

# Driver Safety Guidelines

## Section 1 - Purpose

(1) These guidelines describe how to:

- a. promote the safety of Charles Sturt 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 of Charles Sturt University (the University) planning to drive as a means of undertaking work related travel, and
- b. all managers of the University when reviewing and approving travels plans where driving is to be undertaken.

## Section 2 - Policy

(4) Refer to the [Travel Policy](#) and [Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy](#).

## Section 3 - Procedures

(5) Nil.

## Section 4 - Guidelines

### Responsibilities

	Task	VC, Faculty/ Division Executive ELT	Site/Campus Responsible Manager	School/ Team Manager	Workers	Fleet	DSSW ED
1	Approve and implement the Driver Safety Guidelines.	A	R	R	R	R	I
2	Develop and periodically review the Driver Safety Guidelines, ensure they remain current and address state of knowledge of driving hazards.	C	C	C	C	C	A

	Task	VC, Faculty/ Division Executive ELT	Site/Campus Responsible Manager	School/ Team Manager	Workers	Fleet	DSSW ED
3	Comply with all laws related to driving on roads, be licenced, skilled and experienced in the planned travel method and road type/s.	C	R	R	A	R	I
4	Be fit for work, identify and manage fatigue risks and use defensive driving techniques as outlined in Appendix 2.	I	I	R	A	I	I
5	Check the vehicle is in safe and operable condition prior to use and report vehicle damage or faults.	I	I	I	A	R	I
6	Apply sound risk management to travel plan development and implementation and work hours either side of travel to reduce rushing and fatigue.	I	C	R	A	R	I
7	Monitor staff duties to identify where excessive working and driving hours are occurring and implement controls to reduce this risk.	A	R	R	C	I	C
8	Review and approve travel where the worker has identified the likely hazards and support the implementation of risk controls in the travel plan.	I	C	A	C	I	I
9	Purchase or lease vehicles that meet Australian Design guidelines and standards, and fitted with expected safety features.	A	R	I	I	R	C
10	Maintain vehicles in safe and operable condition.	A	R	I	I	R	C

<b>Responsible</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Person that performs all or part of the standard tasks.</li> <li>Can be more than one segmented task or procedure.</li> </ul>	<b>Consulted</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Person or persons that need to be consulted as part of completing the task.</li> </ul>
<b>Accountable</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Person that will be held accountable for performance.</li> <li>Only ONE person allowed.</li> <li>Normally the most senior appropriate person.</li> </ul>	<b>Informed</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Person(s) that need to be informed.</li> </ul>

## Employees

(6) Employees (workers, includes staff, students, contractors and visitors) 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 28-32 for guidance on hazard types)
  - ii. making a risk assessment of all identified hazards, and
  - iii. through consideration of the hierarchy of control, eliminate or 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. take 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, and
- 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).

## **Supervisors**

(7) Supervisors and managers must:

- a. prior to approving travel plans, review a traveller's plans in the context of the traveller's risk assessment
- 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 (10pm to 5am) 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 implement controls to reduce this risk.

## **Charles Sturt University**

(8) The University will:

- a. purchase vehicles that meet Australian design guidelines and standards, with an ANCAP 5-star rating, equipped with safety features in line with industry benchmarks and ensuring adherence to University requirements (e.g. farm vehicles or fleet reserve)
- b. kit vehicles out with additional items by the business unit or faculty to align to the level of risk with where and how the vehicle will be used, such as for use in remote areas and field work such as:
  - i. first aid kits
  - ii. Emergency Position Indication Radio Beacon (EPIRB)
  - iii. snake bite kit
  - iv. Fire extinguishers
- c. 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**

(9) 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.

(10) 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. A [Travel Planning Checklist](#) is available to assist with determining and managing risk factors in Appendix 1 and a Guide to adopting defensive and safe driving techniques is provided in Appendix 2.

## **Elimination of driving risks**

(11) 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.

(12) 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.

(13) 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.

(14) The vehicle is only to be used for the purposes for which it was designed and registered.

(15) Fleet vehicles allocated to a business unit will be checked annually or as per the km service schedule. Pool vehicles which are available for general business use and can be booked and used by any person will be checked regularly by fleet.

## **Fatigue**

(16) Driving when fatigued has the same risk factors as driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

(17) 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, and decision making is impaired even though other symptoms of fatigue may not be present
- b. ensure adequate nutrition and hydration prior to commencing any journeys, and
- 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, consult their supervisor to seek overnight accommodation and continue the journey the following day, and
- f. aim to manage fatigue by making long journeys with others and share driving at each two hour rest stop.

(18) When planning any work requiring travel off campus in a vehicle, Managers and Supervisors should consider:

- a. 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
- b. roster the commencement of offsite work accordingly so that driving within the usual hours of sleep (10 pm to 5

- am) is avoided as much as possible, and
- c. that work is planned to allow staff to have a minimum 10-hour break before travel commences.

### **Travel time**

- (19) Drivers should plan their journey to allow for rest every two hours if journeys exceed this time.
- (20) Travel should be planned to occur outside of normal sleeping hours (i.e. 10 pm - 5 am).

### **Duration of travel/work to be undertaken**

- (21) It is recommended that travel plans and/or drivers aim to:
  - a. not drive for more than 10 hours in any 24 hour period, and
  - b. avoid journeys where the combined period of driving and working would exceed 10 hours in that working day or in a 24 hour period.
- (22) In individual circumstances, if other risks associated with driving have been identified and are being adequately controlled, travel durations may exceed these recommended limits, for example shared driving arrangements.
- (23) 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.
- (24) Workers are empowered to refuse to drive excessive driving distances. Instances of staff feeling pressured to drive excessive distances and combined work hours should contact [safety@csu.edu.au](mailto:safety@csu.edu.au) and or lodge a hazard report to the [Protecht system](#).

### **Alcohol and other drugs**

- (25) 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.
- (26) All drivers must comply with relevant road laws regarding the consumption of other illicit drugs.
- (27) 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. videoconference 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**

- (28) 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.
- (29) 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.

(30) When driving on dirt or gravel roads where the road holding capabilities are reduced and stopping distances become extended. Be aware that if the vehicle has an anti-lock braking system it will not be as effective on loose surfaces.

(31) When it rains after a dry spell, bitumen road surfaces do not offer as much grip since oil and fuel deposits float on top of the water.

(32) Heavy rain or fog can reduce visibility and ability to brake effectively in the event of an emergency stop.

### **Towing**

(33) The vehicle and any towed appliances such as a trailer or boat must be roadworthy prior to use and the driver must be familiar with full operation, making all necessary adjustments to seats, steering and mirrors prior to the start of the journey. The vehicle must be certified to tow the weight of the trailer or item being towed.

### **Driving off-road**

(34) In all cases where driving 'off-road' or in remote locations is planned, drivers should not be on their own, a system and schedule of communication is to be established prior to the journey commencing. Arrangements are to be in place for raising an alarm if the communication schedule is not met. Drivers must be trained and experienced to drive in the terrain they are anticipating and avoid river crossings, steep side slopes and sand surfaces unless recovery gear is being carried.

### **Country roads**

(35) Country roads can be narrow, winding, rough and full of surprises - such as kangaroos, large trucks and holes. Adhere to advisory signs, don't be tempted to speed, avoid the edges of roads (but be ready to slow down and move over for passing vehicles), and always remain alert, even if the road looks quiet.

### **Mobile phones**

(36) 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).

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

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

### **Driving vehicles on campus**

(39) Drivers of vehicles on campus must give way to pedestrians at all times and not exceed the maximum speed limit of 40 kilometres per hour, unless otherwise sign posted.

(40) If authorised to drive a vehicle on the inner campus, the maximum speed is 5 kilometres per hour (walking pace). Vehicles are only permitted onto the inner campus to deliver and collect goods and are not to remain parked on the

inner campus for extended periods.

(41) UHF Radios in vehicles on the inner campus are only to be used for authorised university communications.

### **Incident reporting**

(42) All incidents and injuries involving vehicles is required to be reported to the University through the [incident reporting system](#) and will be thoroughly investigated. The reporting system will generate a workflow email to notify [fleet@csu.edu.au](mailto:fleet@csu.edu.au) of the incident. If the incident involves a University-owned vehicle, you will also be required to furnish additional details to the Fleet and Insurance teams.

### **Approval procedure**

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

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

## **Section 5 - Glossary**

(45) 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:
  - 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 reasonably able to be done in relation to ensuring health and safety, taking into account 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.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Driver Safety and Travel Planning Checklist**

Departure Date:		Departure Time:	
Departing From:		Destination:	
Estimated Total Travel Time:		Estimated driving breaks during travel time:	

Risk Factors	Yes/No	Risk Management Actions/Comments
1. Do you have the required licence to operate the vehicle and are you skilled in driving in the expected conditions and types (e.g. 4WD)?		
2. Have you planned the route you will take on the journey?		
3. Is the route appropriate for the vehicle undertaking the journey? Is the quality of the road a factor in the journey? Is a 4WD or AWD vehicle required to undertake the journey?		
4. Do journey times take account of road types and condition, weather, and allow for rest breaks every 2 hours?		
5. Have periods when drivers are most likely to feel fatigue been considered and avoided when planning work schedules (e.g. early morning, late evening or hours when normally asleep are high risk times)?		
6. Can long journeys be eliminated or reduced with other methods of transport or virtual/online meetings?		
7. Has the length of the workday combined with hours of travel been considered (including if the journey will start from the employee's home)?		
8. Is an overnight stay rather than completing a long road journey at the end of the day been considered?  A work period combined with driving more than 12 hours is a significant risk. Driving for more than 10 hours in a 24-hour period is not permitted.		
9. Is the driver fit to drive? Some prescription medications can affect driving ability.		

## Appendix 2

Guidance on adopting safe and defensive driving techniques:

Always wear a seat belt	Seat belts and air bags provide impact protection, absorb the force of a crash, and keep drivers and their passengers from being thrown out or around the vehicle.
Secure luggage	Tie down or place loose items in the vehicle's cargo area, boot or behind the cargo net.
Don't speed	Driving above the speed limit increases risk in two ways: it cuts reaction time and results in more damage if the vehicle is in a crash.
Prepare for the unexpected	Because drivers don't know what other drivers will do always keep an eye on the actions of others. Erratic drivers, such as drunk drivers or people on mobile devices, might swerve into their lane or change speeds unexpectedly. Be ready to react quickly.
Slow down	Reduce your speed when driving under adverse conditions. Observe all speed reductions for school zones and roadworks.
Stay focused on the road	It is easy to get distracted by things in the car. Be attentive and remain alert. If you can't remember the past few kms, you may be experiencing micro sleeps, pull over and have a ten-minute break or take a short nap.



Look ahead	Scan the road, don't just watch the car in front. Always scan ahead and around the car to anticipate crashes before they happen. A driver with defensive driving skills scans the road ahead of them and behind them.
Share the road	Be courteous and patient.
Create space	A safe following distance is two to four seconds depending on variables like heavy traffic or adverse weather conditions. Drivers determine the safe following distance by watching the vehicle ahead of them pass a specific mark on the side of the road, then counting "one-thousand-one, one-thousand-two, etc." If their front bumper passes the same mark before they finish counting, they're following too closely.
Signal correctly	Signalling at the wrong time can lead to traffic crashes. For example, if a driver is approaching an intersection, and plans to turn right immediately after the intersection, they increase the risk of an accident if they signal too soon. Another driver might turn left in front of them because they don't know where they are turning. Keep this in mind when moving across lanes as well, signalling and checking traffic around you as well as your blind spots are important when changing lanes.
Know the vehicle's blind spots	Drivers need to familiarize themselves with the largest blind spots of fleet vehicles before they drive them. The blind areas on most vehicles are large enough to hide other vehicles, so before changing lanes drivers should turn their heads to check for oncoming traffic.
Beware of intersections	Intersections are one of the most dangerous areas for any driver. More than 80% of all collisions in cities that result in injury or death occur within traffic-light intersections. To reduce the risk, drivers must slow down as they approach a green light and make sure to look left, then right, then left again. One of the golden rules of defensive driving is, "If you're at an intersection and you don't know if it's your turn to go, let the other driver go."
Buffer zones	Keep space between you and the car in front so you can brake in time if needed. It can take up to 13 metres to stop a regular car doing just 48 km/h; even more if your tyres are under-inflated, or if it is wet or the road is slippery.
Headlights	Turn on headlights while driving on country roads to improve vehicle visibility.
Pass safely	Passing is one of the most dangerous situations drivers encounter. Do not exceed the speed limit and pass only where it is allowed. Before passing another vehicle, drivers need to visually clear the road ahead and behind them. Drivers should not tailgate before passing.
Fatigue	Do not drive when feeling tired, yawning or unable to concentrate. Driving for more than 10 hours in a 24-hour period is not permitted. Being awake for 17 hours has a cognitive impairment risk the same as being 0.05% Blood Alcohol Content (BAC).
Remote Work	Regular 'call-in' schedules may be appropriate and should be arranged in advance in consultation with the Supervisor or Manager.
Damage and Faults	Report any damage, faults and incidents.
Smoking / Vaping	University vehicles are smoke-free workplaces. Do not smoke, vape or use e-cigarettes in any vehicles.
Night driving	Lack of visibility makes night driving hazardous. Slow down if you're having trouble seeing and when driving in rain. Also, try shifting your gaze slightly away from oncoming headlights and adjust your rear vision mirror to reduce glare from vehicles behind.
Vehicle Safety Checks	Check the vehicle to make sure it's operational, especially if it's a vehicle the driver is unfamiliar with, including walking around and conducting a visual inspection. Before starting the vehicle, adjust seat, mirror, climate control, GPS/directions and music so that the driver is not distracted by these while driving. Switch mobile phones to "do not disturb" setting to limit distractions. Check the condition of tyres (visual inspection of inflation and tread conditions), radiator (water level), oil level before departure and occasionally during a protracted trip.
Plan the route	If the driver is confused about where they are going there is more scope for making mistakes in traffic. Slowing right down will help the driver absorb an unfamiliar environment and drive with more confidence.
Road Conditions	Obtain information about likely conditions including weather, traffic congestion, school zones, road works, road closures and detours, that may be encountered during the trip and plan the journey to account for extra time that may be needed to respond to these.

Driver Impairment	Don't drive when impaired. Driving while impaired includes more than drunk driving. Driver fatigue, illness, and the use of medications, alcohol, and drugs all are possible hazards and need to be considered before a driver gets behind the wheel.
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## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Current
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<b>Unit Head</b>	Andrea Bishop Associate Director, Health, Safety and Wellbeing
<b>Author</b>	Bethne Williams Manager, Health Safety and Wellbeing
<b>Enquiries Contact</b>	Health, Safety and Wellbeing