

GOV008 - Travel Policy for Councillors and Staff

1. POLICY CERTIFICATION

Policy title:	Travel Policy for Councillors and Staff Members
Policy number:	008
Category:	Policy
Classification:	GOVERNANCE
Status:	Approved (26 June 2013) Amended (10 October 2013) Amended (25 October 2017)

2. PURPOSE

This policy outlines a set of guiding principles for Roper Gulf Regional Council staff members and Councillors to consider when arranging and undertaking official work-related travel, including airline travel that will require staff members and Councillors to overnight stay in a location other than their primary residence.

3. ORGANISATIONAL SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff members and Councillors of Roper Gulf Regional Council.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

All travel made by staff members or Councillors of Roper Gulf Regional Council for official business purpose must be approved in advance and Travel Allowance Claim Form should be completed.

A Staff member or Councillor who is required to be absent overnight from their usual place of work on official work travel will be paid an entitlement for incidentals and meal expenses (as per the travel allowance form) occurring during the period while undertaking official work travel. Overnight travel expenses are currently not subject to tax instalment deductions, and will not be unless required by taxation legislation.

Staff members who travel on official work travel for a day trip (7.6 hours) are not entitled to claim travel allowance. Travel which requires more than 7.6 hours in a single day shall be treated as overtime, and eligible for Time Off in Lieu (TOIL) as well as Travel Allowance payment.

While undertaking official travel, no staff member or Councillor will be out of pocket for reasonable expenses. However, no staff member or Councillor shall gain a financial advantage through the travelling allowance arrangement.

5. DEFINITIONS

Official business	Business conducted on behalf of, and approved by RGRC, either to fulfil a legislative requirement or to achieve a benefit for RGRC. This may include a staff member's or Councillor's attendance at external courses, conferences, seminars or workshops.
RGRC	Roper Gulf Regional Council
Travel Allowance	A travel allowance is a sum of money paid to you, generally before you start travelling. It gives you funds to pay for your travel costs.
Work	Includes any activity

GOV008 - Travel Policy for Councillors and Staff

6. PRINCIPLES

6.1 Travel Allowance

Travel Allowance is provided to staff members and Councillors conducting official business that requires overnight absence from normal place of work in a location where commercial accommodation is available. Travel Allowance comprises meals and incidental expenses based on rates determined by the Australian Taxation Office. Where the allowance determined by the Australian Taxation Office is not considered appropriate in respect of a particular travel situation, the CEO may substitute a greater or lesser amount to be paid depending on the particular travel situation.

6.2 Payment

Payments for allowance will be paid to staff and Councillors into their bank account of their choice in the earliest pay run from submission of Travel Allowance Claim Form or earlier if possible.

Where a staff member or Councillor does not attend the required course or meeting for which travel allowance and accommodation has been provided without appropriate justification to the CEO or relevant Director, the staff member or elected member will reimburse the payment made to RGRC from their next available wage or allowance.

6.3 Adjustments to Payments

Should the staff member return earlier from a trip or changes to the trip occur e.g. Different method of transport, meals were supplied,, a repayment will be required if a Travel Allowance was provided in advance. The Finance Department will advise staff members via email of the amount overpaid. Conversely additional amounts acquired, as the result of a later return than planned will be paid upon advice of the revised return details.

7. TRAVEL

Travel relates to all modes of travel. It includes flights, taxis, public transport, rental car and council vehicle. The mode of travel used for official travel should be approved prior travel by the relevant Manager or Director.

7.1 Air Charter/ Air Travel

All chartered planes must be approved by either the CEO or Directors prior to departing.

All chartered planes must be budgeted for in each financial year.

Flight booking for all chartered flights will be done by Customer Service Officer (CSO) at Crawford Street. Governance and Corporate Planning business unit will work with CSO at Crawford Street for arranging flights for Councillors for RGRC business.

7.2 Vehicle Travel

RGRC will make every effort to provide an official vehicle for the duty. A rental vehicle will be provided in the absence of availability of RGRC vehicles. Where a staff member has to use their own vehicle, a mileage allowance per kilometer as approved in Travel Allowance Claim Form be provided. Current Insurance certificate must be submitted with the TA form

All prospective drivers must hold a valid driver's licence for the vehicle class which they will drive, and must present evidence thereof to RGRC.

GOV008 - Travel Policy for Councillors and Staff

All prospective drivers who intend to drive their personal motor vehicles for work purposes must present evidence of current registration for their motor vehicles to RGRC as part of the approval process for authorisation to use their personal motor vehicle.

All drivers of RGRC motor vehicles must ensure that safety considerations and legislative compliance prevail over operational and all other considerations whenever a conflict arises.

All prospective drivers who intend to drive their personal motor vehicles for official purposes must ensure that their motor vehicles are mechanically safe, and fit for purpose, and must present evidence thereof as part of the approval process. RGRC may require the prospective motor vehicle to undergo an inspection prior to being authorised for use for official purposes.

All RGRC policies and SOPs apply to private vehicle travel for official purposes including the requirement to carry a satellite telephone, and sufficient water for the prospective journey.

Fuel cards will be provided for the use of a RGRC vehicle. 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 staff member 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 Expense Reimbursement Claim Form approved by authorised personnel to the finance department.

7.2.1 Taxis

It will be the responsibility of the person travelling to organise their own taxi request. Receipts are to be kept for reimbursement. Reimbursement should be claimed by submitting Reimbursement Claim Form approved by authorised personnel to the finance department. Alternatively cab charge cards may be collected from EA to CEO.

7.2.2 Rental Cars

The staff member must seek appropriate approval from their Manager/Director before renting a vehicle. The choice of rental vehicle must be fit for purpose, taking into account the environment in which it is likely to be used i.e. sealed/unsealed roads.

7.2.3 Private Vehicle Allowance

Where the Director or Manager has authorised the use of a private vehicle, a mileage allowance per km as approved by in Travel Allowance Claim Form will be paid.

8. ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation for Councillors for attending official RGRC business will be booked and paid for by RGRC.

Accommodation for staff members should be approved prior by the relevant Manager or Director. Purchase Orders must be raised prior to accommodation booking unless reimbursement or RGRC Corporate credit card has been used.

Additional expenses incurred in accommodation such as telephone calls, room service or mini-bar supplies will be the staff member's/elected member's own responsibility.

Funds will not be paid in lieu of accommodation.

VOQ

Visiting Officer Quarters (VOQ) accommodation may be booked internally by filling out the Internal Accommodation Booking Form and forwarding it to Roper Accommodation.

GOV008 - Travel Policy for Councillors and Staff

9. REFERENCES

Acknowledgements (original author/source documents)	RGRC Governance Unit
Related Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR011 Leave Policy
Related Publications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Local Government Act</i> • <i>Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)</i> • <i>Income Tax Assessment Act 1997 (Cth)</i>
Relevant Forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 107-009 Travel Allowance Claim Form • 107- 020 Executive Travel Allowance Claim Form • 107-010 Expense Reimbursement Claim Form • Internal Accommodation Booking Form

10. DOCUMENT CONTROL

Policy number	008
Policy Owner	GOVERNANCE
Endorsed by	OCM
Date approved	26/06/2013
Revisions	July 2017
Amendments	<p>Replaces Travel Policy prior 26 June 2013</p> <p>2nd March 2015</p> <p>25 October 2017</p>
Next revision due	June 2021

11. CONTACT PERSON

Contact person	Manager Governance and Corporate Planning
Contact number	08 8972 9005