

GOV009 – Vehicle Use Policy

1. POLICY CERTIFICATION

Policy title:	Vehicle Use Policy
Policy number:	009
Category:	Policy
Classification:	Governance
Status:	Approved

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines to employees on general principles and standards of use and care associated with the operation of Roper Gulf Regional Council motor vehicles. The policy is intended to ensure:

- the integrity, reliability and good performance of RGRC motor vehicles;
- that the motor vehicle is appropriately managed.

The policy also aims to set rules and parameters for Roper Gulf Regional Council’s staff in how and what vehicles are procured and used.

3. ORGANISATIONAL SCOPE

This policy shall apply to any driver of any vehicle owned, leased or under the control of Roper Gulf Regional Council.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

The Mayor, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Directors and Managers shall be provided with a vehicle as per their employment contract or equivalent agreement.

The authorised driver of a specific vehicle shall be a driver authorised under a specific employment contract, staff or councillor of the Roper Gulf Regional Council who has an appropriate driving licence and a record of which is on the personnel files of the person to which the vehicle has been assigned.

Vehicles provided to authorised drivers will be safe, reliable, fit for purpose and cost-effective. Staff are to expect adequate access to fleet vehicles to allow them to safely and effectively perform their professional duties.

Roper Gulf Regional Council will ensure that staff are never required to use their private motor vehicles to perform their professional duties.

5. DEFINITIONS

Employment Conditions	The terms and conditions as defined in a contract staff’s employment contract.
Fleet Vehicles	Refers to all vehicles owned or controlled by Roper Gulf Regional Council that are designed to carry passengers and / freight on public roads.
Fleet Pool	A grouping of vehicles that may be used commonly by a group of staff, as defined by location or program. The management of a fleet

GOV009 – Vehicle Use Policy

	pool shall be coordinated centrally by a designated officer.
Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT)	Tax levied on benefits obtained by employees in respect of their employment.
FBT Log Book period	Means a continuous period of at least 12 weeks when a vehicle is used for average business use (it should not be a period chosen because of maximum business) for which special log books are used as basis for FBT calculations.
Log Books	Books used to record details of all trips undertaken including the driver's name, journey date, starting and ending odometer readings and purpose of the journey.
Personal use	Refers to the use of fleet vehicles for non-business purposes. It generally includes travel to and from work.
PCA Offences	Prescribed Concentration of Alcohol Offences: Driver / Attempted Driver drives or attempts to drive a motor vehicle on a road or road related area with a Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) and/or Breath Alcohol Concentration (BrAC) which contravenes the conditions of their drivers licence, as listed in Part V of the <i>Traffic Act</i> .
PID Offences	Prescribed Illicit Drug Offences: Driver / Attempted Driver drives or attempts to drive a motor vehicle on a road or road related area whilst under the influence of a prohibited drug as listed in Schedule 1A of the <i>Traffic Regulations</i>
Reserve vehicles	Vehicles that are not directly assigned to a specific function or staff position
RGRC	Roper Gulf Regional Council
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure

6. PRINCIPLES

6.1 Approved Drivers

Employees and Elected Members of the RGRC who are required to operate a RGRC vehicle in the performance of their duties must be in possession of a valid Australian driver's licence. Staff must provide a copy of the driver's licence to the Human Resources (HR) to be put in their personal file. Elected Members must provide a copy of the driver's licence to the Governance and Corporate Planning Manager to be put in their personal file.

Drivers will be required to undergo four-wheel drive (4WD) training before being authorised to drive off-bitumen, and/or in remote areas.

If at any time the licence of an approved driver expires or is revoked, or the driver is otherwise disqualified from driving, it is the responsibility of the driver to inform their supervisor immediately. They will not be entitled to drive a RGRC vehicle until their licence is reinstated.

Staff members who fail to declare licence suspensions/cancellations to their supervisors and HR, and proceed to drive RGRC motor vehicles will not only commit offences, but will have their failure to declare matters dealt with as serious misconduct.

6.2 Elected Members who fail to declare licence suspensions/cancellations to the CEO and Governance and Corporate Planning Manager, and proceed to drive RGRC motor vehicles

will not only commit offences, but will have their failure to declare matters dealt with as serious misconduct. Use of Council Vehicles

6.2.1 Official use of RGRC Motor Vehicles

All drivers of RGRC vehicles must ensure that they exercise the utmost diligence when driving a RGRC vehicle. Drivers need to ensure that they observe all applicable laws, RGRC policies, as well as the manufacturer's recommendations as set out in the vehicle's manual.

Drivers need to be mindful that they represent RGRC whilst driving a RGRC vehicle, and must not drive, or otherwise operate a RGRC vehicle in a manner which may damage the reputation and standing of RGRC.

Drivers need to ensure that they complete all applicable paperwork such as logbooks and prestart checks as required.

Drivers must ensure that they comply with all applicable safety requirements, and do not drive a RGRC vehicle if they suspect the vehicle to be unsafe due to damage, lack of maintenance, or other reasons.

Drivers need to comply with RGRC safety provisions and ensure that they have a working satellite telephone, adequate water, and met the Journey Management requirements before commencing a journey to a remote area.

All RGRC vehicles must contain a First Aid Kit. A RGRC vehicle must not be driven if it does not carry a First Aid Kit, and it is the responsibility of the driver to ensure that they inspect the vehicle to confirm the presence of a First Aid Kit before driving the vehicle.

Drivers must ensure that they report all actual and suspected damage, and maintenance issues to their supervisors and workshop staff, and that they remove all rubbish from the vehicle once they have finished using it.

6.2.2 Authorised Private use of Vehicles

A person who has private use of a vehicle as part of their employment contract can use their vehicle for private use. RGRC recognises that where an employee is granted full private use of a vehicle, this vehicle in many cases becomes that employee's family vehicle. Accordingly, such employee are entitled to grant permission to drive the vehicle whilst on private use provided such person(s) hold a current driver's licence and is:

- the partner of the employee who permanently resides with the employee, or
- another suitably licensed person where employee and/or employee's partner is the passenger in the vehicle.

Employees authorised to have private use of vehicles are allowed to transport alcohol but cannot make any deliveries for other people. Private vehicle users are to comply with the *Liquor Act*, and all applicable alcohol restrictions, and it is to be remembered that responsibility prevails when carrying alcohol within the Roper Gulf Region. It is also to be remembered that the driver's Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) whilst driving a motor vehicle cannot exceed .05% (meaning 500mg/100ml of blood volume). Any conviction for Prescribed Concentration of Alcohol (PCA) or Prescribed Illicit Drug (PID) offences which occur in a RGRC vehicle will result in disciplinary action.

RGRC vehicles are not permitted to compete in any car rally or competition, or be used for any commercial purpose outside of the RGRC's own operations. Where employees have full private use of a Four Wheel Drive vehicle, only appropriate recreational use of the vehicle is permitted. Appropriate off road use can be defined as utilising the vehicle only where access is provided by either a marked track/trail (e.g. camping

GOV009 – Vehicle Use Policy

ground access, fire trail, dirt roads), or where vehicular access is specifically allowed (e.g. Beach driving). Where inappropriate private use of a 4WD results in damage to the vehicle, the employee using the vehicle will be responsible for all repair costs incurred.

6.2.3 Home Garaging of Vehicles

An employee who has authorised home garaging of a Council vehicle, as an employee benefit, will have this specifically provided through their employment contract or permission granted in writing by the CEO. The purpose of home garaging is for the employee to commute between the employee's place of residence and official place of work by the most direct route. The vehicle is not to be used for any other purpose outside work hours. The vehicle is only to be driven by a RGRC employee with a current Drivers Licence.

6.2.4 Use of Vehicles for Community Activities

The use of RGRC vehicles for any non business purpose must be approved in writing, prior to such use, by the relevant Departmental Managers. Such use will only be by RGRC employees and any request for use by an employee must be put in writing 48 hours prior to the time of the requested use. Any damage to the vehicle will be the responsibility of the employee and the employee will be required to make good any damage. Drivers of RGRC vehicles must ensure that the vehicle is not driven, or otherwise used in a manner which may damage the reputation and standing of RGRC, or is otherwise inconsistent with the public interest.

6.2.5 Pool Vehicles

RGRC vehicles which are not designated to any specific person or department are to be used for pooling. All pool vehicles will be controlled by Workshop. Procedures for requesting pool vehicles and terms of using pool vehicle will be as referred on SOP for Pool Vehicles.

6.3 Fuel Cards

RGRC will supply all vehicles with a fuel credit card. Where a fuel card has not been provided, purchase orders are to be raised and approved by authorised personnel prior to filling the fuel tank. In the event where employee has no choice but to make out of pocket payment for fuel, receipts are to be kept for reimbursement. Reimbursement should be claimed by submitting 107-010 Expense Reimbursement Claim Form approved by authorised personnel to the finance department.

Fuel cards are to be used solely for RGRC use. The Fuel Card should be used only for the purchase of fuel (E10, ULP, Diesel or LPG only) and oil for RGRC vehicles. Drivers need to ensure that they only use low-aromatic petrol (OPAL) in areas where such restrictions apply. No other purchases are permitted on the fuel card. The use of this card for obtaining bonus points (i.e. Flybuys Points) is prohibited due to inconsistency with the public interest, and, RGRC's liability for the Fringe Benefits Tax.

Fuel Cards must be surrendered to the Asset Manager upon termination of employment.

Lost Cards must be reported immediately to Finance who will facilitate the cancellation of the Card.

6.4 Records of Usage (Log Books)

RGRC shall maintain records of vehicle usage in order that:

- the extent of operational and private use can be measured and to calculate fringe benefits tax liability for all RGRC vehicles and
- the person responsible for the vehicle when an infringement, damage or loss occurs for all vehicles can be identified.

GOV009 – Vehicle Use Policy

Log records are to be filled out every time the vehicle is used. Log records are to be filled out with odometer readings every time the vehicle is used. Log records are to be handed to the Asset Manager at the end of every month for verification.

6.5 Security:

Vehicles must be:

- Parked in a safe and secure place at all times.
- Properly secured when unoccupied (i.e. keys removed, doors locked and security systems activated).
- Confidential material and expensive equipment must not be left in unattended vehicle.

6.6 Insurance

Losses or damage to any personal property carried or kept in a RGRC vehicle shall remain the responsibility of the officer to whom the vehicle is assigned at that time the property was placed in the vehicle, unless such property is used in connection with official business.

6.7 Servicing and Maintenance

Vehicles are to be maintained in a condition that reflects RGRC in a positive manner i.e. clean, tidy and well maintained. It is the responsibility of the driver, to whom the vehicle is allocated, to ensure that it is serviced and cleaned regularly inside and out. Drivers shall verify the oil, water, tyre pressure on a weekly basis. The Workshop will maintain Pool Vehicle. Staff borrowing RGRC pool vehicle for a task must return it clean and tidy in accordance with applicable SOPs.

Drivers are responsible for arranging the delivery of vehicles to the Roper Gulf Regional Council workshop for servicing and maintenance. They must contact the workshop in advance to make an appointment.

6.8 Driving Range

All RGRC Vehicles are to be used only within the Northern Territory. If a vehicle is to be taken outside the Northern Territory, prior approval from the CEO is to be obtained.

6.9 Modification in Vehicles

Except for emergency cases, no modifications can be made to any RGRC vehicles such as changing tires, or removing anything that belongs to the vehicle.

6.10 Accidents Emergencies

If the vehicle is stolen or damaged in an accident, the RGRC drivers shall comply with all legal and insurance requirements if involved in an accident, including:

- obtaining particulars of the other parties involved,
- notifying the Police and relevant authorities in accordance with the *Traffic Act* or any other relevant laws,
- notifying relevant Manager/Director and Asset Manager and
- submitting the applicable Incident Form to WHS.

GOV009 – Vehicle Use Policy

Employees should also immediately report any theft or damage, however slight, to the relevant Manager/Director and then to Asset Manager for repairs to be undertaken as soon as they are practicably able to do so.

6.11 Sharing of Resources

To promote safety and efficiency, please make every effort in advertising your travels to others in case someone needs to travel to the same area.

6.12 Safety Driving Standards

The employees of RGRC, while driving any vehicle owned, leased or under the control of Roper Gulf Regional Council, shall drive within the provisions of the *Traffic Act*, the *Traffic Regulations, Schedule 3 – Australian Road Rules*, and shall follow the rules and standards as prescribed by applicable RGRC Standard Operating Procedures.

7. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

If an employee is found guilty of misusing a Council Vehicle, a Formal Warning will be given by the immediate supervisor and Manager. Dismissal may be considered if the offence is believed to be serious enough. A copy of the Formal Warning will be placed on the employee’s personal file.

8. REFERENCES

Acknowledgements (original author/source documents)	
Related Policies	GOV008 – Travel Policy for Employees and Councillors
Related Publications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act</i> • <i>Traffic Act</i> • <i>Traffic Regulations</i> • <i>Traffic Regulations, Schedule 3 – Australian Road Rules</i> • <i>Liquor Act</i> • <i>Local Government Act</i> • <i>Information Act</i>
Related Procedures	<i>RGRC Light Vehicle Procedure</i>
Relevant Forms	<i>Vehicle Prestart Checklist Form</i> <i>Journey Management Form</i>

9. DOCUMENT CONTROL

Policy number	GOV009
Policy Owner	Governance
Endorsed by	OCM
Date approved	26/06/2013 OCM
Revisions	26/03/2014, July 2017

