

PROTOCOLS AND GUIDELINES OF THE MOTORCYCLE COUNCIL NAMIBIA (MCN)

1. PURPOSE OF THE MCN

- 1.1. The MCN is a non-racial and apolitical motorcycle association.
- 1.2. The MCN is constituted by the Presidents of Motorcycle Clubs in Namibia.
- 1.3. The MCN is described as a body managing and overseeing all motorcycle affairs recognized and supported by the majority of motorcycle clubs within the countries boundary.
- 1.4. All Motorcycling Clubs are encouraged to join the MCN – it is to the advantage of biking in Namibia.
- 1.5. The main aim of the MCN is to create a unified structure to ensure uniformity in biking and to ensure that the biker traditions and brotherhood associated with biking are maintained.
- 1.6. The MCN endeavours to enhance brotherhood among bikers and to set a specific standard for biker clubs.
- 1.7. The MCN is committed to ensure unity among all clubs registered.
- 1.8. It is recommended that there should be only one MOTORCYCLING GOVERNING BODY.

2. MCN MEETINGS

- 2.1. The MCN meetings are held quarterly and rotated between the different clubs.
- 2.2. The CLUB hosting the meeting will chair the MCN meeting whilst the meeting is held.
- 2.3. All Presidents attending the MCN meeting are on equal standing and no permanent chairperson shall be appointed.

3. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW MOTORCYCLE CLUB

- 3.1. It is important for anyone wanting to start a new club/ club chapter to first understand all the protocols and to follow the guidelines so as to avoid any confusion and/ or misconceptions.
- 3.2. No new club in the Namibia will be allowed to start off as a MC. Any club that wishes to become a MC, will first have to operate as a RC or MCC and will have to fulfill all the criteria with regards to an MC within a period of 5 years.
- 3.3. No new clubs or club chapters with International affiliations will be allowed to open in Namibia
- 3.4. It is highly recommended that a person/ persons who intend starting a new club, first consider riding or socializing with existing clubs in their area in order to familiarize themselves with the protocols and/ or behaviours of the local biking community.
- 3.5. All clubs which were established after 5 Aug 2022 and not affiliated to MCN will be seen as a new club.
- 3.6. Minimum period for any new club to qualify for acknowledgment as a full back patch club, is 9 months from the date on which the club registration is formally approved.
- 3.7. The full process entails a minimum 12 months period consisting of:
 - 3.7.1. 3 month whilst awaiting approval for registration
 - 3.7.2. 9 months' probation period from date of registration.
 - 3.7.3. During this period the club will attend all events hosted by the MCN but will have no voting right and may only participate in discussions with permission
- 3.8. No person/s subjected to a cooling off period and without the consent of the local motorcycling governing body will be allowed to wear a patch identifying them as being part of the biking community.
- 3.9. A club may not consist of less than six independent riders each with their own bikes. One family group of six do not qualify as such independent riders.

4. COOLING OFF PERIOD

- 4.1. New clubs are often founded by persons who has left an existing club, whatever the reason might be. However, it is an accepted practice that any person/s leaving a club, has to wait for a given time before joining another club.
- 4.2. This is also applicable to such persons starting a new club or a new chapter on behalf of an existing club.
- 4.3. This time period is referred to as a “cooling off” period.
- 4.4. The “cooling off” period has been determined and accepted by MCN to be a minimum of 6 months and is applicable in all situations. The following can be regarded as exceptions:

4.4.1. Patch-Over

- (a) This is where a whole club or club chapter is closed down thus no longer to be in existence and absorbed into another club or different chapter of the same original club. In such a scenario the members of the club/ chapter being closed down are absorbed into the other club/chapter as full members. This normally entails a negotiated process between the relevant parties.

4.4.2. Patch-up

- (a) This is where an existing club/ chapter changes its name and colours with all reference and ties to the original club being removed. The group membership remains the same, but starts to operate under a different name with a different patch.
- (b) In both these scenarios the original club/ chapter will cease to exist.

5. BAD STANDING

- 5.1. The term bad standing emanates from the old school biker traditions and describes a person who has committed a very serious transgression which adversely affects the biker community, e.g. stealing from a fellow biker, etc.
- 5.2. Utmost caution should be exercised before a person is placed in bad standing status because this effectively means that the person is banished from the biking community.
- 5.3. A proper investigation needs to be conducted by the MCN when a club places a person in bad standing.
- 5.4. Care should be taken that this status is not merely allocated to a person as a result of internal club politics or petty infights between members.
- 5.5. Allocation of a status of bad standing should therefore be a well informed decision based on valid facts and merits.
- 5.6. It is also advisable to rather use the term “undesirable” than bad standing.

6. PROCESS FOR STARTING A NEW CLUB

- 6.1. The period involved to start up a new club is 9 months and can be divided into 2 phases:
 - 6.1.1. The Application and Registration period (3 months)
 - 6.1.2. The Approval and Probation period (9 months).
- 6.2. Application and registration period
 - 6.2.1. Any new Clubs and club chapters in Namibia should note that all people wearing a back patch is regarded as part of organised biking and must follow due process to get the club approved.
 - 6.2.2. Application for registration is made through the MCN.

- 6.2.3. All applications must fulfil the necessary criteria inclusive of but not limited to the proposed club name, full names of prospective members, particulars of contact person/s and contact details together with an example of the proposed patch, etc.
- 6.2.4. No application for registration shall be entertained unless all required information is supplied.
- 6.2.5. An application for registration will be suspended until all the necessary information is supplied.
- 6.2.6. The new club will submit an application form at the 1st meeting which they attend at the MCN and the club will be introduced as a prospective new Club to the existing clubs.
- 6.2.7. The application will then be circulated amongst MCN affiliated clubs for a period of three (3) months for approval/objections.
- 6.2.8. Where there is an objection against or as dispute regarding the name, patch, etc, the application will be suspended until all such objections/ disputes has been resolved to the satisfaction of the MCN.
- 6.2.9. A suspension as referred to above, will only be lifted once all queries/ objections has been cleared/resolved to the satisfaction of the MCN.
- 6.2.10. The 3-month period will then only come into effect on the date upon which the suspension is lifted.
- 6.2.11. Where a suspension has been lifted, the application for registration will be re-posted and dealt with as a new application.
- 6.2.12. No club name, patch or any club identification may be worn by any of the members of the proposed new club during this period.
- 6.2.13. The fact that the application has been submitted, does not mean an automatic acceptance of the proposed club.
- 6.2.14. On registration being accepted after the 3-month period, the MCN will notify the prospective new Club and the existing clubs the application was successful and the 9 month probation period will start.
- 6.2.15. The details of the club will then be uploaded onto the website: MCN.com.na.

6.3. Probation and approval period

- 6.3.1. After approval and upon registration (3 month period), the proposed new Club will be subjected to a 9 month probation period.
- 6.3.2. It is important to note, that although the registration of the name and proposed patch has been approved and registered, the club as such has not yet been finally approved.
- 6.3.3. During the probation period, the members of the new club will only be allowed to wear a small front patch on the left side of their waistcoats / jackets and no rockers, depiction of type of club or back patch will be allowed. The front patch is compulsory and serves to identify the club as a new prospecting club in terms of the protocols.
- 6.3.4. During the probation period, the new club must attend the meetings of the MCN as guests in order to familiarize themselves with the protocols within the biking community.
- 6.3.5. On completion of the probation period, the club must indicate to the MCN which type of club they intend to establish (new clubs may not immediately receive MC status).
- 6.3.6. Upon proof of having fulfilled all the necessary criteria and requirements in respect of the type of club they wish to become, the MCN will make a determination at the end of the full term period and allocate them the status for which they qualify.
- 6.3.7. Once approved, the club members will be allowed to progress to wearing a full back patch with all their necessary club insignia.

6.3.8. Upon approval by the MCN the club will be introduced at the first meeting of the MCN following their qualifying date, as having fulfilled the criteria and be allowed to operate as a fully-fledged club.

6.4. New Club Chapters

6.4.1. Starting a new Chapter of a club is a recognized way of expanding the membership base of a club. However, no new Club Chapter will be allowed to open unless it has been sanctioned by the MCN.

6.4.2. Any Club who wish to open a new Chapter must inform the MCN directly, of their intention before taking the steps to start a new Chapter. A fully motivated proposal must be presented to the MCN for consideration.

6.4.3. No new Club Chapter will be allowed to open within a 120 km radius from an already existing Club Chapter of the same club. However, it is the discretion of the MCN to allow such a chapter with proper motivation from the respective club.

6.4.4. New clubs which were established after 1 January 2022 or is still under the 6 month probation period won't be allowed to open new chapters for 2 YEARS AFTER REGISTRATION with MCN.

6.4.5. A new club chapter must fulfil the minimum of 6 key holders.

6.4.6. A proposed new Club Chapter must present a letter of confirmation from the mother chapter confirming that approval has been granted to form a Chapter.

6.4.7. The following information must be submitted to the Motorcycle Governing Body:

- (a) The area where the new proposed chapter will be based.
- (b) The name and contact details of the full patch member/s under whose supervision and guidance the proposed new Chapter will be managed.
- (c) The name of each prospective member who will form part of the new Chapter.
- (d) It must also be indicated whether any of the proposed new members has been a member of another club before. Where any such member left another club they will still be subjected to the cooling off period and full particulars of the club concerned must be disclosed accompanied by a letter of good standing from the previous President.

6.4.8. The proposed new Club Chapter, if approved by the MCN will be subjected to a probation period before being acknowledged as a Chapter and afforded the right to wear any insignia depicting the area relevant to the Local Motorcycling Governing Body. This probation period will, however, be determined by the MCN in conjunction with the Mother Chapter of the proposed new Chapter but will not be for a period less than 6 months and will be subject to specific criteria regarding supervision, display of colours, etc.

6.4.9. The opening of a new Club Chapter will only be considered if at least one of the members of the proposed Chapter is an existing full patch member of the mother Club who is resident or working in the area where the proposed new Chapter is to be opened.

6.4.10. The following guidelines are applicable to a new Chapters of an existing Club:

- (a) New Chapter to be formed with existing Full Patch members of the mother Club. No waiting period providing that there are a minimum of 6 (six) fully patched key holders of the existing Club. No persons classified as hang-around will be considered to enable the prospect Chapter to qualify as a recognized Chapter or a 6 months waiting period will apply.
- (b) A New Chapter to be formed as result of a patch-over. This applies where a whole club or club chapter is closed down thus no longer to be in existence and absorbed into another club or different chapter of the same

original club. In such a scenario the members of the club/ chapter being closed down are absorbed into the other club/chapter as full members. This normally entails a negotiated process between the relevant parties. No waiting period subject to the provision that there are a minimum of 6 (six) fully patched key holders of the existing Club otherwise a six months waiting period will apply. No persons classified as hang-around will be considered to enable the prospect Chapter to qualify as a recognized Chapter.

- (c) A New Chapter with new prospect members
The chapter will only qualify for recognition as a chapter after having complied with the criteria re key holders/membership relevant to the type of club. Only the chapter will be recognized as a chapter of the Club for the area it is to be based in with only the full patch member/s under whose supervision it has been managed for the probation period being allowed to wear the club colours with the new area depiction. All other persons who are not fully patched members of the club at the beginning of the new chapter's probation period, will for the duration of the Chapter's prospect period will have status as hang-around. At the end of that period, such persons will not qualify to be patched up as members of the new Chapter, but will first have to fulfil the requirements for membership as per the mother club's constitution. A minimum period of 6 (six) months subject to the provision that there are a minimum of 6 (six) fully patched key holders of the existing Club.
- (d) Clubs have their own rules regarding the opening of new chapters within their clubs. All clubs need to however adhere to the MCN protocols as a minimum requirement.

7. NON COMPLIANCE WITH PROTOCOLS

- 7.1. Any Individual/ Club or Club Chapter not complying with the protocols and/ or any requirements which may be stipulated by the MCN will be considered to be in breach of the protocols.
- 7.2. Where a Club/ Chapter has been found to be in breach of the protocols, such Individual/ Club/Chapter's full particulars will be published and made available to all existing Clubs affiliated to the MCN for their information.
- 7.3. A Club/ Chapter found to be in breach will not be acknowledged and will automatically be prohibited from attending any biking events until such time as they comply with the protocols.

8. CHANGE IN CLUB STATUS

- 8.1. Where an existing club wants to change its existing status as a club upwards, i.e. from SC or a RC to a MCC, application has to be made to the MCN in writing who will then consider the application against the criteria and protocols relevant to that specific status.
- 8.2. Any club wishing to change status to that of an MC, must have been in existence and active for a period of 5 years (including the 9 month probation period) before such a status change will be considered. In applying for MC status, letters of recommendation and approval by 3 (three) existing and recognized MC's recognized by the MCN must be presented to the MCN together with proof that the applicant Club fulfils the minimum criteria in terms of the protocols to become a MC. The final decision in this regard rests with the MCN
- 8.3. The MCN has the right to downgrade a club in status where it is clear that the club has failed or cannot maintain itself in terms of the criteria applicable to the club status MC, MCC, etc. This will only be done after affording the club a reasonable time to conform.

- 8.4. Such time period will be decided with due consideration for the relevant circumstances of the club.
- 8.5. All status changes must be relayed to the MCN for their information and the necessary changes brought about on the register on MCN.com.na.

9. DORMANT CLUBS

- 9.1. A Dormant Club as per the Oxford definition of the word “dormant” will for the purpose of the Protocols be considered as a club which has become or been made “temporarily inactive”, for whatever reason. A Distinction must be drawn between a dormant club and a club which is proven to have become totally “inactive” in its functioning as a club, hereafter referred to as a “dead Club”.
- 9.2. A Club can become dormant for a variety of reasons such as not having enough members to constitute a Club in terms of the protocols, due to personal, work or any other circumstances of the Club members preventing them to carry on with club activities as per the Club Constitution, etc.
- 9.3. Where a Club has become totally inactive in its functioning as a club, it is considered that the club has ceased to exist as a club. (“dead Club”)
- 9.4. A Dormant Club can be revived at any time within the 12 month period subject to the following criteria:
 - 9.4.1. That it be made active by the same members of the club who made it dormant;
 - 9.4.2. That the Club complies with the Protocols.
- 9.5. A Club is considered to cease to exist automatically where it has been dormant for a period of 12 months or longer or where the club members as a whole are patched over to another existing Club, but can also cease to exist through a decision of the Club members to disband the Club or where the Club is “closed down” through a decision of the MCN where it is found that the further existence of that Club would be to the detriment of the local biking community as a whole.
- 9.6. With the exception of a Club which has been “closed down” as referred to above, a “dead Club” can be revived again.
- 9.7. The revival of a “dead Club” will, however, be dealt with on the same basis as a new club in terms of the protocols.
- 9.8. Where a club is found to be dormant or judged to be a” dead Club”, the registration of that Club, i.e. the name and patch, will remain on the Register of Clubs (MCN.com.na) but with an indication of its status.

11. TYPES OF CLUBS AND RANKING STRUCTURE

11.1. Motorcycle Club (MC)

- 11.1.1. A proper ranking structure which usually consisting of a President, Vice President, Sergeant at Arms, Road Captains, Treasurer & Secretary.
- 11.1.2. Must have a constitution.
- 11.1.3. Minimum licensed riders (key holders): 6 (each with own bike).
- 11.1.4. No FULL patch holders / members under the age of 18.
- 11.1.5. Minimum hang around period: 3 months (club to decide in terms of Constitution).
- 11.1.6. Minimum prospect period: 12 months (club to decide in terms of Constitution).
- 11.1.7. Minimum bike capacity: 600 cc.
- 11.1.8. Colours must be approved and registered
- 11.1.9. Minimum period for any new club to become an MC: 5 years from date of qualifying as a MCC club.)

- 11.1.10. MC status to be approved by minimum of 3 existing senior MC's in conjunction with the MCN.
- 11.1.11. Traditionally, this patch is a three piece (top rocker, patch, bottom rocker), but there are exceptions. The acronym 'MC' is clearly displayed.

11.2. Motorcycle Club (MCC)

- 11.2.1. A proper ranking structure usually consisting of a President, Vice President, Sergeant at Arms, Road Captains, Treasurer & Secretary.
- 11.2.2. Must have a constitution.
- 11.2.3. Minimum licensed riders (key holders): 6 (each with own bike).
- 11.2.4. No FULL patch holders / members under the age of 18.
- 11.2.5. Minimum hang around period: 1 month (club to decide in terms of Constitution).
- 11.2.6. Minimum prospect period: 3 months (club to decide in terms of Constitution).
- 11.2.7. Minimum bike capacity: 600 cc.
- 11.2.8. Colours must be approved and registered.
- 11.2.9. This patch is usually a two piece, but it can also be a one or three-piece patch. The acronym 'MCC' is clearly displayed.

11.3. Riding Club (RC)

- 11.3.1. Must have a set of basic club rules or constitution.
- 11.3.2. Leaders can be known as President, Coordinators, etc
- 11.3.3. Minimum licensed riders (key holders): 6 (each with own bike).
- 11.3.4. No FULL patch holders / members under the age of 18.
- 11.3.5. Minimum hang around period: 1 month (club to decide in terms of Constitution).
- 11.3.6. Minimum prospect period: 3 months (club to decide in terms of Constitution).
- 11.3.7. Minimum bike capacity: 400 cc.
- 11.3.8. Colours must be approved and registered.
- 11.3.9. This is a two piece, or a one-piece patch. The acronym 'RC' is clearly displayed.

11.4. Social / Family Club (SC / SMC)

- 11.4.1. Must have a set of basic club rules or constitution.
- 11.4.2. Leaders can be known as President, Coordinators, etc
- 11.4.3. Minimum hang around period: 1 month (club to decide in terms of Constitution).
- 11.4.4. Minimum prospect period: 3 months (club to decide in terms of Constitution).
- 11.4.5. Minimum licensed riders (key holders): 6 (each with own bike).
- 11.4.6. No FULL patch holders / members under the age of 18.
- 11.4.7. Minimum Bike capacity: 250 cc.
- 11.4.8. Colours must be approved and registered.
- 11.4.9. This patch is a one-piece patch. The acronym 'SC' or 'SMC' must be clearly displayed.

11.5. Fraternal Motorcycle Clubs and Interest groups

- 11.5.1. A Fraternal Motorcycle Club is in essence, a group of people joined together by common interests, beliefs and virtues to preserve the excellence of their fraternity, and of the community in which they live and function, such as Law Enforcement, Military, Fire Fighting, Religion/ Ministry, etc
- 11.5.2. Minimum licensed riders (key holders): 6 (each with own bike).
- 11.5.3. No FULL patch holders/ members under the age of 18.
- 11.5.4. This patch is a one-piece patch.
- 11.5.5. Colours must be approved and registered

11.6. Law Enforcement Motorcycle Club (LEMC)

- 11.6.1. A Law Enforcement Motorcycle Club referred to as LEMC or in short LE, being a club which is structured to accommodate serving - as well as ex-members of the Law Enforcement fraternity (Police, Metro Police, Traffic Police) who share an interest in motorcycles, irrespective of the basis of its membership or affiliation, must also comply with all the protocols pertaining to motorcycle clubs in the MCN.
- 11.6.2. For the purpose of these protocols, a LEMC/ LE shall be considered as being on the same level as a RC and must therefore fulfil the same criteria as applicable to a RC:
- (a) Must have a set of basic club rules or constitution.
 - (b) Leaders can be known as President, Coordinators, etc
 - (c) Minimum licensed riders (key holders): 6 (each with own bike).
 - (d) No FULL patch holders / members under the age of 18.
 - (e) Minimum hang around period: 1 month (club to decide in terms of Constitution).
 - (f) Minimum prospect period: 3 months (club to decide in terms of Constitution).
 - (g) Minimum bike capacity: 400 cc.
 - (h) Colours must be approved and registered.
 - (I) This is a two piece, or a one-piece patch.

11.7. Motorcycle Ministry (MMC / MM)

- 11.7.1. Motorcycle Ministries, are clubs where the members are either members of the same church group or religious background sharing common ground in spreading the gospel as per their religion and must also comply with all the protocols pertaining to motorcycle clubs within the municipal boundaries of the MCN.
- 11.7.2. For the purpose of these protocols, a MMC / MM shall be considered as being on the same level as a SC/SMC and must therefore fulfil the same criteria as applicable to a SC/ SMC:
- (a) Must have a set of basic club rules or constitution.
 - (b) Leaders can be known as President, Coordinators, etc
 - (c) Minimum hang around period: 1 month (club to decide in terms of Constitution).
 - (d) Minimum prospect period: 3 months (club to decide in terms of Constitution).
 - (e) Minimum licensed riders (key holders): 6 (each with own bike).
 - (f) No FULL patch holders / members under the age of 18.
 - (g) Minimum Bike capacity: 250 cc.
 - (h) Colours must be approved and registered.
 - (I) This patch is a one-piece patch.
- 11.7.3. A Motorcycle Ministry can never be an MC/ MCC.

11.8. Brand Clubs/ Association

- 11.8.1. Groups/ Associations which are formed to accommodate members riding the same brand/ type of motorcycles, are also classified as Fraternal Clubs for the purpose of the protocols and are as such also subject to the protocols pertaining to motorcycle clubs within the municipal boundaries of the MCN.
- 11.8.2. Harley Owners group (HOG), the BMW Owners Group, etc. are examples of such groups.
- 11.8.3. Minimum licensed riders (key holders): 6 (each with own bike).
- 11.8.4. No FULL patch holders/ members under the age of 18.
- 11.8.5. This patch is a one-piece patch.
- 11.8.6. Can never be an MC or MCC.

11.8.7. Colours must be approved and registered

11.9. Typical Ranking Structure of a Motorcycle Club

11.9.1. President

The President is the leader of a chapter/club, and mostly established the club but can also be voted into this position or have it handed down from the previous President depending on the constitution of the respective club. Their power varies from club to club, either requiring a popular vote to have their wishes forwarded, or simply ordering members to complete them. Generally acts as the signatory for the club in legal contracts.

11.9.2. Vice-President

The Vice President is the second in command, and will lead in times where the President cannot (such as illness or incarceration). He is either voted into this position, or appointed by the President.

11.9.3. Sergeant-at-arms

Their basic role is to maintain discipline in the club and ensure the safety of the President and ranking members as well clubhouse and club security.

11.9.4. Secretary

The Secretary is best described as the bookkeeper of a club, and will maintain membership details, meeting minutes. The Secretary usually arranges club meetings. He / she is either voted into this position or appointed by the President.

11.9.5. Treasurer

The Treasurer handles the assets and financial records of the club. Club properties may be owned in the Treasurer's name. He may also sign legal contracts for the club. Either voted or appointed.

11.9.6. Road Captain

Responsible for road safety and organises routes for clubs to take when on outrides.

12. COMPLIANCE TO THE GUIDELINES

12.1. The compliance to the MCN guidelines will be monitored and enforced by a Motorcycle Orientation Task Team consisting of members affiliated to the MCN.