

Driver Safety Guidelines

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) These guidelines describe how to:

- a. promote the safety of Charles Sturt University (the University) employees while driving;
- b. actively support safe driving practices;
- c. encourage responsible decision-making in relation to driving for work travel; and
- d. adopt a risk management approach to the planning, approving and undertaking of work related driving.

(2) As a part of achieving the stated purpose of these guidelines, consultation between travelling employees and supervisors approving travel is recommended and encouraged.

Scope

(3) These guidelines apply to:

- a. all employees planning to drive as a means of undertaking work related travel; and
- b. all managers reviewing and approving travels plans where driving is to be undertaken.

Section 2 - Glossary

(4) In these Guidelines, the following definitions apply:

- a. Hierarchy of control - refers to a systematic approach to controlling health and safety hazards. Control options are listed, with those at the top being more effective. The hierarchy of controls is as follows:
 - i. Eliminate the hazard altogether;
 - ii. Substitute the hazard with a safer alternative;
 - iii. Isolate the hazard from anyone who could be harmed;
 - iv. Use engineering controls to reduce the risk;
 - v. Use administrative controls to reduce the risk; and
 - vi. Use personal protective equipment (PPE).
- b. Reasonably practicable - refers to what is, or was at a particular time, reasonably able to be done in relation to ensuring health and safety, taking into account and weighing up all relevant matters, including:
 - i. the likelihood of the hazard or the risk concerned occurring;
 - ii. the degree of harm that might result from the hazard or the risk;
 - iii. what the person concerned knows, or ought reasonably to know:
 - about the hazard or the risk; and
 - ways of eliminating or minimising the risk;
 - iv. the availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or minimise the risk; and
 - v. after assessing the extent of the risk and the available ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, the

cost associated with available ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, including whether the cost is grossly disproportionate to the risk.

Section 3 - Policy

(5) Refer to the [Driver Safety Policy](#).

Section 4 - Procedures

(6) Nil.

Section 5 - Guidelines

Responsibilities

Employees

(7) Employees (workers) when planning or undertaking work related travel in a vehicle should:

- a. apply sound risk management principles to the planning and execution of any approved travel plans, including:
 - i. identifying all reasonably foreseeable hazards associated with the travel plans and/or their personal circumstances (refer to clauses 25-26 for guidance on hazard types);
 - ii. making a risk assessment of all identified hazards; and
 - iii. through consideration of the hierarchy of control, control all risks to as low as reasonably practicable;
- b. hold a current and appropriate licence for any vehicle they intend to drive and have the licence with them at all times when operating the vehicle;
- c. allow to have a break every two hours, or more often if symptoms of fatigue are present;
- d. allow adequate time to arrive at the destination without having to rush;
- e. ensure that adequate nutrition and hydration are maintained to avoid the onset of fatigue;
- f. where possible and appropriate, avoid any medications that could impair driving ability or cause drowsiness (where it is not possible or appropriate to avoid such medications, the travel plan should be reviewed to address this concern);
- g. operate any vehicle in accordance with statutory and licence requirements; and
- h. report any vehicle faults to the relevant University officer as soon as reasonably possible.

Supervisors

(8) Supervisors and Managers must:

- a. prior to approving travel plans, review a traveller's plans in the context of the traveller's risk assessment (as per clause 7a);
- b. only approve travel plans that have satisfactorily considered and controlled any risks associated with the travel;
- c. give consideration to travel time when planning any work that requires travel off campus in a vehicle, including the distance the staff member travels from home to the first job and, at the end of the day, from the last visit to home;
- d. roster so that driving within the usual hours of sleep (10 pm to 5 am) are avoided as much as possible;
- e. ensure work is planned to allow staff to have a minimum 10 hour break before travel commences; and

- f. monitor staff duties to identify if excessive working/driving hours are occurring and to discuss with staff as necessary.

Charles Sturt University

(9) The University will:

- a. purchase vehicles that meet Australian design guidelines and relevant Australian standards and that are fitted with appropriate safety features (such as anti-lock brakes and air bags); and
- b. as far as is reasonably practicable, maintain its fleet of vehicles in a road worthy state and according to relevant statutory requirements. The vehicle will be safe to operate in conditions for which the vehicle is intended.

Risk Factors Associated with Driving and Mechanisms for their Management

(10) There are many known hazards and risk factors associated with driving. Such risks either increase the likelihood of an incident occurring and/or can increase the severity (consequence) of the incident.

(11) Following are some of the known (or reasonably foreseeable) risks that can contribute to the likelihood or consequence of a driving related incident, and some recommended risk controls for the management of driving related risks. These items should be considered as a part of planning, approving or while undertaking driving.

Elimination of Driving Risks

(12) In accordance with the hierarchy of control, in the first instance and where it is reasonably practicable to do so, technological facilities such as video-conferencing and teleconferencing are to be considered as an option to reduce travel between campuses. This effectively eliminates the risk of a driving incident.

(13) Where it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate the need for travel, the risks associated with travelling by vehicle must be considered and controlled prior to the travel being approved and undertaken. This should also include consideration of the individual traveller's personal circumstances (e.g. medications, recent sleep and work patterns, etc.) as well as the journey to be taken.

(14) Risk factors that should be considered as part of planning, undertaking and/or approving travel include fatigue, travel time, duration of travel/work to be undertaken, alcohol and other drugs, hazardous driving conditions and mobile phones.

Fatigue

(15) Driving when fatigued can be as dangerous as driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

(16) Drivers should implement the following strategies to prevent or manage fatigue:

- a. avoid commencing driving if they have been awake continuously for more than 16 hours, at which point response rates are seriously reduced, even though other symptoms of fatigue may not be present;
- b. ensure adequate nutrition and hydration prior to commencing any journeys;
- c. while driving, be aware of the symptoms of fatigue and be able to recognise their onset. Signs of fatigue could include:
 - i. head keeps nodding;
 - ii. difficulty in keeping eyes open;
 - iii. unable to remember the last few kilometres;
 - iv. constant yawning;

- v. drifting in the lane or driving off the road edge;
 - vi. delayed reactions;
 - vii. loss of concentration / daydreaming; and/or
 - viii. fluctuations in driving speed;
- d. where symptoms of fatigue are present, as a minimum:
- i. take a break from driving; and
 - ii. stretch and have a drink of water prior to resuming the journey;
- e. towards the end of the working day, where there is still considerable driving required (e.g. over two hours), and the symptoms of fatigue are present and cannot be alleviated, the driver is encouraged, in consultation with their supervisor, to seek overnight accommodation and continue the journey the following day;
- f. drivers should aim to manage fatigue by making long journeys with others and share driving at each two hour rest stop;
- g. when planning any work requiring travel off campus in a vehicle, Managers and Supervisors should consider:
- i. the distance the staff member must travel from home to the first work site and, at the end of the day, from the last work site to home;
 - ii. roster the commencement of offsite work accordingly so that driving within the usual hours of sleep (10 pm to 5 am) are avoided as much as possible; and
 - iii. that work is planned to allow staff to have a minimum ten hour break before travel commences.

Travel Time

(17) Drivers should plan their journey to allow for rest every two hours if journeys exceed this time.

(18) Travel should be planned to occur outside of normal sleeping hours (i.e. 10 pm to 5 am).

Duration of Travel/Work to be Undertaken

(19) It is recommended that travel plans and/or drivers aim to:

- a. not drive for more than ten hours in any 24 hour period; and
- b. avoid journeys where the combined period of driving and working would exceed ten hours in that working day or in a 24 hour period.

(20) In individual circumstances, if other risks associated with driving have been identified and are being adequately controlled, travel durations may exceed these recommended limits.

(21) In individual circumstances, if other risks associated with driving have been identified and cannot be adequately controlled, travel durations may need to be less than these recommended limits.

Alcohol and Other Drugs

(22) All drivers are encouraged to maintain a zero alcohol level (despite legal limits) and are required to observe road laws in relation to alcohol consumption prior to driving.

(23) All drivers must comply with relevant road laws regarding the consumption of other illicit drugs.

(24) All drivers are encouraged to avoid the use of any medications that may impair driving ability (e.g. medications that may cause drowsiness). Where such medications cannot be avoided, the travel plan should be reviewed and amended accordingly. For example (but not necessarily limited to):

- a. cancel travel and utilise other methods of meeting (e.g. video conference technology);

- b. delay travel until the use of medication has ceased; or
- c. arrange to travel with others who can undertake the driving.

Hazardous Driving Conditions

(25) Where hazardous driving conditions exist due to activities undertaken at a location (e.g. unsealed roads, alpine areas susceptible to ice/frost, off road driving, etc.) or because of environmental conditions, drivers of vehicles should take particular care and modify their driving behaviour or travel time accordingly.

(26) Those areas identified as hazardous include (but are not necessarily limited to):

- a. snowfields;
- b. regions prone to heavy fog;
- c. regions prone to black ice;
- d. regions prone to animals on the road; and
- e. other ad hoc environmental conditions such as fire and flood.

Mobile Phones

(27) It is an offence to operate a mobile phone in a vehicle unless:

- a. the phone is secured in a cradle fixed to the vehicle, or
- b. the phone can be operated by the driver without touching any part of the phone (for example, through the use of hands free or Bluetooth technology).

(28) Mobile phones should only be used in vehicles and by drivers controlling the vehicle if fitted with the items stated in clause 27.

(29) Where telephone calls need to be made/received during a journey, a suitably equipped vehicle should be requested (as per clause 27) at the time of booking a vehicle or the vehicle should be pulled over and switched off prior to the call being made/answered.

Approval Procedure

(30) Managers are encouraged to consult with any employees planning to drive and submitting travel plans for approval. This consultation should aim to verify if all reasonably foreseeable hazards associated with the travel have been identified, assessed and controlled.

(31) Once satisfied that all the reasonably foreseeable hazards associated with the travel have been identified, assessed and controlled to as low a reasonably possible, using the hierarchy of control, managers should approve travel plans in accordance with other relevant policies.

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