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1) Introduction

When motorcyclists meet, they often choose to ride together as a group. Riding with a group of bikes can be great fun but riding safely with others requires a degree of discipline – and sometimes restraint too – if everyone is going to enjoy the experience. These guidelines describe a series of techniques that will assist groups of riders to enjoy their riding together in such a way that safety is maximised, without affecting enjoyment.

2) A standard approach

The advantage of using a standard approach to riding in a group is that all riders will know what is expected of them and understand what other riders in the group are likely to do, and what is expected of them while they are riding. It follows that this improves the chances of all members of the riding group reaching the required destination without getting lost and in the safest way possible. It also means that, should a rider take a wrong turn, for example, they and the rest of the group have a method of locating each other again.

3) Safety

The paramount consideration when riding in a group is always safety. At no time should the safety of riders, or any third party be compromised. Whilst these guidelines should result in the elimination of undue risk for most circumstances, it always remains the personal responsibility of all riders within the group to exercise their own judgement about every course of action that they take. Each rider is responsible for their safety, actions, and any consequences that those actions may have.

4) The law

Traffic laws must always be obeyed when riding on the road. Ride your normal ride within your capabilities and don't be tempted to change this.

5) Definition of a group ride

- IAM Roadsmart Insurance policies cover four specific types of group ride, However Norfolk Advanced Motorcyclists Group Rides fall into only **3** of these categories and are detailed below:

Type of ride	Eligible participants	Training	Details & Cover Provided
<p>1) Social ride out</p> <p>Typically Sunday Group Rides on 2nd 4th and 5th Sundays of each month</p> <p>Also any mid-week organised ride</p>	<p>Full Members of both IAM Roadsmart AND Norfolk Advanced Motorcyclists</p> <p>Associate members of both IAM Roadsmart AND Norfolk Advanced Motorcyclists</p>	No	<p>A social ride with no formal training or observing element included.</p> <p>IAM RoadSmart group ride guidelines are considered good practice.</p> <p>Full & Associate Members Public Liability Insurance applies Trustees (Group Officials) Indemnity Insurance <u>does not</u> apply. IAM RoadSmart observer insurance <u>does not</u> apply</p> <p>Non-Members Public Liability Insurance <u>does not</u> apply Trustees (Group Officials) Indemnity Insurance <u>does not</u> apply. IAM RoadSmart observer insurance <u>does not</u> apply</p>
<p>2) All members Group ride</p> <p>Typically Sunday Group Rides on 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month when at least 2 Observers will be available</p>	<p>Group full members</p> <p>Group associate members</p> <p>Prospective associates (these are non-members that wish to find out more about IAM Roadsmart AND Norfolk Advanced Motorcyclists and must be accompanied by an Observer on a One to One basis and not part of a 'Group')</p>	<p>Yes (but only where a group of 4 riders include at least 1 Observer)</p> <p>A Group of 4 without an Observer does NOT offer training nor coaching</p>	<p>An officially organised ride for full and associate members and prospective associates.</p> <p>Briefing from ride leader and tail-end rider. Coaching available on an ad-hoc basis from observers within the group. Associates must be under observation. Prospective associates must have had an individual assessment before attending and be under observation.</p> <p>IAM RoadSmart group ride guidelines are to be followed.</p> <p>All Participants IAM RoadSmart observer insurance applies. Public Liability Insurance applies as a group organised activity. Trustees (Group Officials) Indemnity Insurance applies.</p>
<p>3) Group training ride</p> <p>These are specifically arranged for the Training of potential National Observers prior to their National Observer Assessment</p>	<p>Group full members</p> <p>Group associate members</p>	Yes	<p>An officially organised training ride for members of IAM RoadSmart, formally arranged through the observer network.</p> <p>These rides may be categorised for full members or observers only and can have associates present for training purposes.</p> <p>If associates are present, there must be an associate to observer ratio of no more than 3 to 1, and the associates are to be under guidance during the ride.</p> <p>No prospective associates should be on this group training ride.</p> <p>IAM RoadSmart group ride guidelines are to be followed.</p> <p>All Participants IAM RoadSmart observer insurance applies. Public Liability Insurance applies as a group organised activity. Trustees (Group Officials) Indemnity Insurance applies.</p>

6) Observer to associate guidance

This section is intended to apply ONLY when the associates are receiving a guidance ride and where the observer will be giving a full briefing/debriefing.

The ratio of associates to observers on a group organised ride should not exceed 3:1, and ideally should be no more than 2:1. Groupings may be arranged directly between the associates and observers OR the group could arrange a set venue/start point where associates are allocated to observers.

7) Rider ability

Every rider must ride within their capabilities and exercise judgement when determining the safety of their actions. If at any time a rider feels that they are not capable of continuing, as the ride exceeds their skill level, then they should pull over at a safe and legal position until they are joined by the tail-end rider, who will consider appropriate options to take, which may include:

- Organising 1:1 guidance for the rider separately from the group ride.
- Adjusting the pace of the ride.
- Agreeing that the rider should ride separate from the group.

8) Planning the ride

The organiser should decide the purpose of the ride and the capabilities of the members who will participate. If either of these factors subsequently changes, the organiser should re-plan the event accordingly.

The ride plan should consider the distance to be covered, types of roads, fuel range of machines, breaks etc. No on-road section between breaks/debriefs should be planned to exceed 90 minutes.

The group should ensure that suitable full members are appointed as the ride-leader and if there is an element of training/coaching a qualified observer as tail-end rider as a minimum. Groups should consider providing ride leader and tail-end rider training courses. For more information contact your Chief Observer. All riders associated with the running of the group ride should be fully conversant with this manual of guidance regarding IAM RoadSmart policy and advice.

9) Publicity

Group organised rides should be advertised within the group's usual communications channels. These channels should include a reminder that participants in group organised rides are responsible for their safety and compliance with the law and should always ride within their capabilities.

10) Size of group

Norfolk Advanced Motorcyclists Group Organised Rides shall ensure that the number of riders within each group shall not exceed 4. Where Associate members are in attendance and in order to provide Guidance within the Group of 4, **1 Observer MUST be present.** This can be deemed an **'All Members Ride'** (Option 2 above)

If no Observer is available within the group of 4 that Group's Ride will be deemed a **'Social Ride'**. (Option 1 above)

11) The Briefing before the ride

- Remind all riders that they are responsible for maintaining safety and complying with the law at all times.
- Every rider doesn't need to have full route details, but it may be beneficial that all are aware of any mid ride stops and final destination.
- Ensure that everyone is aware of the number of bikes within the group and who are riding together
- Remind participants that if any rider is planning to leave the group other than at a pre-arranged stop, they should inform the other members within that Group their intentions.
- Although no rider is expected to become separated from the group, it may be advisable to have a plan.
- If this is a training ride the IAM RoadSmart disclaimer should be given to the associate by the observer before commencing the ride.

Suggestion: Within the Group of 4 ensure that each rider maintains sight of the rider following them. (No 1 keeps No 2 in their mirrors, No 2 does the same with No 3 and No3 does the same with No 4

12) On the road

- Remember- Safety first!
- At all times, every rider is responsible for their own safety, their actions and any consequences that those actions may have.
- The lead rider is responsible for navigation only, every rider must use their judgement about every course of action that they take.
- Always obey traffic laws. Ride at a pace that is legal and at no time ride faster than you consider safe for the conditions, always ride smoothly and predictably, try to avoid harsh acceleration, sudden braking or changes in direction.
- Overtaking within the Group should be avoided as each Group will only have 4 riders any one rider should feel comfortable that if they need to stop, the rider immediately in front will notice and stop/ return to them. Planned mid ride stops will be determined by the lead rider at a safe location and on their side of the road. A rider should not be pressured into going any faster than they feel safe and the following rider should not pressure the rider in front. The following rider can make their intentions known and where appropriate the rider in front can yield allowing for a safe and courteous overtake.
- Should one Group 'catch up' another Group to avoid becoming a much larger 'Group', the following Group's leading rider will find a suitable safe place to bring their Group to a temporary halt allowing sufficient time for the Group in front to get further ahead. **No Group must attempt overtaking another Group ahead.**
- If you intend to leave the group but hadn't made this clear at the start of the ride, find a safe place to pull over on your side of the road. The other 3 members of your Group will either stop behind you if you are leading, or return to you if you're not. **(Remember each Group Member keeps the rider immediately behind them in view from their mirrors).** This will have been communicated at the briefing stage.
- When on the open road, ride in staggered formation when near other group riders.
- Allow other road users to overtake the group if they wish. Where it is safe make space for them to do so

13) The lead rider's role

- Plan a route that will be achievable for the abilities of the expected riders, with suitable refreshment stops and refuelling opportunities.
- Brief all riders before setting off (see 12 above)
- Ride smoothly and at a steady pace.
- If it becomes apparent that the Group has come to a halt because a rider has had problems, consider retracing the route until you discover the cause of the hold-up and take appropriate action. Ensure that those who have stopped beyond the hold-up are kept informed of the situation.
- If in the opinion of the ride leader, any participant who through their attitude or actions, endangers others within the group ride, or members of the public, or whose riding would bring IAM RoadSmart into disrepute, should be advised by the ride leader to rectify their riding immediately or be excluded from continuing within the group ride. If any rider is excluded a report must be created detailing the incident and is to be submitted by the ride leader to the group committee.

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