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## Safe Driving Policy

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### 1. Purpose

The WA Country Health Service (WACHS) recognises its duty of care obligations under Section 19 of the [Work Health Safety Act 2020](#) (the Act) to provide workplaces and systems of work that are, as far as practicable, free from hazards and the risk of harm.

WACHS is a geographically dispersed organisation, extending throughout Western Australia. During work, staff may be required to drive a motor vehicle. This policy applies regardless of whether the vehicle driven on WACHS business is a work vehicle, staff's own vehicle or a hire vehicle.

### 2. Policy

This policy and supporting documents have been developed to ensure that, so far as practicable, safe work systems exist to manage risks arising from driving undertaken as part of WACHS work duties. Work vehicles must only be driven by authorised and competent persons, for the purposes intended and in compliance with all road rules, traffic laws and licence conditions.

Approved drivers authorised by their manager and their regions driving approval system, may drive authorised vehicles, provided they comply with the following minimum standards.

#### 2.1 Safe Driving Legal Requirements

All drivers are to:

- hold a current driver's licence suitable for the type of vehicle to be driven
- notify managers of and abide with any restrictions of their licence, including any changes to licence conditions (failure to do so may be considered a breach of this policy)
- have a copy of driver's licence taken as part of the authority to drive documentation
- comply with Road Traffic Laws, including speed limits, wearing seatbelts, using age-appropriate child restraints and not using mobile phones while driving
- ensure compliance with other policies, for example, in transporting mental health passengers.

#### 2.2 Vehicle Safety Checks

All drivers are to:

- Conduct a visual vehicle safety check before driving, to ensure vehicle is in roadworthy condition. This includes checking for obvious faults, including checking tyres, safety equipment and warning lights. Drivers should keep the windscreen, windows and headlights clean to ensure safe clear vision.
- Report any damage or concerns relating to the vehicle to the fleet coordinator immediately and the vehicle should not be used until permission is given by the fleet coordinator or manager. See [Motor Vehicle Fleet Driver and Management Policy](#).

## 2.3 Identifying and Minimising Driving Hazards

Driver and manager:

- are required to identify and minimise hazards associated with driving, so far as practicable
- should consider the potential hazards of each journey undertaken with a common-sense approach used and where there is a reasonable risk that a potential hazard may impact a journey, mitigation of that hazard should occur prior to commencing the journey
- should consider the potential hazards set out below as well as any other potential hazards related to the journey type or area of travel.

As part of this process the driver and manager should identify what type of vehicle is required for the journey.

## 2.4 Hazards Associated with Driver Condition

Each driver is responsible to risk assess their fitness to drive before each journey. This includes considering fatigue and the effects of medication and alcohol.

Drivers should not drive under any impairment.

## 2.5 Working and Traveling Alone

Managers must ensure staff working alone are monitored in accordance with the [WACHS Working in Isolation - Minimum Safety and Security Standards for All Staff Policy](#).

## 2.6 Hazards associated with travel type

### Identification of hazards of each journey

Drivers are to be competent to drive safely in the expected conditions of the journey. Managers will ensure staff undertaking remote, long distance or high-risk driving have the requisite information, experience and skill to drive safely. Should drivers not be confident and competent in all relevant areas, these concerns should be escalated to the manager and additional measures as part of the risk assessment should be put in place prior to departure.

### High Risk Travel

High Risk Travel is any travel that includes at least one of the following:

- long distance travel (over 500km or 5 hours in length or multi day journey)
- remote travel (outside a major town or highway or 100km from any town or site with fuel and water)
- driving in the dark including dawn and dusk
- extreme or bad weather (Note: travel should be postponed if emergency or weather warning issued)
- largely unsealed or poor condition roads or where 4WD is required
- carrying dangerous goods, medical gas or oxygen bottles
- carrying a heavy or bulky load
- or where there is a reasonable risk additional hazards are likely to be encountered that make the route or travel high risk.

## 2.7 Safe Journey Assessment and Mitigation Plan

A Safe Journey Assessment and Mitigation Plan:

- needs to be completed for all journeys which meet the definition of high-risk travel (which includes remote and long distance travel), a Safe Journey Assessment and Mitigation Plan (see [Appendix A](#)) must be completed by the driver and signed off by their manager. The Safe Journey Assessment and Mitigation Plan should address each identified potential hazard and outline the proposed actions taken to mitigate those hazards (including additional training or equipment)
- a copy of each Safe Journey Assessment and Mitigation Plan should be kept by the driver and manager
- may be undertaken for any other journeys as requested by the driver or manager. Managers and employees must consult for any planned journey however they should also liaise with the regional Work Health Safety Manager for further advice should it be required.
- where the travel or route is reoccurring, the Safe Journey Assessment and Mitigation Plan should be reviewed at least weekly or where new potential hazards occur.

## 2.8 Special Requirements for High Risk Travel

Special requirements:

- for high risk travel, the relevant equipment including, maps, spare tyres and appropriate communication systems must be taken
- when undertaking remote travel, at least one person in the vehicle must be competent in reading maps, changing tyres and using the communication systems supplied (where this is not possible, the manager will make appropriate accommodations as part of the Safe Journey Assessment and Mitigation Plan)
- for long distance travel, consideration is required to be given for rest stops, alternating drivers and refuelling options.

## 2.9 Emergency Equipment

### Emergency kits

All vehicles used for WACHS purposes are required to have a current first aid kit and fire extinguisher. Fleet coordinators are to make local arrangements for checking first aid kits and replacing stocks as required. A checklist of the contents of the first aid kit should be kept within the kit at all times and should be verified by the fleet coordinator each time the car is provided to a driver as well as by the driver for each remote, long distance or high-risk journey.

### Additional equipment

Where the journey may encounter specific hazards, additional equipment may be appropriate to ensure the journey is undertaken safely. This should be considered in planning the journey and included in the mitigation plan.

## Reliable and Continuous Communications

- Where staff are working alone, undertaking remote, long distance or high risk travel, a continuous and reliable means of communication with their manager (or delegated contact person) must be maintained, including during any periods of driving.
- Local arrangements should be made to ensure the driver has a reliable communication system, that is functioning, charged and the driver/passenger know how to use it. Where mobile phone reception will not reliably cover the full journey an alternative communication system (such as a satellite phone) should be utilised.
- Where appropriate a designated contact person is nominated by the driver prior to departure who always knows their whereabouts and records their departure and arrival times. An escalation pathway must be in place for the designated contact person to follow if a staff member does not call or return at the expected time.

## 2.10 Incident Management and Reporting

- Where a driver is involved in or witnesses an incident, they should provide emergency assistance and call emergency services if required and safe to do so.
- All incidents must also be reported to their manager and the fleet coordinator as soon as possible via a [Safety Risk Report Form](#) in accordance with the WACHS [Hazard and Incident Management Procedure](#). Where any vehicle damage occurs or is suspected, the driver must report the damage to their manager/and or the Fleet Coordinator immediately, for further advice before recommencing the journey.
- In the event of an accident or vehicle damage, drivers are to comply with all legal and insurance requirements. Including notifying police. See [Motor Vehicle Fleet Driver and Management Policy](#).

## 3. Roles and Responsibilities

Everyone at a workplace has responsibility for maintaining a safe work place in matters they have authority to control.

The **driver** is responsible for:

- driving safely and ensuring all road laws and licensing requirements are met
- being unimpaired and alert and drive according to the prevailing conditions
- acquiring the necessary information for the planned route and adequately planning the journey and identifying any hazards or specific risks
- escalating any concerns about either the vehicle, equipment, their own competency, or condition to drive to their manager prior to commencing the journey
- following the requirements for keeping vehicle logbooks as outlined in the WACHS [Motor Vehicle Fleet Driver and Management Policy](#).

The **passenger** is responsible for:

- assisting the driver with navigation and communication as needed
- being aware of and following all safety protocols during the journey
- helping monitor the driver's condition and alertness, and offering to breaks as needed
- reporting any safety concerns or incidents to the driver or manager.

The **Manager** is responsible for:

- providing appropriate training and information to all staff undertaking driving for work related purposes.

- undertaking risk assessments of planned journeys in conjunction with the driver
- approving Journey Plans when applicable
- reviewing and managing workers who demonstrate a pattern of careless or unsafe driving.

The **Fleet Coordinator** is responsible for:

- vehicle selection, maintaining vehicles, arranging repairs and ensuring drivers receiving the appropriate vehicle in working conditions. Further information about their role and these elements can be found in [Motor Vehicle Fleet Driver and Management Policy](#).
- ensuring appropriate maintenance and servicing is completed on WACHS vehicles and that vehicles are in appropriate working order before they are used by workers.

**All staff** are required to work within policies and guidelines to make sure that WACHS is a safe, equitable and positive place to be.

## 4. Monitoring and Evaluation

### 4.1 Monitoring

All completed Safe Journey Assessment and Mitigation Plans must be provided to the supervisor/manager/nominated delegate for review and record keeping. Monitoring daily compliance with this procedure is to be managed by the Regional Work Health Safety Managers and the Fleet Coordinators.

### 4.2 Evaluation

Evaluation of this document is to be carried out by the Regional Work Health Safety Managers and the Fleet Coordinators.

## 5. Compliance

This procedure is a mandatory requirement under the [Work Health and Safety Act 2020](#) (WA).

Failure to comply with this policy may constitute a breach of the WA Health Code of Conduct (Code). The Code is part of the [Integrity Policy Framework](#) issued pursuant to Section 26 of the [Health Services Act 2016](#) and is binding on all WACHS staff which for this purpose includes trainees, students, volunteers, researchers, contractors for service (including all visiting health professionals and agency staff) and persons delivering training or education within WACHS.

WACHS staff are reminded that compliance with all policies and procedures is mandatory.

## 6. References

[Australian Code for the Transport of Dangerous Goods by Road and Rail](#) (2017). National Transport Commission.

Defined Remote Area of Western Australia (September 2019). [The Government of Western Australia, Department of Transport](#).

Road Traffic Act 1974**7. Definitions**

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Driver</b>	Anyone, whether they are staff, relevant contractor or agency personnel operating a vehicle for WACHs work purposes, whether as part of their normal duties, or as directed by a manager.
<b>High Risk Travel</b>	High risk travel includes remote and long distance travel where at least one factor in <a href="#">High Risk Travel</a> is present, or travel where there is a reasonable risk additional hazards are likely to be encountered that make the route or travel high risk.
<b>Long Distance Travel</b>	Where driving will exceed 500 kilometres per day or [5 hours per day. As well as any journey that will take more than one day to complete.
<b>Remote Travel</b>	Remote travel will be driving that occurs outside a major town or highway or 100km from any town or site with fuel and water
<b>Road Traffic Laws</b>	Includes the <i>Road Traffic (Vehicles) Act 2012 (WA)</i> and <i>Road Traffic (Vehicles) Regulations 2014 (WA)</i> and any other legislation that may apply to any driving activities undertaken.
<b>Vehicle</b>	Means any vehicle used for work purposes, may include WACHS fleet vehicles, hire vehicles or personal vehicles where approved for use for work purposes.

## 8. Document Summary

<b>Coverage</b>	WACHS-wide
<b>Audience</b>	All staff
<b>Records Management</b>	Non Clinical: <a href="#">Corporate Recordkeeping Compliance Policy</a>
<b>Related Legislation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Work Health and Safety Act 2020</a> (WA)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Road Traffic (Vehicles) Act 2012</a> (WA)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Road Traffic (Vehicles) Regulations 2014</a> (WA)</li> </ul>
<b>Related Mandatory Policies / Frameworks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MP 0006/16 - <a href="#">Risk Management Policy</a></li> <li>• MP 0180/23 - <a href="#">Work Health and Safety Management Policy</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Employment Policy Framework</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Work Health Safety Policy Framework</a></li> </ul>
<b>Related WACHS Policy Documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Hazard and Incident Management Procedure</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Managing Risks of Hazardous Chemicals and Dangerous Goods Procedure</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Motor Vehicle Fleet Driver and Management Policy</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Work Health and Safety Policy</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Working in Isolation - Minimum Safety and Security Standards for All Staff Policy</a></li> </ul>
<b>Other Related Documents</b>	Nil
<b>Related Forms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Safety Risk Report Form</a></li> </ul>
<b>Related Training Packages</b>	<a href="#">Rural and Remote Safe Driving</a> (RRSD EL1)
<b>Aboriginal Health Impact Statement Declaration (ISD)</b>	ISD Record ID: 3302
<b>National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards</b>	1.1a, 1.7c, 1.10a, 1.10c
<b>Aged Care Quality Standards</b>	Nil
<b>Chief Psychiatrist's Standards for Clinical Care</b>	Nil



## 9. Document Control

Version	Published date	Current from	Summary of changes
4.00	13 June 2024	13 June 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>increased accountability for the WACHS due to the changed in legislation from OSH to WHS</li> <li>policy now focused on safe driving only</li> <li>changes to safe journey plan - now 'high risk' threshold. If it meets this threshold, then risk assessment and mitigation plan completed between driver and manager.</li> </ul>
4.01	5 July 2024	13 June 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>minor amendments to the high risk criteria and expectations of managers and employees</li> </ul>
4.02	11 July 2024	13 June 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fix typo in definitions section</li> </ul>
4.03	22 July 2024	13 June 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>minor amendment to update Appendix A</li> </ul>

## 10. Approval

<b>Policy Owner</b>	Executive Director People Capability Culture
<b>Co-approver</b>	Nil
<b>Contact</b>	Director Work Health Safety Wellbeing
<b>Business Unit</b>	Work Health and Safety
<b>EDRMS #</b>	ED-CO-14-90356
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**This document can be made available in alternative formats on request.**



## Appendix A: Safe Journey Assessment and Mitigation Plan ('Risk Assessment') – Template

A written risk assessment and journey plan is required for remote, long distance and high-risk travel and where potential situational hazard(s) are identified. Where the same route is reoccurring done safety plan must be reviewed weekly so any new or changed hazards.

<b>Driver:</b>		<b>Work Mobile Number</b>	
<b>Manager name and contact:</b>		<b>Satellite Phone Contact number:</b>	
<b>Trip Distance:</b>		<b>Vehicle Registration Number:</b>	
<b>Person responsible for monitoring travel and contact:</b>		<b>Manager phone numbers</b>	
<b>Passenger(s):</b>		<b>Passenger/s phone number:</b>	
<b>Travel Dates</b>		<b>Travel Details (Route and Destination)</b>	

Basic Checklist to be completed by driver		
Visual check of vehicle including checking the following: <input type="checkbox"/> Headlights <input type="checkbox"/> Brakes <input type="checkbox"/> Lights <input type="checkbox"/> Mirrors <input type="checkbox"/> Tyres <input type="checkbox"/> Seatbelts <input type="checkbox"/> Indicators <input type="checkbox"/> Horn <input type="checkbox"/> Brake light <input type="checkbox"/> Locks <input type="checkbox"/> Windscreen wipers <input type="checkbox"/> Windscreen undamaged and clean	Ensure vehicle has following: <input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient fuel <input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient drinking water <input type="checkbox"/> Maps of area travelled <input type="checkbox"/> Spare tyre and changing equipment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> First aid kit <input type="checkbox"/> Fire extinguisher  Additional equipment (if necessary): <input type="checkbox"/> Reliable and continuous communication system <input type="checkbox"/> GPS system <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Spare fuel and water	Plan the journey: <input type="checkbox"/> Length and hours realistic <input type="checkbox"/> Breaks planned <input type="checkbox"/> Rigid check in plan if required <input type="checkbox"/> Potential Hazards assessed <input type="checkbox"/> Extra precautions and risk mitigation plans put in place <input type="checkbox"/> Consider is travel essential or can other methods be used

Hazards Identified	Y/N	Safety Plan and Mitigation steps put in place	Additional equipment (or training) needed	Initial driver and manager
Remote Travel				
Long distances (above 500km or 5 hours)				
<b>Situational hazards:</b>				
Bad Weather conditions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Bushfire risk</li> <li>○ Flooding risk</li> <li>○ Bogging risk</li> </ul>				
Collision risk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Wildlife or stock on road</li> </ul>				
Driving outside of daylight hours				
Poor road conditions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Unsealed road, 4WD</li> </ul>				
Transporting dangerous goods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Medical gas and oxygen bottles</li> </ul>				
Carrying load				
<b>Driver related hazards:</b>				
Fatigue				
Impairment (illness, medication, alcohol)				
Working / traveling alone				
Inexperienced driver (<2 years or new to conditions)				
<b>Other Hazards (list):</b>				

Signature/Date - Manager:

Signature/Date - Employee: