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:
  o **Snapshot**
    o 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*
    o District and Chapter Director needs to encourage riding in the District newsletter, both past and future events
    o District Director needs to get down to the Chapter level and have fun with the Chapters
    o Have a Director forum, at either the District or Chapter level
    o Have a Chapter Director gathering at a rally or other event
    o District Director needs to have personal communication with the Chapters Director, i.e. phone calls, cards or mailed correspondence
  
  o **Attendance at District Events**
    o 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
    o Without support the function cannot happen
    o Set goals or targets for the Chapters to meet. When met, have a tangible reward, such as paying for yearly charter fees.
    o 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:**
    o Visit local motorcycle shops
    o Open enrollment to other motorcycle model type owners
    o Review ARL and contact people in Chapter area
    o Make new members/visitors welcome. Assign a mentor.
    o Increase involvement — Stop asking for volunteers. Use the direct approach and ask individuals (one on one) TO GET INVOLVED.
    o 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/GWRRA story.
    o 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
    o Watch Attendance – Excessively absent members could mean disinterested or unhappy members. Keep lines of communication open
  • **Lack of Couple of the Year:**
    o Explain to Chapter Director, the Couple of the Year is selected, not elected
    o Hold a Couple of the Year Boot Camp
    o Explain to the Chapter Director, the Couples-of-the-Year are future officers
  • **Participation in Chapter of the year:**
    o Explain to the Chapter Director, what a great tool the program is
    o How it can open bring new life into the Chapter, even if they choose not be compete
  • **Age of Chapter – Demographics and/or Charter:**
    o See Membership
    o 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**