

GOLD WING ROAD RIDERS ASSOCIATION, INC.



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OCP-Officer Certification Update

Ben Franklin once said, **“Investment in knowledge pays the best interest.”**

When we introduced the Officer Certification Program (OCP), our intent was to provide a learning environment in which knowledge was shared with our Operations Directors and Assistant Directors. That knowledge gave those Officers a greater insight into GWRRA by facilitating a better understanding of our organizational structure and the basic policies and procedures. We made it mandatory training because we felt that the information was so critical to successful operations that we wanted to ensure that everyone in Director/Assistant positions benefited from the same knowledge base. We even went a step further and offered OCP to everyone else interested in learning more about the organization.

Initially, we experienced a considerable amount of pushback because the word, “mandatory,” did not sit well with some of our membership. Unfortunately, we did lose some of those members. Some of our Officer’s took the course reluctantly, but they did take it, and the feedback from those who have taken OCP has been very positive. Many have said they benefited from learning something new and wished this course had been available years ago. Actually, the information taught in OCP was not new - it was always available through our Officer’s Handbook. However, the OCP classroom experience did focus on the fundamentals and enabled attendees to ask questions. It was also a great opportunity for attendees to meet new friends and connect with one another.

What started out as 1½ day program has now evolved into a one-day course that is also available online for those who are not in a position to travel - or the number of attendees is too small to schedule a class.

What is most disconcerting is that the OCP “mandate” resulted in a negative perception that many other GWRRA offerings are also mandatory! It is my belief that the OCP mandate dissatisfaction served as a catalyst for many inaccurate, negative perceptions. (Please see my March 2013 *Wing World Magazine* article about the “*Anti-Fun Perception.*”)

In addition, reluctant or forced attendance does not foster a positive learning environment, especially if you are continually lamenting the fact that you are there! It is a known fact in education that those interested in self-improvement and learning, benefit more because they come willingly to training.

Another possible perception brought on by the OCP “mandate” is that GWRRA fails to listen to the members. In my February article on “*The Stone that Sharpened the Sword,*” I made the following statement: “You and your thoughts do count!” These are not just words.

Words constitute feedback that can result in actions when appropriate and in the best interest of the membership. Some may feel when a decision is made, never go back. This is an area we may have to agree to disagree. My philosophy is, if it is wrong, correct it, regardless of how long it has been in place. Just because we always did something a certain way, does not necessarily make it right for today. OCP as a one day course and on-line course are examples of listening to the membership.

As such, effective March 1, 2013, OCP will no longer be mandatory for anyone.

However, OCP is not going away! It will still be offered and promoted to the fullest. **I strongly recommend that all volunteers take the course**, especially if you plan to serve as a Director/Assistant at a Chapter level or higher. In fact, OCP completion will be a factor we consider when multiple candidates are interested in the same position.

Let’s look at some additional benefits to taking OCP... Simply put, a better understanding of the organization will give you a better experience. It will also help you be more successful as a volunteer. As a Director/Assistant, it will also make you GWRRA-knowledgeable and a “go-to person.”

To all of the Officers, and the many members/volunteers who chose to attend OCP, I applaud your desire to learn more about our great organization! To all the dedicated trainers who continue to impart knowledge through OCP, **thank you**, your efforts contribute significantly to GWRRA and bring about better experiences for all of our members!

GWRRA offers a buffet selection of fun events, rides, and learning and each of us makes choices as to what pleases our palette. OCP is now part of the buffet for everyone and I sincerely hope that you will recognize the value and will sign up to take the course – in person or online!

Ride safe and be well.

Sincerely,

Jere D. Goodman
Director of GWRRA

