

1. STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE CERTIFICATION

Procedure title:	Light and Road Going Vehicle Use Procedure
SOP number:	154
Classification / Business Unit:	Work Health & Safety
Date:	9 December 2014
Status:	APPROVED

2. INTRODUCTION / SCOPE

The purpose of this procedure is to define the requirements for Roper Gulf owned light and road going vehicle use, journey management and off site travel by all Roper Gulf Employees and Contractors. The procedure applies to drivers of Roper Gulf vehicles within Roper Gulf boundaries and driving outside of Roper Gulf boundaries on work related business, including travelling to and from work. This procedure does not apply to council members using vehicles provided by Roper Gulf as part of their council duties.

3. THE PROCEDURE

Exceptions

Any employee required to operate a vehicle for Roper Gulf that cannot meet the conditions of this procedure must be documented and an exemption approved by the Chief Executive Officer.

An exemption will only be granted under the following conditions:

1. Employee’s current drivers licence attached to exemption form; **and**
2. Practical assessment of employee’s unsealed road/4WD skills by designated person; **and**
3. Employee has signed off to confirm they have read, understood and will comply with this procedure.

Employees are not allowed to drive on unsealed roads without training unless an exemption signed by the Chief Executive Officer is in place for each individual. Refer to *SOP 201 - WHS Exemption Procedure* for how to apply for an exemption.

Training and Competency Requirements

All personnel that are required to drive a Roper Gulf light and road going vehicle must be deemed competent, authorised to drive and shall comply with the following:

- Hold a current full class C Australian Driver’s License (or equivalent) that has been valid for 2 years or more;
- Probationary license holders are permitted to drive Roper Gulf light vehicles within 50km of a site. An exemption to this prohibition can only be granted in writing by the Chief Executive Officer or in an emergency situation such as the preservation of life or property.
- Learner license holders are prohibited from driving Roper Gulf vehicles unless it’s use is in conjunction with an official Roper Gulf driver training program e.g. RJCP Driver Training
- Employees commencing employment with Roper Gulf from overseas or interstate who have a current motor vehicle licence from another country are required to transfer their licence to a Northern Territory “C” class motor vehicle licence within 3 months of commencing employment.

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- Employees have 6 months from commencement date to complete minimum training requirements outlined in Table 2.1. All Roper Gulf light and road going vehicle courses shall be facilitated by an approved provider.
- Employees travelling to a site for the first time must be escorted by an employee who has current training competency and is experienced travelling that route.

Light vehicle training certification will remain current for three years after which time re-certification or verification of competency will be required.

Individuals may apply for recognition of prior learning through the Training department for driver qualifications obtained prior to joining Roper Gulf.

Table 2.1 - Competency based training

Course	Target Group	Outcome	Pre-Requisites	Accepted Units
Operate a four wheel drive on unsealed roads	Any person required to drive on an unsealed road outside of a site	Provide participants with the skills and knowledge required to use appropriate range, gear and techniques to drive a four wheel drive vehicle through and over a variety of terrain types	Current and Valid D/L	Any one of the following nationally recognised units are acceptable: FPICOT3259 Operate a four wheel drive on unsealed roads SISODRV302A Drive and recover a 4WD vehicle
Perform complex 4x4 operations	Any person who may be required to perform complex four-wheel drive (4x4) vehicle operations, including operations over rugged terrain and water crossings	Provide participants with the skills and knowledge required to perform 4x4 operations over water crossings and rugged terrain safely and in line with organisational requirements	Current and Valid D/L Operate a four wheel drive on unsealed roads	Any one of the following nationally recognised units are acceptable: FPIFGM3215 Perform complex 4x4 operations

Disqualification

In the event that a driver loses his/her license for any reason, they must notify their supervisor immediately and forfeit all Roper Gulf driving privileges.

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Safe Use of Roper Gulf Light and Road Going Vehicles

Minimum Vehicle and Operating Safety Standards

Vehicle selection shall take account of tasks, application, environment, roll-over and crash worthiness. Non 4WD light vehicles (excluding buses) should not be used for travel to and from Barunga, Beswick, Borroloola, Bulman, Jilkminggan, Manyalluk, Ngukurr or Numbulwar. 4WD vehicles should always be selected for travel to any location accessible by single lane highway or unsealed road (i.e. Central Arnhem Road, Carpentaria Highway, and Roper Highway)

General Rules

When operating a Roper Gulf light or road going vehicle the following rules apply:

- Smoking is prohibited in all Roper Gulf vehicles.
- Driving while under the influence of drugs or alcohol is strictly prohibited.
- Where an employee is taking medication or has a medical condition that may affect their ability to operate machinery or drive a vehicle, it is their responsibility to relay this information to their immediate supervisor.
- A 'Lights-on' Policy is mandatory at all times.
- Northern Territory road rules must be adhered to at all times.
- Drivers must be conscious of the conditions and adjust their speed accordingly.

Vehicle Maintenance

All Roper Gulf vehicles must:

- Be regularly maintained and kept in a safe and tidy condition. All minor maintenance such as oil/water levels, refuelling and cleaning are the responsibility of the Department or the allocated driver.
- Have a Light Vehicle Prestart Checklist completed as follows:
 - Private Use Vehicles – Weekly before the first journey of the calendar week
 - All Other Vehicles – Daily before the first journey of the day
 - Private use and all other vehicles - As per Journey Management requirements below
 - Vehicle prestarts are to be submitted to the relevant manager for review weekly
- It is the responsibility of the department head to ensure these occur. Safety faults found during the inspection must be reported immediately to your Supervisor.

Drivers are responsible to advise their Supervisor if the due service kilometre mark has been reached.

Vehicle Fuelling

Diesel powered vehicles should wherever possible be refuelled from the Roper Gulf bowsers. Where fuel and oil purchases are made, they should be made utilising the appropriate corporate charge card.

Where required odometer readings must be reported when refuelling vehicles.

Vehicle Breakdown

In the event of a vehicle breakdown your Department Manager must be notified, this includes breakdowns occurring outside normal business hours. Arrangements will then be determined to recover the vehicle. In the event of breakdown, becoming bogged or other situation that prevents drivers from reaching their destination, they are to remain with the vehicle.

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Vehicle Accidents

All vehicle accidents must be reported immediately to your manager. This includes if the accident occurs after hours.

An employee should not admit liability if involved in a vehicle accident, even if the employee believes they are at fault. Investigation into accidents will take place in line with the ordinary Roper Gulf Investigation procedure.

Carrying Passengers

Carriage of family members outside the Private Use conditions in the Vehicle Use Policy, and carriage of any passengers for non RGRC purposes must be approved in writing by the responsible Director prior to commencement of the journey.

Journey Management Planning

Notice of intention to travel is required in **ALL** situations; however the method of notification varies according to the level of risk involved with the journey.

Travel within 50kms of the Origin

Drivers are required to:

- If one hasn't been performed, complete a daily Light Vehicle Prestart Checklist on the vehicle.
- Inform Supervisor of your intention to travel.

Travel Greater Than 50kms from the Origin

Drivers are required to:

- Check Road Conditions for the route of travel <http://www.ntlis.nt.gov.au/roadreport/>
- Ensure they have at least one of the following fully charged and/or in working order prior to departure:
 - EPIRB / SPOT GPS tracker
 - Satellite telephone (where no means of communication is available at the end of the journey or other traffic is unlikely in the area); plus a method of recharging the phone battery.
 - Alternative contact methods such as HF/UHF radio.
- Ensure knowledge of the latest information regarding road conditions and that someone at the destination is expecting your arrival.
- Complete Journey Management Form. This form is to be lodged with your Supervisor (or nominated delegate).
- Complete a Light Vehicle Prestart Checklist including off-site travel section for the vehicle.
- Submit completed Journey Management Form and Prestart Check to Supervisor or nominated delegate.
- Upon arriving at the destination:
 - Inform your Supervisor or nominated delegate of your safe arrival; **and**
 - Inform the Council Service Manager of your arrival if travelling to community

Driver Behaviour

Mobile Phones and other portable media devices

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Mobile phones and other portable media devices shall NOT be used whilst operating vehicles unless a hands free kit is installed in the vehicle. Vehicle operators who are required to use a mobile phone shall pull off the road to a safe position prior to use.

Driver Fatigue

All employees shall comply with fatigue management requirements outlined below:

- Maximum driving between rest stops or between driver changes is two hours.
- The maximum working time per 24 hours shall not exceed 14 hours, including travel time.
- Rest periods between shifts shall be at least 10 hours.

Night Driving

Driving at night or in the hours of darkness should be avoided. Drivers shall exercise extreme caution when driving at night due to the presence of livestock and wildlife along the roadway.

All vehicles required to travel at night shall be fitted with auxiliary driving lights.

Disciplinary action

Employees found in breach of the rules stated in this document will be subject to disciplinary action and approval to drive Roper Gulf vehicles in the future may be revoked.

Breaches of this Guideline by employees and their immediate family, who drive a Roper Gulf benefit vehicle outside of working hours and Roper Gulf boundaries or on paid/unpaid leave, may result in the suspension or removal of the benefit vehicle entitlement.

Unsealed Roads

If you will be driving on unsealed roads you must have the vehicle in 4WD, this includes manually locking the hubs (if applicable).

Crossing Rivers/Flood Ways

Employees are not to attempt a crossing if water levels are 0.4 meters or higher or if employees believe that doing so is not safe.

Emergency Response

Emergency response (as outlined in Appendix 1) shall be initiated in any of the following scenarios:

- If a driver fails to arrive or make contact within 1 hour of their stated arrival/scheduled call in time.
- Other notification is received that an incident has occurred

The following is a high level description of common activities.

Verify alarm

Once the alarm has been raised, it is the Department Manager role to attempt to verify the emergency.

In the event that a driver goes missing, attempts shall be made to contact that employee using contact details listed on the Journey Management Form. The Department Manager (or nominated delegate) shall call the employee's home telephone and mobile every 15 minutes until initial contact is made.

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The Department Manager (or nominated delegate) should physically check the employee’s house, Roper Gulf offices and any other location that, to their best knowledge, the employee may be at. The Department Manager shall then immediately notify local Police of the potential for a possible missing person.

Response

The Department Manager is responsible for alerting the appropriate public emergency response unit (Police, Fire, Ambulance). All external responses are the responsibility of the appropriate external agencies, however where appropriate assistance shall be provided.

Other Roper Gulf personnel or contractors travelling the same route as the missing person/s should be requested to assist with any search.

If it is appropriate, vehicles may be sent from the departure point and proposed destination in an attempt to find the missing vehicle. **NOTE:** - This will be coordinated by the Department Manager in a structured manner.

Investigate

Investigation into the incident will take place in line with the ordinary Roper Gulf Investigation procedure.

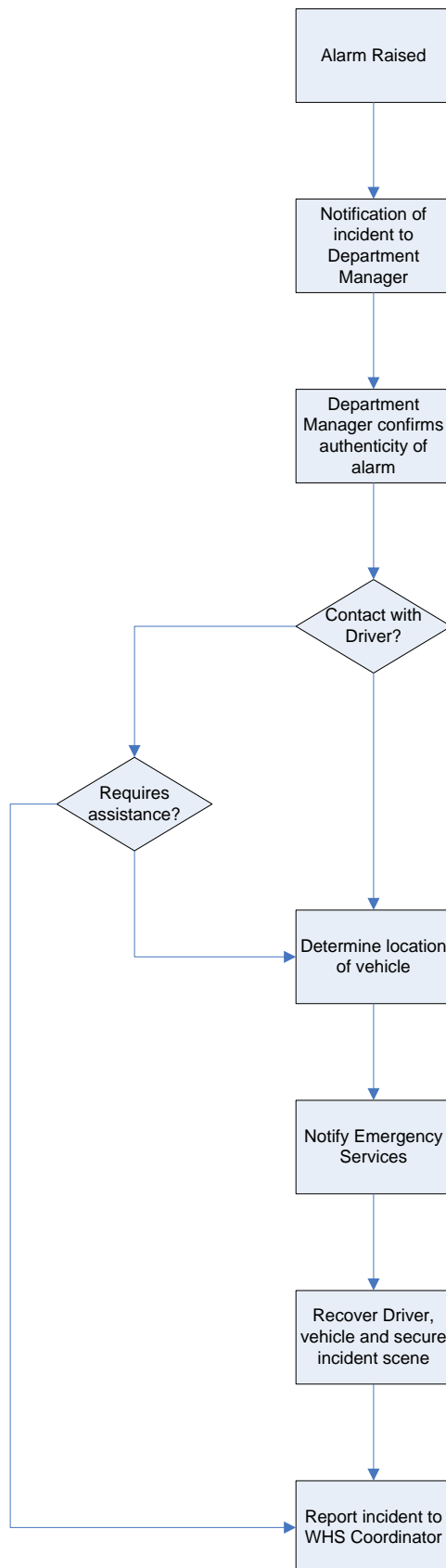
4. DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

TERM	DESCRIPTION
Approved Provider	A training provider that meets minimum Roper Gulf training provider requirements.
Off Site Travel	Off site travel is travel to and from Katherine, Barunga, Beswick, Borroloola, Bulman, Jilkminggan, Manyallaluk, Mataranka, Minyerri, Ngukurr, Numbulwar, and Robinson River. Offsite travel includes where work is performed at a location outside of town boundaries for any of the above.
Work Location	Locations outside of the recognised sites. This includes any location which does not have permanent communication infrastructure.
Private Use Vehicles	Refers to the use of fleet vehicles for non-business purposes. It generally includes travel to and from work.
Shall and should	The word “shall” is to be understood as mandatory and the word “should” as recommended but non-mandatory.
Site	A site is an operational base. Specifically Barunga, Beswick, Borroloola, Bulman, Jilkminggan, Manyallaluk, Mataranka, Minyerri, Ngukurr, Numbulwar, Robinson River; 29 Crawford Street, Chardon Street, Emungalan Road and Victoria Highway depots in Katherine.

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5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Emergency Response Flowchart



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6. REFERENCES / DOCUMENTS

Related Policies and Procedures	ADM009 - Vehicle Use Policy 107-022 Light Vehicle Checklist 107-002 Journey Management Form SOP 201 WHS Exemption Procedure
Related Publications	
Other Relevant Documentation	
Next revision due	May 2016

7. CONTACT PERSON

Contact person **Matthew Galloway**

Position **Work Health & Safety Coordinator**

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