Safe driving

Ensuring all workers operating or travelling in any road vehicle, while at work or on their way to or from work, are suitably fit and capable, and demonstrate low-risk driving behaviours.

Note: This is a reformatted version of the procedure last published in March 2013 with some minor changes (refer to the change history). The procedure is under review.
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Introduction

Purpose

Rocks and Maritime Services is committed to the health and wellbeing of all its workers and others. A safe and healthy workplace is the right of every worker.

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure drivers comply with NSW road rules and drive safely when operating any light or heavy Roads and Maritime fleet vehicle.

All workers operating or travelling in any road vehicle, while at work or on their way to or from work, must demonstrate low-risk driving behaviours (LRDBs).

LRDBs include:

- Planning the road trip – to allow sufficient time for travel and work commitments
- Ensuring that you are physically fit and competent to drive the vehicle
- Taking appropriate rest breaks and/or planning to stay overnight
- Ensuring the vehicle is roadworthy before commencing travel
- Driving to the road conditions – being alert, scanning for potential hazards, managing speed and position of the vehicle, so as to reduce the likelihood of a crash
- Exhibiting courteous driving behaviour to all other road users (including pedestrians and cyclists).

Scope

This procedure covers all workplaces and includes:

- Workers
- Others who carry out work for Roads and Maritime or who are likely to be directly affected by safety issues in connection with work-related driving (such as visitors).

All workers, whether a driver or a passenger, must comply with this procedure. Industry partners are required to have in place an equivalent procedure for managing risks associated with workers engaged in work-related driving.

General requirements

Drivers of light or heavy Roads and Maritime vehicles must hold the appropriate current licence and drive safely to reduce any potential risks to their health and safety. Managers and workers must take necessary precautions to prevent and effectively manage potential hazards and risks, during work-related driving.

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1 See Definitions, worker
2 See Definitions, driver
3 See Definitions, workplace
4 See Definitions, manager
This procedure documents and explains:

- Hazard identification
- Risk control measures
- Capability and training requirements
- Fatigue management
- Operating under red and blue emergency states
- Towing trailers and other items.

**Consultation**

Managers must consult with their workers whenever there is a work health and safety (WHS) issue related to driving. When driving is identified as a potential workplace hazard, appropriate risk control measures must be used to eliminate or minimise workers' exposure to the hazards.

**Risk management**

Managers, workers and others must identify and assess potential risks that may arise at workplaces or while driving for work. Once the risks associated with driving are identified, appropriate methods must be taken to eliminate risk exposure or minimise the risks. Managers should refer to the WHS risk management procedure when doing this.
Safe driving

1 Hazard identification

Managers must consult with workers to identify potential WHS risk exposures as a result of undertaking work related driving.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors to consider include:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Past experience</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Answering YES increases the risk.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there any evidence of:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- A significant number of road accidents at a particular location?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Other drivers having been involved in accidents resulting from the same or similar type of work or work-related driving?</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Complaints about the driving style of particular drivers?</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Passengers being afraid to report unsafe driving practices?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- A tendency for drivers to demonstrate poor care of vehicles or inadequate routine vehicle checks?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work environment factors</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Answering YES increases the risk.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is driving required at night or in poor weather conditions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the road unsealed or of poor quality?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the road busy, narrow, with large or long vehicles or present with many road side hazards?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the road subject to extreme conditions such as snow, ice, extreme heat, flood, fog, or bushfires?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the road have many blind spots?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do stock or wildlife use the road as a crossing or graze on unfenced land beside the road?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Answering YES increases the risk.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the driver unfamiliar with the specific operating features of the vehicle?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are work patterns likely to make a driver fatigued?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Answering NO increases the risk.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Does the driver know about the effects of alcohol and drugs, fatigue and distractions including phone use and how they affect their capacity to operate vehicles safely?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 2 Risk control measures

Managers and their workers must aim to eliminate (where practicable) or minimise potential hazards while driving vehicles. Examples of risk control measures include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk control guide</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **ELIMINATE**      | ▪ Remove the hazard from the workplace.  
 ▪ Do not use unsafe vehicles\(^5\).  
 ▪ Remove unsafe vehicles from available pool. |
| **SUBSTITUTE**     | ▪ Change equipment or materials  
 ▪ Replace or change plant, substances or materials to lower the risk from the hazard  
 ▪ Assign vehicles to suit work needs (eg 4WD for off-road)  
 ▪ Design and install equipment to counteract the hazard:  
   ▪ Fit cargo barriers to wagons and vans (AS4034)  
   ▪ Ensure hands-free kits for mobile phones available  
   ▪ Use vehicles with added safety features, such as ABS; driver, passenger and side airbags; climate control. |
| **ISOLATE**        | ▪ No relevant controls available |
| **ENGINEER**       | ▪ No relevant controls available |
| **TRAINING & ADMIN** | ▪ Plan long-distance trips, take into account travel time, rest breaks and work to be done  
 ▪ Ensure maintenance standards and schedules in place for every vehicle  
 ▪ Drive with headlights on  
 ▪ Conduct driver check before driving vehicle for first time  
 ▪ Conduct competency checks and ‘type rating’ for specific vehicle types required for higher risk work  
 ▪ Review driver licence status at scheduled intervals  
 ▪ Ensure procedures in place to respond safely to breakdowns, collisions and other safety occurrences  
 ▪ Ensure information about effective management of vehicle breakdown is readily available  
 ▪ Ensure procedures in place to analyse collision and near miss data to establish underlying causes and key contributing factors  
 ▪ Establish an education program, training and continuous improvement for all staff to improve road user behaviour. |
| **PPE**            | ▪ First aid kits  
 ▪ High visibility vests  
 ▪ Reflector triangles  
 ▪ Sunglasses. |

\(^5\) Roads and Maritime intranet only: Light Motor Vehicle Policy
3 Fatigue management

Organisational factors
Working for extended periods of time may cause fatigue. Managers must be aware of the workloads placed on workers to ensure they do not place themselves at an added risk while driving. To help manage the work factors that lead to fatigue, managers should:
- Ensure work involving extended driving periods takes account of the span of hours to be worked in that shift and relevant work patterns
- Ensure work is done as much as possible within normal working hours
- Monitor workloads and working hours, including driving time, to minimise the effects of accumulated fatigue
- Encourage drivers to
  - Plan in advance any work that requires extended driving
  - Schedule regular rest breaks for periods of extended driving
  - Sleep over in motels where necessary
  - Consider video conferencing, where practical.

Sleep
The quality and duration of sleep affects alertness at work. If a person is deprived of sleep (continuous sleep for less than seven hours per night), they will suffer from the effects of fatigue at a quicker rate than a person who has had adequate sleep.

To improve the quality of sleep, consider the following:
- maintain room temperature between 18 and 24°C to provide optimal sleep conditions
- use heavy curtains or blinds to reduce the amount of light in the bedroom
- use earplugs or other methods to cut down external noise.

Alcohol
Too much alcohol affects a person's natural sleep patterns and inhibits certain phases of sleep.

Food
Foods high in fat or sugar (such as processed foods) decrease the level of chemicals in the body that maintain alertness. Consider avoiding the following foods if you are already tired:
- fatty meats
- sweet pastries or cakes
- full fat dairy products
- potato or corn chips
- pizza
- any other greasy, fatty or 'junk food'

Low-fat protein foods can help make you feel more alert.

Water
Water is essential in maintaining bodily hydration levels. If you are dehydrated, your body conserves what water is left by reducing your activity to relax you and slow you down. This makes you more fatigued.

Caffeine
Caffeine is a known stimulant available in many common drinks. To maximise caffeine's effectiveness, consider:
- Avoiding caffeinated drinks first thing in the morning, as the body is naturally waking up, or when you are not tired, as this contributes to an increased caffeine tolerance.
- Avoid caffeinated drinks a few hours before going to sleep, as they may affect the quality of sleep that night and make it harder to stay awake the following day.

All heavy vehicle operators must comply with National Heavy Vehicle Driver Fatigue laws that apply to fatigue-regulated heavy vehicles.

All heavy vehicle operators have a primary duty of care to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that no heavy vehicle is driven by a fatigue-impaired person.
4 Capability and training

Managers must provide workers with sufficient information to assist them to drive safely when driving vehicles. A training needs analysis should be undertaken to identify specific training required in relation to the risks associated with the work.

Minimum information to be provided to workers

The ‘Get connected’ induction
The Roads and Maritime induction, Get connected, provides targeted information to managers and workers about the policies and procedures on reducing injury among road users. It includes:

- Requirements of this and related procedures
- Legal BAC and drug limits and the effects of alcohol and drugs on driving performance
- Strategies for dealing with fatigue and stress while driving
- Tips and techniques for safe driving:
  - In adverse weather
  - On poorly maintained roads
  - At night
  - In rural areas.

Fleet induction
Fleet induction must be provided to all workers required to drive. It may incorporate:

- How to plan driving trips and perform safety checks
- The requirements for reporting vehicle damage
- Familiarisation with different vehicle makes and types.

Specific training
Specific training on low-risk driving strategies may be required. A combination of work factors and workplace environmental factors could place workers at a greater risk of injury. Specific training provides drivers with practical skills necessary to accomplish specific driving tasks and so reduce the risk of being involved in an accident.

This training can also be used to target specific needs identified in an occurrence analysis and to help correct a driver’s skills and behaviour, where necessary.

Specific training can:

- Provide skills to drive vehicles in a high-risk environment, such as:
  - Off-road or difficult terrain
  - Towing and maneuvering trailers
  - On snow or icy roads
  - In flooded road conditions.

- Correct unsafe driving techniques associated with, but not limited to:
  - Cornering
  - Tail-gaiting
  - Lane-changing
  - Overtaking
  - Braking.
5 Driving under red-and-blue emergency status

Roads and Maritime undertakes a number of operations that require authorised drivers to drive under red-and-blue emergency vehicle status. This is called a priority response. Workers who engage in priority responses include traffic commanders and traffic emergency patrollers. When responding to road emergencies drivers must comply with the NSW road rules and drive using low-risk techniques.

### Emergency status

#### What is an emergency?

An emergency is a road or traffic occurrence which, as determined by the Transport Management Centre, has:

- Created a major safety or traffic problem, or
- Requires a priority response (the immediate deployment of traffic control and traffic management resources).

#### Conditions and limitations for priority response authorisation

A priority response may only be undertaken by a traffic emergency patroller or traffic commander.

It must be:

- Authorised by the General Manager, Transport Management Centre
- In a vehicle with emergency vehicle status
- Undertaken with permission given by the Transport Management Centre Chief Traffic Operations Controller (CTOC) for a specific occurrence.

**Important:**

- Authorised Roads and Maritime priority response drivers are not authorised to exceed the speed limit.
- Authorised Roads and Maritime priority response drivers may only proceed through a red light after stopping with lights flashing and where the occurrence has been identified as life-threatening.
- Permission to drive under priority response is valid only for driving in the affected traffic zone.

#### Priority response permission

Permission to drive under priority response is only given:

- Where traffic movement is significantly affected by an occurrence
- Following confirmation that the:
  - Driver is willing and authorised
  - Vehicle has emergency status.
- Following a risk assessment which takes account of the:
  - Nature of the occurrence
  - Traffic conditions, such as heavy traffic or high speed
  - Weather conditions, such as heavy rain and fog
  - Road conditions, such as access to breakdown lanes
  - Experience and competence of driver under the prevailing conditions.

Risk assessments must be recorded as part of the occurrence record.

Traffic commanders may use their own discretion in priority response driving, but only after discussion with the CTOC and a risk assessment is recorded.

Traffic commanders may provide information to the CTOC which recommends granting or withdrawing permission for authorised traffic emergency patrollers to drive under priority response.
6 Towing trailers or other items

Many Roads and Maritime workplaces require workers to tow a vehicle or trailer as part of their work. These include:

- boating safety officers (BSOs)
- Vehicle regulation inspectors
- Traffic commanders
- Traffic emergency patrollers
- Road and Fleet Services workers
- Other Roads and Maritime work areas.

There are work health and safety risks associated with towing so managers must:

- Identify if towing activities are necessary
- Ensure workers are appropriately trained and competent to tow.

Factors that must be considered when towing:

- Weight loading for the item being towed
- Tyre pressures of the towing vehicle and the item being towed
- Suitability of the connection and securing mechanisms of the towing vehicle and the item being towed
- Driver competency (skills) and capability (for example, fatigue)
- Route (destination, road conditions, distance, access/egress)
- Need for means of effectively communicating with a secondary driver.

Towing vessels by NSW Maritime Division personnel

BSOs may be required to tow vessels on trailers as part of their work. The size and type of vessels range from 300 kilograms for PWCs to 3,000 kilograms for large cabin vessels. Towing times vary from 30 minutes to eight hours.

Vessels may be towed on all road surfaces and under all weather conditions, at day and night. Requirements include towing from ramp to ramp or within city locations.

When planning to tow, BSOs must consider:

- Dimensions (size) of the towing vehicle
- Dimensions of the vessel being towed
- Environmental conditions (rain, wind), current and forecast
- Expected tow duration.
### Roles and responsibilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Roads and Maritime (managed from executive to the front line) must: | - Comply with and ensure that systems are in place to manage potential work health and safety risks to workers from work-related driving  
- Ensure work health and safety responsibilities are appropriately defined and appropriate resources (including financial and time) are provided to ensure effective hazard and risk management for workers. |
| Managers must:                            | - Identify potential risks to workers from work-related driving  
- Consult with their workers to identify work health and safety issues relevant to their driving needs  
- Implement measures to eliminate driving related risks, so far as is reasonably practicable  
- Establish appropriate strategies to eliminate identified trends in unsafe road use. This may include driver training or reviewing a driver’s authority to operate a vehicle  
- Ensure all managers and workers receive an induction in road user safety  
- Provide access to ongoing education, awareness and training  
- Review a driver’s ability every three years for drivers regularly operating in high-risk driving conditions. |
| Drivers must:                             | - Drive and control road vehicles in a way that complies with the NSW road rules and in accordance with Roads and Maritime policy and guidelines  
- Plan road trips to minimise safety risks to self, passengers and other road users  
- Become familiar with the particular vehicle before driving it  
- Report any vehicle problems  
- Report all injury and damage occurrences, including near misses, to the WHS reporting line. |
| Fleet managers must:                      | - Ensure appropriate light and heavy vehicles are provided for the required use and that they conform to relevant safety standards  
- Consult with drivers when selecting specialised vehicles or plant  
- Ensure vehicles are maintained according to manufacturer requirements  
- Maintain complete records of maintenance, damage and usage of each vehicle  
- Ensure drivers have appropriate information and equipment to safely assist with a road occurrence. |
## Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BAC</td>
<td>Blood alcohol concentration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driver</td>
<td>Implies a worker driving (in control of) a light or heavy vehicle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatigue-related heavy vehicle</td>
<td>A fatigue-related heavy vehicle is a:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Vehicle with a gross vehicle mass (GVM) over 12 tonnes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Vehicle combination when the GVM is over 12 tonnes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Bus with a GVM over 4.5 tonnes, fitted to carry more than 12 adults (including the driver)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Truck, or combination including a truck, with a GVM over 12 tonnes and with a machine or implement attached.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazard</td>
<td>A situation, condition or source that has the potential to lead to negative consequences, harm or loss. A hazard is not the negative outcome itself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazard management</td>
<td>A problem-solving process aimed at defining problems (identifying hazards), gathering information about them (risk assessment) and solving them (risk control). This is followed up by checking to see that the controls were successful (evaluation) and reviewing the whole process (review) after a period of time or when something changes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LRDB</td>
<td>Low risk driving behaviours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>A person responsible for planning and directing the work of a worker or group of workers, monitoring their work, and taking corrective action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occurrence</td>
<td>A series of events and conditions that results in, or has the potential to result in, a non-trivial amount of injury or damage. An occurrence that could have resulted in damage or injury but did not is generally referred to as a near-miss.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passenger</td>
<td>Implies a worker travelling in, but not driving, a light or heavy vehicle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PWC</td>
<td>Personal water craft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk</td>
<td>The possibility of suffering harm or loss.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk management</td>
<td>Risk management is the identification, assessment, and prioritisation of risks (defined in ISO 31000 as the effect of uncertainty on objectives) followed by coordinated application of resources to eliminate, minimise, monitor, and control the probability and impact of hazardous events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHS reporting line</td>
<td>The Roads and Maritime 24-hour telephone service for reporting hazards and occurrences (1300 131 469).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worker</td>
<td>Any person who carries out work in any capacity at a Roads and Maritime workplace – Roads and Maritime employees (including labour hire, apprentices and trainees); professional services contractors and consultants; contractors, subcontractors and their employees; outworkers; students gaining work experience and volunteers. In the context of this procedure workers can be drivers or passengers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace</td>
<td>A place where work is carried out for Roads and Maritime’s business or undertaking and includes any place where a worker goes or is likely to be, while at work (including in vehicles).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Doc no</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PN066P02</td>
<td>Procedure WHS risk management</td>
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<tr>
<td>PN219</td>
<td>RMS Light Motor Vehicle Policy</td>
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<td>PN219P</td>
<td>RMS Light Motor Vehicle Procedure</td>
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Document control

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Change history

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<th>Issue</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<td>2.2</td>
<td>1/9/17</td>
<td>Updated links. No other changes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>25/7/16</td>
<td>- Reformatted to current WHS procedure template</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Updated terminology and definitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Updated poor or incorrect wording</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Aligned suggested risk control measures to each control level in the hierarchy of controls</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Improved layout of all tables</td>
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<td>2.0</td>
<td>5/3/13</td>
<td>No change history information available</td>
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Feedback

Contact WHS Branch with feedback on this document at: onermssms@rms.nsw.gov.au