

2.21

## SAFE DRIVING

### POLICY

#### PURPOSE

To improve workplace road safety for all RTA staff.

#### OUTCOME

RTA personnel operating or travelling in any road vehicle while at work, or on their way to or from work, will demonstrate low-risk driving behaviours.

Outcomes will include reductions in:

- injury to RTA road users and the public
- motor vehicle accidents (involving RTA and own vehicles used for work journeys)
- damage to vehicles and property
- the at fault rate

Coverage      All Staff

## RTA requirements

All occupational health and safety hazards must be managed in accordance with the RTA OHS Risk Management Policy. For the prevention of incidents involving light or heavy fleet in RTA workplaces, the following requirements must be met:

**1. The RTA will provide light and heavy fleet vehicles that meet accepted safety standards and OHS requirements for plant.**

RTA policies for light and heavy fleet establish the relevant RTA standards.

**2. All RTA staff are to drive in a manner that minimises risk to self and others as well as damage to vehicles and property.**

As a minimum, staff are to:

- comply with Australian road rules;
- comply with fleet management requirements;
- travel with the headlights and taillights switched on when in an RTA vehicle, and
- wear seatbelts where they are provided.

Staff shall drive at a speed that does not exceed the speed limit.

Staff must use hands-free devices for mobile phones while driving. Call times should be minimised while driving.

Staff shall not attempt to put a vehicle in motion while under the influence of alcohol or any other drug. Drivers of heavy fleet vehicles shall not drive while there is the presence of alcohol in his or her blood.

Refer to Appendix A to identify other factors that increase the risk.

**3. All RTA staff are informed of the RTA's workplace safety requirements.**

Awareness of safe driving behaviour is to be provided to all staff at induction.

Additional training needs for safe driving will be assessed for the work requirements of positions within the RTA. Training will be commensurate with the level of risk associated with the work requirements of the position.

Refer to Appendix D for more information.

**4. Staff who may be required to drive an RTA vehicle as part of their job must meet the following RTA standards.**

Possession of an appropriate current class of licence.

Evidence to satisfy any other occupational-specific requirements – e.g. safe driving history for Driver Testing Officers.

**5. Managers and staff must actively manage workloads involving driving to minimise fatigue.**

Staff must ensure that they organise their own work involving driving in a way that minimises fatigue.

Refer to Appendix C for more information.

Managers have an obligation to ensure that staff receive active management support in meeting this requirement.

**6. Managers are to review available reports on vehicle damage relating to their staff and provide feedback to vehicle users.**

Where managers identify unsafe driving performance positive steps must be taken to improve driving performance.

Refer to Appendix B for more information.

**7. Priority response driving, if required and authorised, must be undertaken in accordance with the Transport Management Centre's "Guidelines for Driving Emergency Vehicles (TMC-POL-409210)".**

Refer to Appendix E for more information on the conditions and limitations that apply to priority response driving.

**Responsibilities and further advice  
are set out in the following pages ➡**

## What does this policy and its associated guidelines cover?

The following pages set out the responsibilities for RTA managers and staff for preventing accidents with heavy and light fleet.

### DEFINITION

Safe driving is the adoption of a low-risk attitudes and behaviours that reduces the possibility of the driver being involved in a driving incident.

Low risk attitudes include:

- placing a high value on safe driving
- choosing low risk alternatives in spite of pressures to do otherwise
- maintaining motivation to apply low risk behaviours

Low risk behaviours include:

- preparation - planning driving (being fit to drive, rest breaks / overnight stops, route selection, non-driving duties), vehicle safety check
- driving - being alert, scanning for potential hazards, managing speed and position of the vehicle to reduce the likelihood of a crash
- evaluation - reviewing driving to identify ways of reducing risk on future journeys

<b>GUIDELINES</b>	
<b>Responsibilities</b>	
<b>Appendix A</b>	will help you to <b>identify potential risk factors</b> associated with driving
<b>Appendix B</b>	lists possible <b>control measures</b> to be considered
<b>Appendix C</b>	<b>Fatigue Management</b>
<b>Appendix D</b>	<b>Education and Training</b>
<b>Appendix E</b>	<b>Priority response driving</b> and emergency service personnel in the RTA
<b>References</b>	
<b>Other Resources</b>	Light Motor Vehicle Policy and Guidelines Manual Heavy Fleet Policy (to be developed) Drug and Alcohol Policy (to be developed) Guidelines for Driving Emergency Vehicles (TMC-POL-409210) Australian Road Rules Road Transport (General) Act and Regulations Road Transport (Safety and Traffic Management) Act and Regulations Roads Act 1993 Road Transport (Driver Licensing) Act and Regulations Road Transport (Vehicle Registration) Act and Regulations

## Responsibilities

Managers & Supervisors	Drivers	OHS Staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Communicate safe driving policy and guidelines to staff.</li> <li>▪ Ensure occupation-specific safe driving record requirements are met where this is a condition of employment.</li> <li>• Implement appropriate counter measures for identified trends in unsafe road use, such as training and review of a driver's authority to drive RTA vehicles.</li> <li>• Consult with drivers when resolving driving safety related issues.</li> <li>• Ensure all staff, managers and supervisors receive an induction in road user safety.</li> <li>• Conduct assessment on road use risks and assess training needs of staff.</li> <li>• Provide on-going education, awareness, and training.</li> <li>• Ensure that in-vehicle driver training is done by an approved assessor.</li> <li>• Review driver ability every three years for drivers operating in high risk driving conditions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Operate road vehicles in a way that complies with the road laws and in accordance with RTA policies.</li> <li>▪ Plan road trips to minimise safety risks to self, passengers and other road users.</li> <li>▪ Participate in initiatives for improving road safety.</li> <li>▪ Undertake operation and safety familiarisation of the particular vehicle before operating it for the first time.</li> <li>▪ Report defective vehicles.</li> <li>▪ Report all injury and damage incidents, including near misses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establish guidelines for drivers that address the risks associated with vehicle operation.</li> <li>▪ Provide assistance to managers with the development and implementation of appropriate education, awareness and training programmes to meet identified areas of need.</li> <li>▪ Provide regular management reports to managers to show accountability for incident costs in terms of injury.</li> <li>▪ Benchmark motor vehicle accident injury outcomes against similar organisations.</li> <li>▪ Develop measures to address unsafe trends in workplace road use.</li> </ul>

Fleet Management	Risk Management	Learning and Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure that light and heavy vehicles provided for all kinds of use conform to uniform safety standards.</li> <li>▪ Consult with potential operators in the selection of specialised replacement vehicles and plant.</li> <li>▪ Ensure vehicles are maintained according to vehicle manufacturer requirements.</li> <li>▪ Maintain records of all maintenance, damage and usage data for each vehicle.</li> <li>▪ Ensure that drivers have the appropriate information for the safe operation, and equipment to assist in actions following an incident or breakdown.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Benchmark damage and near miss incidents against similar organisations.</li> <li>▪ Collect data on vehicle damage and identify all costs associated with repairs and replacement of damaged vehicles and property.</li> <li>▪ Provide regular management reports to managers to show accountability for incident costs in terms of damage to property.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide resource material and programmes to support safe driving awareness, education and training needs.</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX A Identification of hazards

<p><b>Past experience</b></p> <p>If the answer is <b>YES</b>, risk is elevated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Has there been a significant number of road accidents at a particular location?</li> <li>▪ Have RTA staff been involved in accidents resulting from the same or similar type of work or work-related driving?</li> <li>▪ Is there a history of staff complaining about the driving style of drivers?</li> <li>▪ Have passengers been afraid to report unsafe driving practices?</li> <li>▪ Is there a tendency for drivers to demonstrate poor care of vehicles, and/or inadequate routine vehicle checks?</li> </ul> <p><b>Work environment factors</b></p> <p>If the answer is <b>YES</b>, risk is elevated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Is driving required at night or in poor weather conditions?</li> <li>▪ Is the road unsealed or of poor quality?</li> <li>▪ Is the road busy, narrow, with large and or long vehicles or present with many road side hazards?</li> <li>▪ Is the road subject to extreme conditions such as snow, ice, extreme heat, flood, fog, or bushfires?</li> <li>▪ Does the road have many blind spots?</li> <li>▪ Do stock or wildlife use the road as a crossing or graze on unfenced land beside the road?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Work factors</b></p> <p>If the answer is <b>YES</b>, risk is elevated.</p> <p>Does your RTA job involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ travelling for more than two hours to or from places of work?</li> <li>▪ assessing members of the public for driving tests?</li> <li>▪ enforcing driving related regulations?</li> <li>▪ travelling long distances, in unfamiliar locations, or off road with the aid of a 4WD?</li> <li>▪ using large or long vehicles?</li> <li>▪ dealing with vehicle breakdowns either in own or other vehicles?</li> <li>▪ driving in or working around traffic regularly?</li> <li>▪ driving long distances to work and returning on the same day?</li> </ul> <p>If the answer is <b>NO</b>, risk is elevated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Are RTA staff competent to operate the vehicle that they are using?</li> <li>▪ Do RTA staff plan their driving trips taking fatigue, knowledge of the location, and other safety implications into account?</li> <li>▪ Are RTA staff held accountable for the way they use vehicles?</li> </ul> <p><b>Staff factors</b></p> <p>If the answer is <b>YES</b>, risk is elevated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Is the driver unfamiliar with the specific operating features of the vehicle?</li> <li>▪ Are work patterns likely to make a driver fatigued?</li> </ul> <p>If the answer is <b>NO</b>, risk is elevated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Does the driver know about the effects of alcohol and drugs, fatigue and distractions and how it affects their capacity to operate vehicles safely?</li> <li>▪ Are drivers operating vehicles that are not suitable for the requirements of the job?</li> </ul>
--	--

## APPENDIX B Examples of control measures

Having established a level of risk for a hazard, it is then necessary to determine and implement an appropriate control, or combination of controls if no single measure is sufficient. The table below sets out the controls in order of preference – from the most preferred at the top, to the least preferred at the bottom.

<b>RISK CONTROL GUIDE</b>	
<b>Eliminate the hazard</b> <i>(the best option, if it can be done)</i>	<p><b><i>Remove the hazard from the workplace.</i></b> The Light Motor Vehicle Policy and Guidelines Manual requires that any unsafe vehicle is withdrawn from service.</p>
<b>Change equipment or materials</b>	<p><b><i>Try to replace or change plant, substances or materials to lower the risk from the hazard.</i></b> Assign vehicles appropriate to work needs, ie 4WD for off-road driving.</p> <p><b><i>Design and install equipment to counteract the hazard</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fit cargo barriers on station wagons and vans to comply with Australian Standard AS4034.</li> <li>• Ensure hands-free kits for mobile phones are available to staff.</li> <li>• Purchase/hire vehicles with added safety features identified in the Light Motor Vehicle Policy:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Anti lock brakes; seat-belts (for cars); driver and passenger airbags; air-conditioner; mudflaps/mudspats</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b><i>Administrative controls</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan long distance driving trips, taking into account time travelling, rest breaks and the work to be undertaken.</li> <li>• Maintenance standards and schedules for every vehicle to be in place.</li> <li>• Headlights on while driving.</li> <li>• Conduct appropriate driver checks before drivers operate specific vehicles for the first time.</li> <li>• Conduct competency checks and "type rating" for specific vehicle types required for higher risk work.</li> <li>• Review driver licence status at scheduled intervals.</li> <li>• Procedures in place to respond safely to breakdowns, collisions and other safety incidents.</li> <li>• Ensure information about effective management of vehicle breakdown is readily available.</li> <li>• Procedures are in place to analyse data that relates to collisions and near misses to establish underlying causes and key contributing factors.</li> <li>• Establish an education program, training and continuous improvement for all staff to improve road user behaviour.</li> </ul>
<b>Personal Protective Equipment</b> <i>(the least preferred option)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• first aid kits</li> <li>• high visibility vests</li> <li>• reflectorised triangles</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX C      Fatigue management and improved road safety

<p><b>Organisational factors</b></p> <p>Working for extended periods of time may fatigue an individual. Managers must be aware of the workloads that are placed on staff to ensure that they do not place themselves at an added risk while driving. To help manage the work factors that lead to fatigue, consider the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that work involving extended driving periods takes account of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the span of hours to be worked,</li> <li>• relevant work patterns,</li> </ul> and is done, as much as possible, within normal working hours.</li> <li>• Managers to monitor staff workloads and working hours, including driving time, to minimise the effects of accumulated fatigue.</li> <li>• Plan in advance any work that requires extended driving.</li> <li>• For periods of extended driving, schedule regular rest breaks.</li> <li>• Allow staff to sleep over in motels where necessary.</li> <li>• Consider video conferencing where practical.</li> </ul> <p><b>Sleep</b></p> <p>The quality and duration of sleep affect alertness whilst at work. If a person is deprived of sleep (continuous sleep for less than 7 hours per night), they will suffer from the effects of fatigue at a quicker rate than a person who is adequately rested.</p> <p>To improve the quality of sleep consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maintain room temperature between 18-24°C to allow for optimal sleep to occur;</li> <li>• use heavy curtains or other methods of reducing the amount of light in the bedroom, and</li> <li>• use earplugs or other methods to cut down external noise.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Alcohol</b></p> <p>Too much alcohol affects a person's natural sleep patterns and inhibits certain phases of sleep.</p> <p><b>Food</b></p> <p>Foods high in fat or sugar (such as processed foods) decrease the level of alerting chemicals in the body. The following foods should be avoided if a person is already feeling tired:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fatty meats</li> <li>• sweet pastries or cakes</li> <li>• full fat dairy products, including cheese</li> <li>• potato or corn chips</li> <li>• pizza</li> <li>• any other greasy, fatty or 'junk food'</li> </ul> <p>Low fat protein foods can increase the levels of alerting chemicals and therefore will help to make a person more alert.</p> <p><b>Water</b></p> <p>Water is important to maintain the body's hydration levels. If the body is low on water, then it will conserve what water is left by reducing a person's activity and making them relax and slow down. This will make the worker more fatigued.</p> <p><b>Caffeine</b></p> <p>Caffeine is a known stimulant in many commonly available drinks. For caffeine to be more effective, consider the following.</p> <p>Avoid drinking caffeine containing drinks first thing in the morning as the body is naturally waking up, or when you are not tired as this contributes to the body's tolerance to caffeine.</p> <p>Avoid caffeine containing drinks a few hours before going to sleep as it may affect the quality of sleep that night and make it harder to stay awake the following morning.</p>
--	--

## APPENDIX D Education and training in safe road use

<p><b>Pre-employment information sheet</b></p> <p>Information about the RTA's requirements for safe driving must be provided in the information package for candidates applying for a job with the RTA.</p> <p><b>RTA induction</b></p> <p>RTA induction will provide targeted information that informs managers and staff of the RTA's policies and procedures on reducing injury among RTA road users. It will include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• requirements of this and related policies;</li> <li>• legal limits and the affects of alcohol and drugs on driving performance;</li> <li>• strategies for dealing with fatigue and stress while driving;</li> <li>• General information about safe driving techniques for:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• driving in adverse conditions (including adverse road conditions),</li> <li>• driving at night, and</li> <li>• driving in rural areas.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Fleet induction</b></p> <p>Fleet induction must be provided to all staff who are required to drive and may incorporate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how to plan driving trips and perform safety checks;</li> <li>• the requirements for reporting on vehicle damage, and</li> <li>• familiarisation with different road vehicle makes and types , ie. sedan/station wagon.</li> </ul> <p><b>Specific training</b></p> <p>Specific training refers to customised training that focuses on low-risk driving strategies. A combination of work factors and work environment factors will place an RTA staff member at risk of injury. The purpose of the specific training is provide the driver with the necessary practical skills to accomplish specific driving tasks and to reduce the risk of being involved in a motor accident.</p> <p>Such training can also be used to target needs identified in an incident analysis and to help correct a driver's skill and behaviour where necessary. Training of this nature may come in the following forms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• skilling in the operation of vehicles in a high risk environment such as off-road, towing, snow or flooded road conditions;</li> <li>• correcting unsafe driving techniques. This includes, but is not limited to cornering, tail-gaiting, driving inappropriately for driving conditions, and unsafe overtaking.</li> </ul>
--	--

## APPENDIX E Priority response driving in the RTA

Priority Response is where a Traffic Commander or Traffic Emergency Patrol needs to proceed to an incident as a matter of priority.

Subject to specific conditions and limitations, drivers of RTA priority response vehicles may, when authorised, respond to road emergencies. Drivers must always apply low-risk driving principles to avoid involvement in a preventable crash.

What is an emergency?	Priority response permission
<p>An emergency is a road or traffic incident which, in the opinion of the Transport Management Centre has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ created a major safety or traffic problem, and</li> <li>▪ requires the immediate deployment of traffic control and traffic management resources.</li> </ul> <p><b>RTA-specific conditions and limitations for priority response</b></p> <p><b>Authorisation</b></p> <p>A priority response can only be undertaken by a Traffic Emergency Patroller or Traffic Commander.</p> <p>It must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ authorised by the General Manager, Transport Management Centre;</li> <li>▪ in a vehicle with emergency vehicle status, and</li> <li>▪ with permission given by the RTA Transport Management Centre Chief Traffic Operations Controller (CTOC) for a specific incident.</li> </ul> <p>Authorised RTA priority response drivers are not authorised to exceed the speed limit.</p> <p>Authorised RTA priority response drivers may only proceed through a red light after stopping, with lights flashing, where the incident has been identified as life-threatening.</p> <p>Permission to drive under priority response is valid only for driving in the affected traffic zone.</p>	<p>Permission to drive under priority response will only be given:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ where traffic movement has been significantly affected by an emergency;</li> <li>▪ following confirmation that the driver is willing, authorised, and that the vehicle has emergency status;</li> <li>▪ following a risk assessment taking account of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ the nature of the incident;</li> <li>▪ traffic conditions, such as heavy traffic or high speed;</li> <li>▪ weather conditions such as heavy rain and fog;</li> <li>▪ road conditions such as access to breakdown lanes, and</li> <li>▪ experience and competence of staff for driving under the prevailing conditions.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Risk assessments will be recorded as part of the incident record.</p> <p>Traffic commanders may use their own discretion in priority response driving, but only after discussion with the CTOC and a recorded risk assessment.</p> <p>Traffic commanders may provide supplementary information to the CTOC and recommend granting or withdrawing permission for authorised Traffic Emergency Patrollers to drive under priority response.</p>

## References

- Australian Standard (1992) **AS/NZS 4034:1992 Motor vehicles - Cargo barriers for occupant protection.**
- Australian Transport Council (1999) **Australian Road Rules.**
- Land Transport Safety Authority (1997) **Fleet Manager's Guide to New Car Safety.**
- National Road Transport Commission of Australia (2001) **Fatigue Expert Group: Options for Regulatory Approach to Fatigue in Drivers of Heavy Vehicles in Australia and New Zealand.**
- NSW Government (2000) **Roads (General) Regulation 2000.**
- NSW Government (1999) **Road Transport (Safety And Traffic Management) Act 1999.**
- NSW Government (1999) **Road Transport (General) Act 1999**
- NSW Government (1999) **Road Transport (Safety and Traffic Management) (Road Rules) Regulation 1999.**
- NSW Government (2000) **OHS Act 2000**
- NSW Government (2001) **OHS Regulation 2001**
- Queensland Government (2001) **NHVAS Fatigue Management. Risk Management Guide.**
- RTA (1999) **Light Motor Vehicle Policy and Guidelines Manual.**