

Motorcycle Support Vehicle (MSV) Standard Operating Procedures

(Last update 09/13/2011 – Rick Yost N4VQT GWRRA# 95916)

1. Goal is to monitor route(s) to provide support and ensure safety for all bicycle riders

- a. Cover as much of the route as possible without pairing up with other MSVs (Motorcycle Support Vehicle).
- b. Ride the route per your assigned position at normal posted speed limits. See item 3 below for details on how to monitor your assigned position.
- c. Meeting of all MSVs and communications control personnel will occur 1 hour before start time.

2. Communicate!

- a. All communications must go through communications control to ensure there are not duplicate support efforts being initiated for the same issue.
- b. You will be assigned a tactical communications name such as Motor1, Motor2, Motor3, etc.
- c. Conduct all communications with your tactical name so communications control knows who they are communicating with.
- d. If you see a rider who needs help, ensure that you know your location and call communications control and report the situation. Your location can be any of the following or a combination thereof:
 - A street address.
 - Route mile marker.
 - Actual mile marker.
 - The road you are on and your distance from your entry onto that road.
 - Your distance and direction from the closest rest stop.
 - GPS coordinates or closest GPS waypoint on the route (GPS waypoints for all turns on the route are sometimes provided prior to the event. If you have taken the time to load the waypoints into your GPS, you can simply state “I’m between turn xx and turn xx”).
- e. Contact communications control directly using whatever means is available to you report the situation you are handling (cell phone, CB, amateur radio).
 - Cell phone numbers for communications control are typically given out prior to the event. It’s helpful to program that number into your cell phone prior to event start.
 - Amateur radio frequencies are always provided before the event and all communications for the event are conducted using formal net control protocol. Contact amateur radio communications control prior to event start for net protocol guidelines.
 - CB frequency will be provided at the start of the event. If you are using a CB, please be sure to open your squelch to conduct any communications to ensure you hear the normally weak signals of the Citizen Band radio. You can sometimes hear those weak transmissions along with the noise on the frequency.
- f. If you need to use someone else to relay your message and issue status to communications control, ensure that the person you speak to as a relay is kept in the loop with status updates until the issue has been cleared. Do not assume that someone else notified that relay person that the issue has been cleared.
- g. Determine what help is needed and if you can help with any supplies on your motor, do so.
- h. If additional help is needed call communications control and request to send a 4-wheel SAG (Supplies And Gear) vehicle to carry the rider and their bicycle to next rest stop or Start/Finish line.
- i. If help requires medical attention (there is blood visible and rider is in obvious distress), call 911. If you cannot call 911 directly, use your radio and try contacting someone to help relay the message. Always advise communications control that you placed a call for 911 services.
- j. If you decide to take a break, do so at rest stops and advise other Motors you are “relaying with” (see item 3 below) of your break rest stop and expected break time duration. Remember that other motors will be monitoring the route and will automatically fill in for your absence due to the relay process explained below. It’s always good to stop at each rest stop to see if other Motors are taking a break there and discuss who will go in which direction when leaving a given rest stop.

3. Travel/monitor your assigned route via relay process

- a. You will be assigned a route to be monitored as well as your tactical name for communications.
- b. Lead, Intermediate and End Motors will be assigned for each route by the MSV coordinator or net control
- c. **Lead Motor** will leave the start/finish line following the group but will maintain visual contact with leading rider until leading rider gets to finish line at which point, Lead Motor will reverse on the route until the next Intermediate or End Motor is seen. At which point, Lead Motor will turn around and head back toward the finish line. This process is to be repeated throughout the entire event. Status updates providing first rider’s number and location should be communicated to communications control at each rest stop. Be aware that first riders often do not take rest stop

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breaks and the first rider will change during the route. You'll need to stick with the first rider (whoever that is) at all times.

- d. **Intermediate Motors** will be dispatched from starting line at timed intervals (usually about 2 to 5 minutes apart) based on the number of riders on the route. All Intermediate motors should pass the End Motor at start of race. Intermediate Motors will continue on their course until the next forward Motor is seen and then reverses on their assigned route until next Intermediate or End Motor is seen. At which point, Motor turns around and continues forward on the route. This process is to be repeated throughout the entire event. Please be sure you find a safe place to make your U-Turns.
- e. **End Motor** primary goal is to keep tabs on who the last rider is on their assigned route and notify communications control as the last rider changes and as the last rider arrives at each rest stop. End Motor will follow behind last rider and will maintain visual contact with last rider. End Motor should maintain a one or two block distance from the last rider on the route. As End Motor, it's OK to pass last rider but End Motor should not go too far (no more than ¼ mile) from last rider so as to not to lose visual contact with the last rider. To avoid overheating of your Motor, the End Motor and an Intermediate Motor can swap assignments as they deem necessary. Note that some event coordinators and/or net control may elect to use a 4-wheel SAG vehicle in lieu of a motor in which case, end motors will not be required unless this changes during the event. Note that net control often assign's 4-wheel sags to this position in which case, there will be no need for an End Motor.

4. Be Visible

- a. Turn on 4-way flashers and/or strobe lights if installed.
- b. Wear high visibility clothing/vest.
- c. Attach "Support Vehicle" sign to windshield.

5. What to carry on your Motor

- a. Cell phone
- b. Radio gear (keeps squelch as loose as you can stand it)
- c. First Aid kit: bandages, tape, antiseptic, smelling salts, sterilized Nitrile or Latex rubber gloves.
- d. Water for yourself and riders
- e. Snacks (bananas, power bars etc.) for yourself and riders (usually found at start/finish line)
- f. Small camping seat may come in handy
- g. Bicycle tube, air pump for both Schrader and Presta valves. The most used size tube will be 700C x 23 with Presta valves.

6. What to do and what not to do

- a. Your primary mission is to monitor the route and look for riders needing assistance and report any anomalies to communications control.
- b. Drive at posted limits unless you are the Lead or End Motor and must drive slower to maintain visual contact with the lead or end bicyclists.
- c. Don't "hang out" with riders as you will not be covering much ground.
- d. If you see riders stopped alongside the road check that all is OK. Sometimes exchanging a simple thumbs-up gesture will suffice that all is OK.
- e. Try not to become a bicycle mechanic as the time you spend helping a rider fix a flat is time spent not doing your monitoring of the route and someone a block away might need more serious assistance. However, you should not leave a rider unless a 4-wheel SAG relieves you.
- f. Law enforcement is sometimes placed at busy intersections. It's OK to communicate with them regarding the riders on the route and where they are located if you have good information to provide them.
- g. Provide water or snacks to any riders that may need nourishment.
- h. As you are passing riders who may be riding two or three abreast on busy streets, advise riders to form single lines to avoid the blocking of normal vehicle traffic.
- i. Directing traffic should be left to law enforcement. If you decide to help the riders make it through an intersection by stopping traffic and blocking roadway with your motor, remember that you are no longer riding and you're not covering the route and you then become responsible for ensuring that traffic stops. Also, be advised that you have no legal authority to direct traffic. You're better off supporting riders' own responsibility of obeying the law and stop at stop signs or red traffic lights.
- j. If you see 4-wheel SAG vehicles driving slowly following riders, pass them with care using flashing high beams and horn.
- k. Have fun!