

Chapter Problem Response

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Purpose: Identify Red Flags of a Struggling Chapter

Goal: Propose actions to take to reenergize the Chapter

Red Flags:

- **Activity:**

- Are you receiving monthly updates from the Chapter?
- Is the Chapter attending District functions? i.e. operations meetings or rallies

- **Communication:**

- Is the Chapter sending out monthly newsletters?
- Is the Chapter Director responding to your communication attempts? i.e. email or phone calls
- Are you receiving Negative or Misinterpreted Communications from the Chapter?

- **Financials:**

- In reviewing the yearend financial report, is the Chapter recording regular expenses and deposits?
- Are they making deposits, but not spending?

- **Membership:**

- Is the Chapter growing? Do they have new members?
- Is the Chapter participating in Chapter of the Year?
- Is the Chapter naming a Couple of the Year each year?
- How old is the Chapter? Has it been around a long time? Newly formed? Do they have young members? Old members?

- **Officers:**

- How long has the Chapter Director been in office?
- Are the Chapter Officer positions completely filled?
- Does the Chapter Director understand what is expected of the Chapter Officer, positions or programs?

Resolutions:

- **Activity:**

- *Snapshot*

- Explain what the expectations are for the District monthly snapshot report and the importance of this information for the health of the association
 - *Might be a good thing to actually give the associations expectations and reasons of importance here so all have the same understanding*
 - District and Chapter Director needs to encourage riding in the District newsletter, both past and future events
 - District Director needs to get down to the Chapter level and have fun with the Chapters
 - Have a Director forum, at either the District or Chapter level
 - Have a Chapter Director gathering at a rally or other event
 - District Director needs to have personal communication with the Chapters Director, i.e. phone calls, cards or mailed correspondence

- *Attendance at District Events*

- Explain expectations and importance of attendance. Does the membership understand why these functions are important? They aren't just ways to make money.
 - The function is to gather members from all over to share the experience of the association with friends
 - Couple of the Year Selection
 - A larger opportunity for training
 - A place where Chapters can be seen, recognized and appreciated
 - Without support the function cannot happen
 - Set goals or targets for the Chapters to meet. When met, have a tangible reward, such as paying for yearly charter fees.
 - District could pay for Chapter Director(s) to be trained, if funds allow. This could also be done at the Chapter level. Chapter could pay for a member(s) to attend out of town training event(s) or operations meetings, if funds allow.

• **Communication:**

- *Lack of Communication from a Chapter:*
- Have expectations been conveyed to the Chapter Director?
- District Director needs to have personal contact with the Chapter every 2-3 months. By phone or in person.
- *No Newsletter or Minimal Content in a Newsletter:*
- Expand the news. Include content from the District, Region and/or National. The Chapter Director should share information from the District newsletter with the membership.
- Printed Newsletter should be available to those requesting it. It should be mailed and/or available at the monthly gathering.
- **Chapter website:**
- It's a way for non-members to find and contact the Chapter
- Communications between Chapter and members about events
- *Miscommunication and/or Negative Communication:*
- District Director should call the Chapter Director
- District Director should call the Chapter Member
 - The Chapter Director and the Chapter Member will have different views of issues
- District Director may survey the Chapter Members.
- Respectfully challenge the nay-sayers.
 - Why are the negative comments being made?
 - What are the circumstances?
 - Are the negative comments a direct result of misinterpretation or poor communication or hearsay?
- Make sure the Chapter Director knows he/she is the most important director in the association. The member is the most important person.

• **Financials:**

- Communicate with chapters and use District or Chapter funds to give back to the members
- District or Chapter to pay for Chapter Directors or Chapter Members to be trained
 - Does Chapter Director know the expenses for which Chapter funds may be used? (Receipts required)
 - Examples:
 - Entertainment
 - Give back to Chapter Members
 - Funds to cover fundraiser expenses
 - COY expenses
 - Education
 - Training
 - Operations
 - Charter Fees
 - OPS meeting
 - Operating Expenses
 - Website
 - Newsletter cost

- **Membership:**

- *Lack of/or Minimal New Members:*

- Visit local motorcycle shops
- Open enrollment to other motorcycle model type owners
- Review ARL and contact people in Chapter area
- Make new members/visitors welcome. Assign a mentor.
- Increase involvement – Stop asking for volunteers. Use the direct approach and ask individuals (one on one) TO GET INVOLVED.
- Keep the Gathering Interesting – make sure the gatherings are worth members' time. Invite speakers who have a story to tell. Discourage speakers who are there to raise funds. Encourage speakers who have been involved in riding or safety in some capacity. Ask members to give their motorcycle/GWRRRA story.
- Shake things up...
 - Periodically have someone other than the Chapter Director run the monthly gathering
 - Follow up with missing members...they may be having difficulties and could use the Chapter's help
 - Periodically have a 15 second "commercial" on a member – A getting to know you segment at the meeting
 - Spotlight Chapter Members in the newsletters
 - Change the meeting time so it accommodates members' schedules
 - Hold meetings at picnics
- Watch Attendance – Excessively absent members could mean disinterested or unhappy members. Keep lines of communication open

- *Lack of Couple of the Year:*

- Explain to Chapter Director, the Couple of the Year is selected, not elected
- Hold a Couple of the Year Boot Camp
- Explain to the Chapter Director, the Couples-of-the-Year are future officers

- *Participation in Chapter of the year:*

- Explain to the Chapter Director, what a great tool the program is
- How it can open bring new life into the Chapter, even if they choose not to compete

- *Age of Chapter – Demographics and/or Charter:*

- See Membership
- Hold Public Relations Events

- **Officers:**

- **Terms:**

- Same people in the same position for a long time
 - Keep the Chapter Team fresh by giving them challenges
 - District Director should convey expectations
 - District Director should do a one-on-one with the Chapter Director each year
- Burnout
 - Teach Chapter Director how to delegate
 - The Chapter Director should have one job only within the Chapter. If filling more than one position, needs to relinquish others, unless it's a vacant officer position, except for treasurer.
- Lack of Passion
 - District Director needs to have regular communication with the Chapter Director
 - Have the Chapter Director visit other chapters or vice versa
 - Utilize the Seniors within the district, or the District Team and ambassadors

- **Lack of Supporting Officers:**

- Educate the Chapter Director the real purpose of Couples of the Year. They are the future Chapter Officers.
- Be an advocate of anything that promotes leadership
- Perception – Being a Chapter Officer doesn't mean you have to be retired
- District needs to communicate expectations
- Combine OPS meeting with a Chapter Director forum
- District needs to keep the fun at the chapter level and the business at the district level
- Whine UP – Positive DOWN – Officers are putting the perception out to the membership that they have to “do all this work.”

- **Misunderstanding of Positions and/or Programs:**

- Communication is the best way to combat misunderstanding
- Educate the membership
- Be truthful in communication with prospective officers
- **Display a Positive attitude to members**