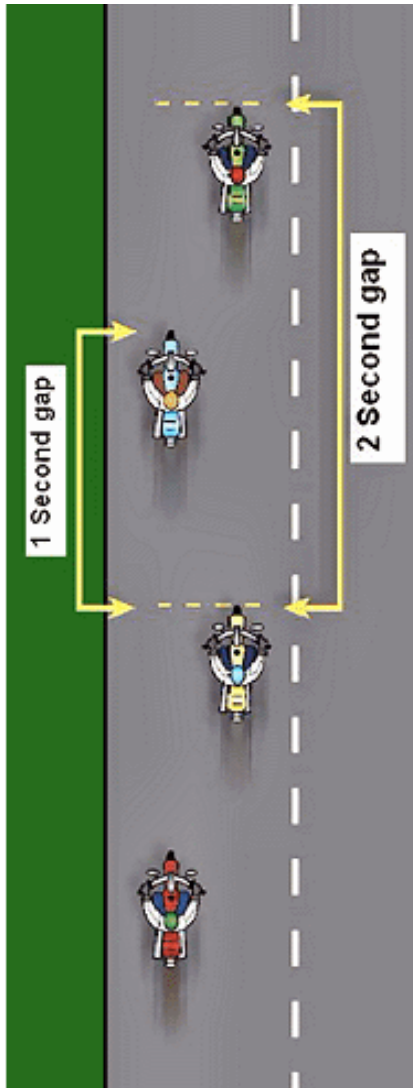
# General Ride Rules

- **Never pass the road captain**
  - they know where we are going
- **Stay in the same lane as the Road Captain**
  - Change lanes safely
- **Only ever pass other riders when it is safe for everyone around you**
  - good idea to pick your right position in the group at the start of the ride
- **Start every ride with a full tank and empty bladder**
- **If someone pulls over don't stop, let the Tail End Charlie help them**
  - otherwise the total ride may become disrupted
- **If you are not happy riding with the people around**
  - Try signaling 1 or 2 following riders through to pass you, or
  - Pull over and re-join the ride in front of the Tail end Charlie who will slow down and if needed stop for you
- **If you are joining the ride part way through**
  - Join in after the Tail End Charlie, who will signal you to pass when safe
  - don't push in to the pack





# Staggered Riding

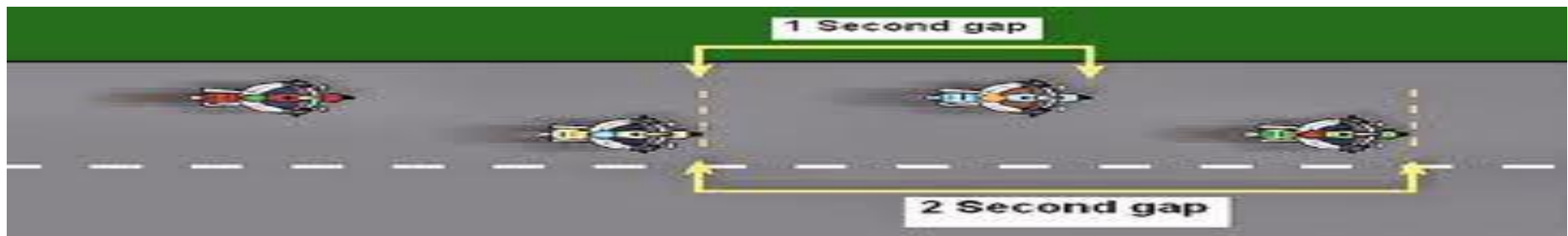


- As a club we ride in staggered formation because it is safe:
  - It allows following riders to see past the rider in front of them and up the road
  - It keeps potential large groups of riders together without overly dominating the road, it keeps us closer together, safely
  - If we need to emergency break it allows the group to safely concertina up to two abreast thus doubling everyone's effective braking distance

NOTE: This only works if we all hold our line during the ride including if we have to stop suddenly
- When cornering each rider owns the road and may choose to break formation to safely corner and then return to the stagger
- At intersections we concertina up in to double file so more people can get through the intersection quickly, once through return to the original stagger
- Remember the two second rule

# Establishing & Maintaining the Staggered Formation

- At the beginning of the ride the Road Captain will position themselves on the road
  - usually in the right hand tyre track
- All other riders then position themselves in staggered formation off the Road Captain
- If a rider drops out of the ride re-establish the staggered formation by:
  - the rider following behind (i.e. behind but in the opposite tyre track)  
“switches” to the opposite wheel track vacated by the rider who dropped out and takes their place in the formation
  - Subsequent riders following follow suit and change positions in the lane by switching tyre tracks
- This will then ripple down through the through the group”



# Other Road Users

As a group of Harleys we are quite noisy, can appear intimidating and are often obstructive on the road, because of the length of our group. In fact we want to be friendly and courteous to other road users

- **Motorways**

- Always try to stay in the same lane as the Road Captain
- If cars want to move through the pack, say to exit, then let them
- At the briefing make sure you know which exit we are taking in case we get broken up

- **Passing lanes**

- Always try and stay in the same lane as the Road Captain
- Sometimes they may decide not to pass to let some cars through or to let other riders catch up

- **Passing traffic**

- Make your own decision about when it is safe to pass
- Once you pass move as far forward as you can to leave room for following riders to pass
- To keep the ride together please actively look for opportunities and pass when you can and join back up



# Hand Signals

A risk of riding in a group is that riders down the pack can't see hazards on the road ahead of them. Road Captains will use a number of hand signals to help warn riders of these. You should pass these back down the pack to people behind you. ***AS LONG AS YOU CAN DO THIS SAFELY***



Hazard on my left



Hazard on my Right



I'm slowing down  
or stopping



*You guess this one*

Road Captains will explain signals they will use on the ride as part of the briefing

# Corner Marking



The Road Captain will lead the ride on the route they have planned; to ensure we all reach our destination we need to ensure the rider behind us does not get lost.

If you arrive at a corner where the group has changed direction and you can't see the rider behind you, you must:

- Stop where it is safe and the following riders will see you
- Signal the turn they need to make
- Once you are sure they have seen you and the turn, make the turn and continue ahead of them

If you can't see a rider in front of you and you arrive at an intersection continue straight on

# Accidents

If there is an accident within our group while riding:

- The Tail End Charlie or Road Captain will normally take control, follow their instructions
- Before assisting, park your bike off the road and well out of the way so they will not have to be moved for emergency vehicles
- If you are confident with First Aid please make yourself known to the person in charge
- Areas you may be asked to assist with:
  - Traffic control
  - Phoning emergency services



**HOG**<sup>TM</sup>