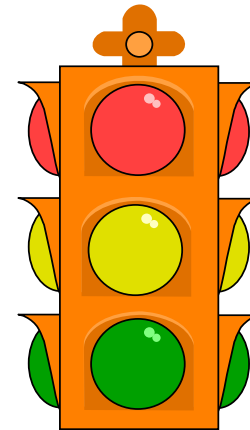


Safe Driving Handbook



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1. Foreword

This Safe Driving Handbook provides guidelines in relation to the safe use of Power and Water Corporation vehicles in varying driving situations.

In addition to familiarising your self with the information provided in this handbook, it is also the responsibility of all drivers of Power and Water vehicles to familiarise themselves and comply with the NT Fleet Driver's Handbook.

The NT Fleet Driver's Handbook is located in the glove box of all Power and Water vehicles. It is also available on the NT Fleet Intranet, and at NT Fleet offices.

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2. Definitions

Urban Travel: Travel on sealed roads.

Inter Regional Travel: Travel on sealed roads between centres.

Off Road Travel: Travel on unsealed roads that may or may not be in remote areas.

EPIRB: Emergency Positioning Indication Radio Beacon

HCSCC: Hudson Creek System Control Centre

3. Driver Responsibilities

(See NT Fleet Driver's Handbook, page 7-12)

It is the driver's responsibility to comply, at all times, with the Traffic Act, Australian Road Rules, and Laws and Regulations which apply to vehicles being used in particular areas. Drivers must hold a current and applicable drivers licence for the class of vehicle being driven.

If your licence is suspended you must notify your supervisor of your inability to drive.

Employees who are unlicensed are strictly prohibited from driving any Power and Water vehicle.

If you are new to the Northern Territory you must apply to the Motor Vehicle Registry to transfer your interstate or overseas licence to a Northern Territory licence.

Accurate odometer readings must be given each time the vehicle is refuelled.

Seat belts must be worn at all times and any cargo within the vehicle must be secured.

Use and load the vehicle according to its purpose, design specification and agreed capacity. This also applies to any trailer being towed. See also Section 9, Load Restraint

It is the driver's responsibility to pay all Traffic Infringement Notices (TINs) and fines that have resulted while the vehicle is in their use. This includes all parking fines and TINs arising from speed and red light camera fines. The fines generated from these sources are individual fines and the responsibility of the driver to pay them. Late payment of fines may incur additional penalties.

As a driver, you need to account for the time you spend driving any Power and Water vehicle. All drivers should complete the logbook that is kept in the vehicle.

Not all vehicles are the same. Before starting any journey familiarise yourself with the controls and adjust the seat and mirrors before moving off.

Secure personal effects and take responsibility for lost or stolen personal items.

Smoking is not permitted in any Government vehicle.

Comply with Section 16 of Treasurer's Directions.

Unauthorised or misuse of a Government vehicle may result in penalties being imposed on the driver. The penalties for driving under the influence of a drug or intoxicating substance or exceeding the prescribed percentage or concentration of alcohol in the blood are severe.

3.1 Home Garaging of NT Government Plated Vehicles

The only person permitted to drive an NT Government plated vehicle when it is home garaged is the Power and Water employee.

Only Power and Water employees are permitted to travel in a Power and Water vehicle. No family member or friends are permitted to drive a Power and Water vehicle.

If an NT Government plated vehicle is home garaged it must be driven to and from work only, with no private use whatsoever.

3.2 Home Garaging of Power and Water Private Plated Vehicles

If a Power and Water private plated vehicle is home garaged, it is part of an executive contract (Executive Contract Manager or Executive Contract Officer 1 and above) and can be used by family members out of hours.

If a non-contract officer takes a private plated vehicle home this vehicle is not to be used as a general family vehicle. It should only be driven by the staff member and their spouse/partner. The Power and Water staff member should be in the car when their spouse/partner is driving. If the vehicle is used for private purposes outside the urban area in which the employee lives, fuel must be purchased by the employee (OCPE ref 1999/703).

3.3 Keeping your vehicle roadworthy

The person who drives the vehicle is responsible for the following service checks:

Daily Checks

- Engine oil level;
- Transmission oil level (for auto);
- Radiator coolant level;
- Visual tyre check;
- Ensure windscreen is clean and clear; and
- Lock vehicles when unoccupied even within Power and Water sites.

Weekly Checks

The following checks should be done weekly or when the vehicle is refuelled:

- All under bonnet levels, engine oil, brake and clutch master cylinder level, battery level, windscreen washing reservoir; and
- Tyre inflation pressures;

Servicing your Vehicle

Monitor the 'next service' sticker and arrange with NT Fleet a mutually agreeable time for servicing. Contact details are in the NT Fleet Driver's Handbook located in each vehicle.

Driving within Power and Water facilities

When driving within Power and Water facilities please:

- Abide by the speed limit. In most locations this is 20km/hr; and
- Wear your seat belt until the vehicle has stopped and the journey is completed. Do not take your seat belt off as you enter a Power and Water site; you are still bound by the Traffic Act.

4. Urban Travel

4.1 Overview

In the Northern Territory there is an open speed limit in certain areas, and there are also speed restrictions in built up areas. All Power and Water employees must abide by the speed limits. Power and Water vehicles are not emergency vehicles and there is no excuse for speeding.

Employees need to take care in noting where speed limits change as there are a number of zones. It is your responsibility as a driver to note the speed limits and abide by them.

Day time lights should be used where available. If daytime lights are not available, low beam headlights should be used during operation of a vehicle to provide an extra degree of visibility and safety.

4.2 Mobile Phones

It is an offence under the *Traffic Act* to use a mobile phone without hands free whilst driving. Any use of a mobile phone whilst driving a vehicle will increase the chance of being distracted by the conversation and in accepting the call.

Recommendations whilst driving:

- Turn your mobile phone off and allow calls to be answered by message bank;
- If there is another staff member in the vehicle, make them responsible for answering phones;
- If you have to take a call, pull over and stop the car in a safe area. Keep the call short so as not to create a hazard whilst parked;
- If you cannot pull over and must take a call, only phones fitted with a hands-free device or cars fitted with in-car hands free devices are to be used to take the call;
- Do not talk with a phone out of its hands free cradle or held in the driver's hand;
- Incoming calls must be kept brief. Advise the caller that you are driving and ask if the call can wait. If the call requires lengthy discussion employees must terminate the call, pull out of traffic, park in a safe place and resume the conversation.
- It is not recommended to talk on mobiles in cars when there is inclement weather conditions, poor road conditions, or congested traffic.

4.3 Bad Weather Conditions

Storms and rain change road conditions. You should allow additional time to complete your journey in bad weather and be aware of the following:

- Braking times will increase with water on the road.
- Steer and brake with a light touch, braking hard or locking the wheels could result in a skid.
- Slow down where water is on the road to prevent aquaplaning.
- After a storm there may be debris on the road. If debris is a hazard, pull over safely and notify Police or Hudson Creek System Control Centre (HCSCC) of the location. Wait on site for help to arrive and to warn other motorists.

Cruise Control on wet and slippery roads

Drivers should refer to the vehicle manual for specific guidance on the use of the vehicle's cruise control system in varying road conditions.

Most manuals recommend **not using** cruise control in heavy or varying traffic, or on winding, slippery or rough roads. Severe accidents have occurred when vehicles aquaplane in cruise control, if the cruise control system's low traction feature does not activate, it may cause the vehicle to accelerate rapidly.

4.4 Breakdowns

If your vehicle breaks down it is recommended that you:

- a) Turn on the hazard lights to alert other traffic;
- b) Move the car to the shoulder of the road if possible to allow traffic to pass freely;

- c) If unable to move the vehicle contact Police or HCSCC to assist with traffic management;
- d) Call the Fleet roadside assistance number. Details are in the NT Fleet Drivers Handbook located in each vehicle;
- e) Contact your supervisor and/or staff at your intended destination and advise of your situation; and
- f) Keep clear of the roadway and approaching traffic.

4.5 Accidents

The following should be completed in the event of being involved in an accident:

- a) Stop immediately in a safe place. Make sure you're not in any danger, and if it's safe, apply First Aid to any victims of the incident.
- b) If you consider the emergency requires police, fire or ambulance, call "000"
- c) Contact Hudson Creek System Control on the emergency number: 8947 7015; or via two-way radio. Advise System Control is "000" has been called.
- d) If the vehicle is drivable, move to a safe area and ensure hazard lights are switched on.
- e) For any asset damage at all, it is a requirement to report the accident to Police within 24 hours;
- f) If another vehicle is involved, take down the following details:
 - Full name of driver;

- Contact details of driver and any passengers (address and phone numbers);
- Licence details of driver;
- Registration number, make, model and year of other vehicle; and
- Exact location of accident, street names.
- Date and time of accident
- g) If the vehicle is not drivable arrange with NT Fleet to have it towed. Contact details are in the NT Fleet Driver's Handbook located in each vehicle.
- h) Complete a Motor Vehicle Accident (MVA) report form and the RISQ incident form.

4.6 Parking

Take care when parking, driving around car parks and negotiating turns such as three-point turns.

- Be aware of where other stationary or moving objects are, such as cars, poles, walls and curbs;
- Ensure you have enough room to complete the action you are planning to do;
- If the car is unfamiliar to you, allow additional room to complete actions; and
- Be aware that different vehicles have different turning circles.

4.7 Other People

Travel exposes employees to others on the road. You can control what **you** do whilst driving. If you see others driving dangerously, take steps to ensure you do not drive near them. Take note that there may be others on the road apart from vehicles such as cyclist and pedestrians. Do not assume that the public will cross the road at a designated crossing. **Stay alert.** An alert driver is able to compensate for hazards.

5. Inter Regional Travel - Travel on Sealed Roads between Centres

5.1 Vehicle Suitability

Things to consider:

- Is the vehicle suitable for the route to be travelled;
- Is it capable of safely carrying the required load and/or number of passengers;
- Is it equipped with sufficient spare parts/wheels, first aid kit, water and emergency provisions for the journey;
- Is it equipped with a means of communication in the event of a breakdown; and
- Has the vehicle been maintained to a suitable standard that will provide reliability.

5.2 Inter Regional Area Hazards

Consideration should be given to the following points:

Roadtrains

Roadtrains are common in the Northern Territory and can be up to three trailers (50 metres) long. They are not confined to the bitumen and will be encountered on dirt roads. Always give them plenty of room and when overtaking, allow at least 1km of clear road ahead.

Take care when overtaking.

Wandering Stock and Wildlife

The majority of Northern Territory roads are not fenced. Cattle, horses, kangaroos, donkeys, buffaloes and camels may be found crossing the roads, particularly early in the morning and late in the afternoon. They may also be found standing in the middle of the road at night. Drivers should slow down and treat all animals on the road or roadside with caution. Do not expect animals to automatically move out of the way. Birds may also be a problem especially if they are feeding on the bodies of other animals killed on the road.

Night Driving

Night driving should be avoided where possible. However, if night driving is necessary, check the vehicle to ensure

its lights are adequate. A driver required to travel at night should reduce speed to assist in stopping safely.

Driver Fatigue

If you feel tired or drowsy stop driving and have a break. Breaks of ten minutes or more should be taken every three hours. Driver fatigue is one of the most common causes of single vehicle accidents.

Floods

Do not attempt to cross flooded bridges or causeways until water recedes. Be aware of the danger that swift flowing water presents. Most flash floods recede within twenty four hours. Listen to radio reports in the Wet Season.

Breakdowns

In the event of a breakdown stay with the vehicle. A missing vehicle is much easier to find than a missing person. Temperatures in the Territory can be in both extremes, making it important to stay in the shade or under shelter. Drivers should also ensure that prior to starting their journey there is an ample supply of water in the vehicle and they have let their coworkers and manager know their travel plan. In the case of travelling off road or to a remote location, you should advise HCSCC of the details of your journey.

Service and Fuel

Prior to departing drivers should check the NT Fleet Drivers Handbook, page 11, for information on the availability of fuel and vehicle repair outlets such as opening times, distances and location.

Fuel Supplies

Before starting a journey, ensure you can make fuel purchases on your fuel card along the route you are taking.

The NT Government (including Power and Water) has a contract with an approved supplier to supply fuel for its vehicle fleet. If the PWC vehicle you are driving requires fuel, you will find a fuel card in the vehicle (usually on the keychain). Fuel is paid for by using this **card and is subject to a mandatory common use contract**. Fuel should only be purchased from suppliers who accept the fuel card supplied with the vehicle. It is the driver's responsibility to ensure that the correct type of fuel (eg unleaded petrol, diesel etc) is used when refuelling.

Fuel cards, other than the approved supplier, can only be supplied with Managing Director approval and can only be used in locations where there is no BP station eg Barkley Homestead, Yulara, Timber Creek, Jabiru and some remote outstations.

Odometer Readings and Accuracy

The actual odometer reading, to the nearest kilometre, should be provided to the service station attendant when refuelling. Accurate odometer readings, registration number and a clear signature must be provided on manual Fuel Card Dockets, V Forms and all other fuel records.

The provision of accurate odometer readings at each refuel is essential for NT Fleet to efficiently manage the vehicle fleet. Your assistance in providing this information is appreciated.

Drivers are reminded that it is a **serious offence** to use fuel purchased for Government use in unauthorised vehicles.

6. Off Road Travel

6.1 Travel Off Road or to a Remote Location

Power and Water employees travelling to a remote location by road must advise the designated contact point (if applicable) in the area and HCSCC of the following details:

- a) Proposed itinerary before commencing the trip;
- b) Satellite telephone number, mobile telephone number, and/or the two-way radio identification call sign (if available);

- c) Registration of the vehicle;
- d) If an EPIRB is carried in the vehicle;
- e) Emergency contact person's telephone number for HCSCC;
- f) Departure time from each point;
- g) Estimated time of arrival (ETA) at the next point; and
- h) Actual arrival time at the next point.

6.2 Communication Protocol

In the event a Power and Water employee fails to report their arrival at their destination to HCSCC, within one hour after their ETA, HCSCC will initiate the following actions:

- (a) Attempt to call the satellite/mobile telephone or by UHF radio to determine if there is a problem
- (b) If no contact is established with the traveller, contact shall be made with the emergency contact person to advise them of the situation; and
- (c) Once the emergency contact person has been contacted and appraised of the situation, the employee's manager or supervisor and emergency contact person shall determine the appropriate course of action. However, HCSCC may be asked for further assistance.

6.3 Emergency Actions

The following is a list of actions to be performed by the emergency contact person in the event that no contact is made with the travelling employee:

- (a) Contact the accommodation provider at the destination to confirm the safe arrival of the traveller;
- (b) Contact the employee's home to confirm arrival at home, or contact from the traveller;
- (c) Continue to call the satellite/mobile telephone;
- (d) Check with other sources at the destination to confirm the safe arrival of the traveller;
- (e) Contact the Section Manager and inform him/her of the situation; and
- (f) Contact the Rescue Coordination Desk in Canberra to check for the activation of an EPIRB on the route of travel (1800 815 257).

6.4 EPIRB Activation

On receipt of a notification from the Rescue Coordination Desk in Canberra that an EPIRB has been activated, HCSCC shall contact the business unit General Manager and notify them of the event. The business unit General Manager shall coordinate the rescue and recovery action.

6.5 Amendments to Travel Plans

Any change to the travel itinerary should be notified to the designated contact person and HCSCC, immediately the change/s has been identified.

6.6 Vehicle Check List

Before starting a journey make the following checks to your vehicle and equipment and arrange for repairs if required:

External Checks
Number plate clean
Number plate not damaged
Vehicle clean
Any visible damage to vehicle
Lights
Indicators working
Parking lights working
Headlights working
High beam working
Brake lights working
Tyres
Tread worn evenly
Sufficient tread on tyres
Tyres not damaged

Interior
Odometer reading under next scheduled service date

No loose items that can be thrown around
Interior light working
Dashboard lights working
Instrumentation working
Horn working
Interior clean
Interior damaged
No cracks on windscreen
Windscreen wipers working
Blades not damaged
Windscreen washers working
First aid supplies current and in date
Fire extinguisher in good condition and inspection tag current
Under bonnet check
Engine oil at maximum
Brake/clutch fluid at maximum
Power steering reservoir at maximum
Transmission fluid at maximum
Water/coolant at maximum
Windscreen washer reservoir at maximum
Spare tyre fully inflated
Jack and accessories
Wheel brace/cross bar
Miscellaneous
Car keys in good condition
Keyless remote in good condition
Fuel card attached to keys
EPIRB, two way radio, Sat phone have all been tested and work

Travelling time, destination, arrival and departure plans have been approved and sent to HCSCC?

7. Safe Overtaking

Overtaking Rules

Most motorists enjoy overtaking but few observe the safety rules involved. Remember that taking responsibility for you're own life as well as others is the first step towards cultivating good road manners.

When you want to overtake:

Stay Back

Maintain a safe following distance. Always remain two seconds behind the vehicle in front. Many motorists forget what they have learnt about safe following distance when they start to overtake. They go too closely to the vehicle in front and dart out onto the right side as soon as an opening occurs. This is hazardous because the vehicle in front may stop suddenly. Also, the closer you get to the vehicle in front, the less you can see ahead.

Check Ahead

Check for oncoming traffic and road space available. Ensure that approaching traffic is beyond your twelve second visual scan and that there is no road hazard within the twelve second distance. Remember that it takes approximately ten seconds to complete your overtaking manoeuvre.

Check Behind

Check traffic behind. Do not pull to the right until you know what's behind. Always be mindful that the driver behind may want to overtake you. Use your mirrors and also turn your head to the right to **check your blind spot** for any vehicle.

Signal and Move Right

Warn the vehicle behind of your intention by using your right indicator. Signal for at least five seconds before overtaking. You may need to re-adjust your twelve-second scan at this point as the vehicle you are overtaking or the oncoming vehicle may change speed.

Move Right

Once you are sure that you are following at a safe distance and the road ahead is clear, move onto the right hand side. Give the vehicle you are overtaking adequate space. Be careful and always maintain control.

Accelerate

Now you are sure that you will be overtaking and your vehicle is in between two lanes or on the lane of oncoming traffic. Accelerate and overtake as quickly as possible. Change to a lower gear to allow more power and acceleration if needed. Remember to stay within the speed limit.

Communicate

Warn that you are overtaking. Now that you are in the blind spot of the vehicle you are overtaking, tap your horn or flash your headlights if the driver does not know that you are attempting to overtake him.

Signal and Move Left

After you have passed the vehicle, use your left indicator to signal that you are returning to the left-hand side of the road.

Move Left

Return to the left side as soon as you can see the front of the vehicle you have just overtaken in your rear view mirror. Do not cramp the vehicle you have just passed.

Resume Speed

Now that you have safely completed overtaking, resume the speed that you were at. If someone tries to overtake you, you should make it easy for him or her by either slowing your speed or moving over to the left to give them more space to complete the manoeuvre.

8. Good Manners

Do Not Tailgate

Tailgating is **dangerous!** It can make the driver in front nervous and gives you **less time to react** if the vehicle in front slows down or brakes suddenly. Keep a safe following distance. Do not harass the vehicle in front by tailgating.

Be Patient

Never lose your **'cool'** on the road and display provocative gestures and language when others cause you inconvenience. Avoid direct confrontation.

Do Not Road Hog

This is probably one of worst offences road users can commit. Most people want to get to their destinations in the shortest possible time, even if you may not be in a hurry. Keep to the left unless overtaking.

Use Horn Correctly

Beep only to warn others of danger. Expressing your frustration through your horn will only alarm or anger other road users into making unpredictable moves which may lead to accidents.

Signal Early

Indicating late or worse, not at all, is **dangerous!** Most accidents can be avoided simply by alerting other road users of your intentions **early**. Remember to turn off your indicator after use.

Do Not Jump Queue

This causes unnecessary frustration especially in a traffic jam and only worsens the situation. Give way to oncoming vehicles turning on and off the main road.

Forgive and Forget

It is polite to apologise when you make a mistake. If the other party apologises, please acknowledge it.

Watch Out for Children, Aged and Handicapped

Give way to the young, aged or handicapped even though they may not always have the right of way.

Driving on Shoulders

Never drive on road shoulders! They are strictly meant for emergencies only. Innocent lives have been lost due to irresponsible motorists using road shoulders.

Do Not Always Insist on the Right of Way

This can be especially helpful if the other party is experiencing some difficulty for example coming in and out from a side road, changing lanes or leaving a car park.

Reciprocate

Wave 'thanks' to other motorists who give way and reciprocate courteous acts. Returning courteous gestures creates a more pleasant environment for everyone.

Be Helpful

Help other motorists in distress. It may be you next time.

One last word, if you are already practising these tips, congratulations! Keep up the good work! If not, it is never too late to start.

9. Load Restraint

Why is load restraint important?

Every year people are injured and killed in crashes caused by un-restrained loads and objects. This occurs when:

- Heavy objects fall from vehicles onto other vehicles or pedestrians;
- Drivers swerve to avoid falling or fallen items from vehicles;
- Spillage on roads from lost loads causes vehicles to skid and lose control;
- Unrestrained loads crash into vehicle cabins during emergency braking; and
- Vehicles overturn because of loads shifting while cornering.

To prevent accidents and injury from unrestrained or shifting loads:

- ✓ Always restrain the load being carried.
- ✓ Use a vehicle appropriate for the type of load you are carrying.
- ✓ Position the load correctly.
- ✓ Use suitable restraint equipment, in good condition, for the load being carried.
- ✓ Use good quality restraint equipment, in good condition.

- ✓ Check your load restraint immediately before leaving and during the trip.
- ✓ Be aware you are driving under different or more difficult conditions when you are carrying certain types of loads.
- ✓ Unload safely.
- ✓ Failure to restrain a load correctly on a vehicle may result in legal action being taken against any persons involved.

(See also Load Restraint Guide which covers the guidelines and performance standards for the safe carriage of loads on road vehicles. A copy of the guide is available at most Motor Vehicle Registry Offices.)

10. Power and Water Corporation Contact Details

Name	Phone	Fax
System Control HCSCC	8924 6506	
System Control HCSCC use in emergency only	8947 7015	
NT Fleet Darwin	8924 5638	8924 5084
NT Fleet Katherine	8973 8794	8973 8719
NT Fleet Tennant Creek	8962 4583	8962 4600
NT Fleet Alice Springs	8951 5582	8951 5246
PWC Transport Officer	8924 7726	0401 114 451 mobile