

## **Guidance to Observers on POWER (MPOWDER)**

POWER is the acronym used in ROADCRAFT to help remind police riders of the checks they are meant to carry out before riding motorcycles. This is especially important because they usually ride bikes taken from a pool and will rarely be riding the same bike as on their previous duty. Hence they do not have the familiarity and assurance that it is developed by riding the same bike all the time. By carrying out a full POWER check as per ROADCRAFT they ensure that the machines they ride are completely roadworthy and safe.

The current IAM Manual does not include POWER but does recommend that riders learn as much as they can about how a motorcycle works. Accordingly, the IAM test does not include any specific reference to POWER but “The examiner will look for” - “Does your machine appear to be well maintained?” and “Are its tyres in good condition and properly inflated” Obviously, during the test the examiner will also discover whether or not your lights and indicators are working.

It is accepted policy in most IAM Groups that POWER should be included as part of the “Skills for Life” programme. The acronym changes with different groups with many now accepting MPOWDER as the most appropriate. Because the amount of detail that is covered under each heading varies some guidelines are useful.

WHEN and HOW to put MPOWDER across.

We all have different methods but to try and cover the full and detailed MPOWDER during your first ride with an associate is not usually recommended. It will take a long time and non-technical riders will get easily bored and frustrated.

On your first ride, during the introductions and ice breaking sessions, the associate’s bike will frequently be discussed. Use this time to give it a good visual check and look for problem areas, especially the condition of the tyres and chain. (If these are bad, the rest of the bike will frequently be so too.)

At the appropriate time in your briefing introduce the acronym MPOWDER and go through the headings but then just select a couple to cover in more detail. Frequently these will be the essential “legal” ones of tyres and lights (especially brake lights) but may also include the chain if this is obviously not well maintained. Remember, some riders really are not “maintenance” aware and a gentle approach may be needed.

### **MPOWDER. (SIMPLE – IAM TEST STANDARD)**

1. Mirrors. Clean and set up correctly?
2. Petrol. Is there enough?
3. Oil. Is the associate happy that his machine is correctly oiled? Look for obvious leaks.
4. Water. If water cooled, is the associate happy that it is correctly filled? Look for obvious leaks.
5. Drive/ Damage. Check the drive chain – oiled and tension. Check for any damage that may interfere with the operation of the bike. (Legal implications.)

6. Electrics. Check all riding lights and warning devices are operating correctly.  
(Legal requirement)
7. Rubber. Check rider knows the correct tyre pressures and that the tyres are legal.  
(Legal requirement.)

If, having completed a simple MPOWDER you consider the bike is not roadworthy then you should not accompany the associate on a ride but advise him to rectify whatever faults have been noted.

For subsequent runs, the details of all the headings can be discussed in full as per the suggested content below so that by the end of the SFL programme all associates have a reasonable knowledge of how they should check and maintain their bikes.

### **MPOWDER (ROADCRAFT/POLICE/RoSPA DIPLOMA Standard)**

**MIRRORS** – clean and correctly adjusted.

**PETROL** – fuel gauge, visual inspect, trip meter

**OIL** – filling, checking, brake fluid, clutch fluid, pipes/banjoes (leaks), reservoirs (colour, levels), leaks.

**WATER** – coolant (front, rear), filling, radiator damage (visual check – **do not touch**), check under bike for leaks.

**DRIVE / DAMAGE** – condition and tension of chain or shaft seals as appropriate. Any damage to bike that could cause a danger.

**ELECTRICS** – Ignition on (**do not start**) – check idiot lights – **clutch in – start engine** - idiot lights off - headlight – main beam – passing beam – rear running lights – indicators – hazards (if fitted) – hand brake – foot brake – horn – (rear wheel down, ask help) – turn handlebars (free movement in headstock bearings, trapped cables / hoses, different engine noise) - emergency cut off switch.

**RUBBER** – (rear wheel down, ask for help) – **Front tyre** – 1 complete rotation by hand using side wall only, bulges – cuts – foreign bodies – tread depth – pressure. **Rear tyre** - 1 complete rotation by hand using side wall only, bulges – cuts – foreign bodies – tread depth – pressure.