

# ROAD CAPTAINS REFERENCE GUIDE



**HOG CHAPTER  
#4409  
Eugene, Oregon**

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## **Section 1: Introduction**

### **1.1 Preface**

As defined in the H.O.G. Chapter Charter, Head Road Captain and Road Captains are discretionary positions. The official duties and responsibilities of the Head Road Captain and Road Captains are indicated in this reference guide.

### **1.2 Reference Guide Objectives**

The Reference Guide is designed as a guide for current and aspiring Road Captains. It contains the duties, responsibilities, ride positions, descriptions, and training objectives for Road Captains.

The overall mission of Road Captains is to pursue the safety and enjoyment of H.O.G. Chapter Members and Ladies of Harley during rides. Ultimately, each rider is responsible for their own safety.

This Reference Guide aids in pursuing this overall mission.

### **1.3 Responsibilities of Road Captains**

As a Road Captain, there are responsibilities that come with the position, some of which are listed below:

1. Be proactive
2. Plan routes and pre-ride the routes whenever possible
3. Meet and communicate with other riders before and during the ride
4. Be a positive, enthusiastic and helpful mentor to other riders
5. Create a fun and safe environment for riding
6. Look at rides through the eyes of all riders, new and experienced
7. Understand that there are different riding styles
8. Be a role model for newer riders

## **Section 2: Training and Qualifications**

Road Captain training emphasizes group riding experience, leadership and safe riding practices of each Road Captain.

### **2.1 Road Captain Qualifications/Patching Requirements**

Qualifications for the position of Road Captain shall meet the following requirements:

- Current International and Local Chapter H.O.G. memberships
- Completion of the Road Captain Training Course held at the local level.

- † In continuing efforts to improve overall riding and leadership abilities, it is strongly encouraged that Road Captains participate in Slow Course Training and Lead or Sweep at least one ride for the current year. Participating in these events promotes team building and confidence amongst Chapter members.

## 2.2 Road Captain Proficiencies

The proficiencies listed below have been identified as skill sets critical to the position of Road Captain when organizing and leading rides.

- Plan the route for a ride.
- Place and organize riders into groups according to ability or special needs when necessary.
- Recognize and adjust the ride to the experience and skill level of the entire group being led.
- Navigate a group through an urban environment.
- Proper acceleration and slowing techniques.
- Execute lane changes in urban and highway environments.
- Exhibit the proper technique for passing other vehicles on both two lane and multi-lane roadways.
- Use appropriate hand signals when necessary.
- Demonstrate the skills necessary to ride as Sweep.
- Successfully conduct the pre-ride meeting. Completing the Pre-Ride Checklist is recommended.

## 2.3 Expectations of Road Captains

- Road Captains should be active participants in group rides.
- Identify and address unsafe riders for the safety of the entire group.
- Be aware of road and weather conditions and adjust accordingly.

## Section 3: Head Road Captain Duties and Responsibilities

### 3.1 Duties

- In collaboration with the chapter administration, the Head Road Captain participates in recruiting efforts to staff the Chapter with an adequate number of Road Captains to provide a safe and enjoyable riding environment for group rides.
- Provide leadership and direction to all Road Captains.
- Maintain open communication with all Road Captains and with the chapter administration.

### 3.1.1 Responsibilities:

- Attend chapter administration meetings and provide updates and input concerning future rides, events and safety concerns.
- Maintain and update the ride calendar for the current riding season.
- Develop and offer adequate training for all Road Captains.

## 3.2 Road Captain Duties and Responsibilities

### 3.2.1 Duties:

- The primary duties of a Road Captain include providing leadership and assisting charter members in planning and organizing open and closed H.O.G. Chapter rides.
- Support recruiting efforts in identifying and inspiring individuals in becoming road captains.

### 3.2.2 Responsibilities:

- Be aware of the current skill sets and attitudes of other riders in a group and when necessary, address concerning matters in a quiet and private manner.

### 3.2.3 Pre-Ride Recommendations:

- Arrive at the departure site fully fueled and at least 20-30 minutes prior to the listed departure time and discuss ride details with the sweep.
- Be well rested. If you are not feeling well, consider arranging for another road captain to replace you.
- Be familiar with the intended route, having pre-ridden the route if possible.
- Conduct the pre-ride discussion with the Sweep and address any concerns prior to the ride. **EXCHANGE PHONE NUMBERS!**

### 3.2.4 During the ride:

- Perform the duties of Lead or Sweep to the best of his/her ability while promoting the safety and welfare of all individuals within the group, surrounding motorists, pedestrians and cyclists.
- Always Maintain a "Safety First" attitude.

### 3.2.5 Post Ride Recommendations:

- It is recommended the Lead and Sweep critique the overall ride experience to continually improve future rides by addressing details they feel should be shared with the overall membership, or an **individual if riding unsafely**.

## Section 4: Riding Positions for Road Captains

There are two riding positions for Road Captains within a group ride: Lead and Sweep.

Each role has a specific position and responsibilities within the ride-group.

### 4.1 Lead Riding Position

In a staggered riding formation, the Lead Road Captain is positioned at the front of the group in the left 1/3 of the lane.

This position is maintained throughout the ride except when the group forms a single file formation.

When Trikes and Sidecar motorcycles are assigned to Lead, that Lead rider shall occupy the whole riding lane. The rider directly behind either of these types of motorcycles shall occupy the left 1/3 of the riding lane with following cycles falling in accordingly.

#### 4.1.1 General responsibilities:

- Determine the route for the ride and if necessary, make a map and/or write directions for the ride. Whenever possible, pre-ride the route for the intended ride and make any changes to maps or directions as necessary.
- Lead the group from the starting point to the designated destination.
- Manage all aspects of the ride.
- Provide direction to participating riders and maintain a safe and enjoyable ride experience for everyone.
- While riding, communicate your intentions to the group with chapter recommended hand signals.

#### 4.1.2 Specific Duties:

- Assemble the entire group at least 10-15 minutes prior to the departure time for the ride. It is recommended to review and mention each item on the Pre-ride Check List.

- The Lead bike is positioned at the head of the formation.
- When the Sweep indicates all riders are ready, move the group onto the roadway.
- Use the chapter hand signals as necessary.

#### **4.1.3 Maps and Directions:**

Maps and directions are not required for every ride. However, they are recommended if the rides are complex or rides exceeding 100 miles.

The contents should contain a visual map and/or written directions of the ride and cell numbers for the Lead, Sweep and Head Road Captain. Provided maps and directions should be properly discarded as they contain names and phone numbers associated with members of our chapter.

When participating in overnight rides, Lead and Sweep captains shall have a complete list of names, phone numbers and resources of those who can help in the event of an emergency.

#### **4.2 “Sweep” Riding Position**

The Sweep position is the last position in the ride-group.

This position is maintained throughout the ride unless otherwise directed by the Lead.

If an additional motorcycle(s) should join the group, the Sweep falls back and retains the last position in the group.

##### **4.2.1 Specific duties:**

- Actively participate in the pre-ride discussion with the lead road captain.
- With everyone mounted, it is the sweeps responsibility to ensure all riders are fired and ready for departure.
- Once the Sweep completes the readiness check, he/she moves to the entry point to the right of way. This position will indicate to the Lead that the group is ready for departure.
- When given the signal by the Lead, the Sweep stands by and monitors the movement of the group as they enter the right-of-way.
- When the entire group has moved onto the right of way the Sweep falls behind the last rider.
- If an individual rider in the group pulls out of the group and gives the thumbs down signal, the Sweep will also pull out to assess the situation. The Sweep will give assistance to the rider and return to the group when possible.

- In concert with the Lead, the Sweep will protect the group from the rear during lane changes.

#### **4.3 Recommended Supplies for Emergency Situations:**

- Cell phone numbers of Road Captains and Primary Officers
- Emergency numbers for police & ambulance in the area (911)
- A basic First Aid kit (recommended)
- A cell phone
- A camera (the one in your cell phone is acceptable)
- Copies of the following forms:
  - Chapter Event Release Forms for Adults and minors.
  - Chapter Injury Report
- Completed paperwork is to be submitted to the Chapter Secretary at the next available opportunity.

### **Section 5: Road Captain References**

#### **5.1 Pre-Ride Briefing**

Prior to each ride, the Road Captain conducts a briefing for the entire group. During this briefing the Road Captain will review the route to the 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. Road Captains and Sweeps will be identified for each group. The Road Captain conducts the pre-ride brief utilizing the briefing sheet. This process should take about 10 minutes to complete.

##### **5.1.1 Recommended Talking Points:**

- Introductions: Introduce Road Captains and assign positions for the ride if necessary.
- Route: Explain the route for the ride and distribute maps and directions if available.
- Staggered Riding: Maintain 18 feet (2 full bike lengths) behind the staggered rider in front of you.
- Stop Signs and lights: Double up, proceed through as pairs and then return to normal staggered formation if going straight. Never ride double in turns.
- Left turn lanes for large groups: If double left turn lanes are present, break into 2 groups to get the entire ride-group through one traffic cycle. Once through the intersection fall back into line and resume staggered ride formation.

- Lane Changes – Pass signal back, each rider is ultimately responsible for their own safety. If possible, on multiple lane highways, Lead and Sweep should secure the lane and will coordinate lane changes.
- Passing Traffic: Single file while passing, use your own judgment to initiate the pass. The Road Captain in the passing lane indicates no oncoming traffic and it is safe to begin passing. Return to your own lane safely and without cutting off the passed vehicle. Assume proper formation as soon as possible.

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

- Special Considerations: Any personal needs, small fuel tanks, place in the formation, etc.
- Release Forms: Non-Member guests and minors are required to fill out a release form.
- Groups: Try to limit groups to 7 to 8 bikes.
- Tanks Full/Bladders Empty

### **5.1.2 Tips For Planning Rides:**

- Pre-determine and pre-ride the route: Plan the entire route, including stops for gas, food, and points of interest. Adjust based on potential congestion, road construction, and weather. Pre-riding the route, if possible, helps you identify road conditions, potential hazards, and optimal stopping locations.
- When plans include meal stops at a restaurant, call ahead several days before to ensure the restaurant will be open. Before starting the ride call the restaurant to let them know how many people are coming.
- Plan for a rest stop after the first hour or so. After that rest stops can be coordinated with gas stops at 100 miles or an hour and a half. For some people a Port-A-Potty is fine, others may prefer a clean rest room such as at a gas station.
- When possible, arrange rest/gas stops on the right side of the road to avoid crossing moving traffic lanes.
- Take weather and traffic into consideration when planning the ride. Try to avoid riding in rush hour, for example.
- Using a ride planning app like Harley Ride Planner can be a great help on complicated rides, giving turn-by-turn directions and estimates of times and distances. Harley Ride Planner 'Rides' can be downloaded to 2014 and newer Boom Box bikes, or you can use the Harley Ride Planner App on your cell phone. Rides can be shared ahead of time too. Pre-riding is recommended when creating the Ride with an app in case the road has changed, and the app doesn't reflect the change.

## 6.0 Road Captain's Worksheet

Candidates Name: _____	DATE	RD Captain Initial
Attend Road Captain's Training	_____	_____
Watch Group Riding Video (Willamette Valley HOG Website)	_____	_____
Watch Road Captain Video (Willamette Valley HOG Website)	_____	_____
Follow Lead during a Group Ride	_____	_____
Sweep a Group Ride	_____	_____
Plan and Pre-Ride a Group Ride	_____	_____
Lead a Group Ride including Pre-Ride Briefing with Road Captain observing	_____	_____
<b>Head Road Captain Approval</b>	_____	_____
<b>Road Captain Patch Presented</b>	_____	_____