



# WaBAM Riding in Groups

## Contents

1. Introduction
  2. Eligibility
  3. Safety
  4. The Law
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5. Standard approach.
  6. Planning the ride.
  7. Lead and TEC basic principals.
  8. The Lead Rider's briefing.
  9. Post ride documents.

## 1. Introduction

- This guide is closely based upon the IAM Group Rides Policy document to be found at (<https://www.iamroadsmart.com/my-dashboard/group-officials/running-a-group>) Highlighted sections at least in part form IAM policy and failure to comply with these may put a member's continued membership of IAM RoadSmart in jeopardy.
- The WaBAM Forum Member's section is where all communications relating to Group Ride-outs can be found, this includes details of individual rides usually posted at least two weeks in advance. Plans can change, so revisits are recommended.
- Riding in a group can be a great opportunity to practice advanced rider skills and techniques, and also a social occasion where like-minded riders have an opportunity chat over tea and cake, and as such, everyone is encouraged to take part.
- Riders should be mindful that Group riding brings responsibility in promoting the aims of IAM and WaBAM and should not risk bringing either Brand into disrepute.
- In common with all Advanced riding, each participant will take responsibility for their own actions, ensure that they and their vehicle are both fit to take part, and above all ride safely and legally. By signing the Ride Register immediately prior to the ride, you acknowledge these criteria and also as having read the following Contents, - paragraphs 1 to 4 are mandatory, 5 onwards contains useful information regarding Group riding and the 'Drop-off' method of route marking.

## 2. Eligibility.

- The minimum qualification to take part in all categories of ride is valid membership of IAM Roadsmart and WaBAM. Only these persons are permitted to carry pillion.

Lead and Tail End Charlie (TEC) should ideally be LO at least but can be a Member for development purposes.

- Short/breakfast rides should be generally less technically demanding and therefore can include IAM/WaBAM Associates who have been cleared by their training Observer to take part. The ride leader should nominate an Observer to follow any Associates in the group, the TEC will assume the role during periods when the nominated planned Observer is out of position due to the marking system.
- Group organised rides may be planned to achieve specific training objectives and restricted to particular categories of participant, these will be clearly notified on the Forum ride details.

### 3. Safety

- The primary consideration when riding in a group is safety, this includes that of third parties, and remains the responsibility of the individual rider. Any riding considered to compromise safety should be reported to the Ride Leader or TEC (Tail-End Charlie) at the earliest opportunity who will decide what action to take, if any.

### 4. The Law

- Traffic laws must be obeyed at all times. At no time when participating in a Group Organised Ride will any person riding in the group be expected or required to act illegally. If there is a conflict between this Guide and the Law, the latter must be take precedence. Any riding considered to breach the Law should be reported to the Ride Leader or TEC at the earliest opportunity who will decide what action to take, if any.
  - Please Note:- Any breach of the RTA or any other regulation legally enforced may result in the group insurance being negated.
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### 5. Standard Approach

- Using a standard approach to riding in a group ensures safety and reduces the chance of members getting lost. 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.
- The ride should be conducted using the 'System', at a speed such as to avoid causing nuisance to following traffic but within the legal limit. It is important to take into account the right of other road users to travel without unnecessary hindrance. In all circumstances, any road user wishing to overtake a rider should be given space and consideration.

### 6. Planning the Ride

- The organiser, usually the ride lead volunteer, should take into account the purpose of the ride, and thence the capabilities required of the participating members and make this known via the Forum. If either of these factors subsequently changes, the organiser should re-plan the event accordingly.
- The ride plan should take into account the distance to be covered, types of roads, fuel use etc. No on-road section between breaks/debriefs should exceed 90 minutes.
- All riders should ensure they have sufficient fuel and are otherwise prepared to cover the period between planned stops, if a rider feels the distance excessive with regard to fuel consumption, they should discuss an interim fuel stop with the Leader.
- It is worth considering sharing plan details with another person to act as deputy Ride Leader, at least LO qualified, ahead of the day, so that if an unexpectedly large number of riders turn up there are two persons able to act as Lead and the ride can be split into two. The various qualifications of those attending also needs to be considered for this to be an option.

## 7. Lead and TEC Basic Principles

- Riding in close convoy and stopping on the road to allow riders to regroup are two practices that should be avoided, hence the use of the Leader and Tail rider (TEC) system.
- The basis of the system is that the Leader always stays at the front of the group and the TEC at the rear, with riders spaced comfortably between.
- Whenever there is a deviation from the obvious straight ahead route, the Leader indicates to the following rider (the marker) to pull over with hazard lights on in a visible but safe position to point all bikes in the correct direction. At complex junctions or roundabouts, or if a following riders think it may be of benefit for clarity, more than one marker may be required. When the TEC comes along (usually clearly visible in pink vest) the marker(s) rejoins in front of him/her.
- All riders should regularly check that the rider following is occasionally in view, - generally no more than two hundred metres or so behind, if necessary, slow until the following rider re-appears, this will ensure the group does not become too fragmented but will still mean that the group can be strung out over several kilometres. This is particularly important with regard to the rider immediately in front of TEC to ensure TEC has not been held up or had an incident of some kind.
- By following this basic system each and every rider regardless of ability within the group may ride their own ride without the risk of getting lost and offers the opportunity for the Group to close up if necessary.

- Care should be taken when other motorcyclists become entrained in the Group as they may lead to confusion and disrupt the Lead and TEC system.

## **8. The Lead Rider's Briefing**

1. Ensure all riders fill in their details and sign the Ride Register prior to setting off, this acknowledges the individual's compliance with the conditions of the ride.

2. Remind all riders that they are responsible for their own fitness to ride, their own actions, maintaining safety and complying with the law at all times.

3. Make sure that everyone is familiar who are acting as the Lead and TEC and also the 'drop-off' system.

4. Ensure every rider knows how to recognise the Leader's signal to stop and act as a marker, but the exact position and the responsibility for the marker's safety lies with the individual marking. If the Ride Leader cannot see any following members of the Group he/she will stop and wait until someone catches up, or retrace the route after a period to investigate the cause.

5. Ensure all riders are aware of ride protocol such as

- default direction is straight on,
- ride in a staggered formation when the Group is bunched and
- overtaking within the Group.

Also remind riders to be courteous to third parties particularly to vulnerable road users and when overtaking..

6. Ensure that every rider is aware of the place/location of rest and fuel stops. Check that riders have sufficient range to reach the first fuel stop.

7. Ensure that everyone is aware of who are riding together, - Associate and their LO for example.

8. Remind participants that if any rider is planning to leave the group other than at a pre-arranged stop, they should inform the Lead or Tail rider of their intentions. For unplanned stops such as technical issues, fatigue etc., the rider should flag down and inform TEC who will decide what action to take.

9. Particularly if a check run of the route has recently been carried out, identify and warn of any particular road hazards that may be encountered, - broken road surfaces, standing water, roads contaminated by agricultural vehicles etc.

10. Remind participants of the possibility of other motorcyclists joining and moving through the Group.

## **9. Post ride documents.**

- At the end of the ride, a ride report should be completed and sent, together with the Ride Register, to the Rides Co-ordinator.