

MOTOR VEHICLE POLICY

WHS01

Policy Title:	Motor Vehicle Policy		
Policy Type:	Work, Health and Safety		
Policy Owner:	Chief Executive Officer		
Policy Custodian:	Chief Operations Officer		
Responsible Officer:	Health, Safety and Risk Officer		
Document ID:	24946	Version:	4.0
Approval Date:	23/05/2024	Next Review Date:	23/05/2026

Background

The West Daly Regional Council ('Council') operates in a vast area of over 14,000km². It comprises three Indigenous communities that are interconnected by gravel roads and tracks. Due to the rough terrain, the majority of travel in this area is carried out through four-wheel drive vehicles. The weather conditions in the area vary between the annual monsoon season and long periods of dry weather. Driving in this area can be hazardous due to rivers, creeks, bush tracks, sand, and long distances between communities. The roads in this area are also prone to storm and flood damage, leading to dangerous washouts, scours, and rough surfaces. During the wet season, the rivers and floodways can become extremely hazardous. Similarly, in the dry season, the road surfaces may become badly corrugated with large areas of loose sand.

Purpose

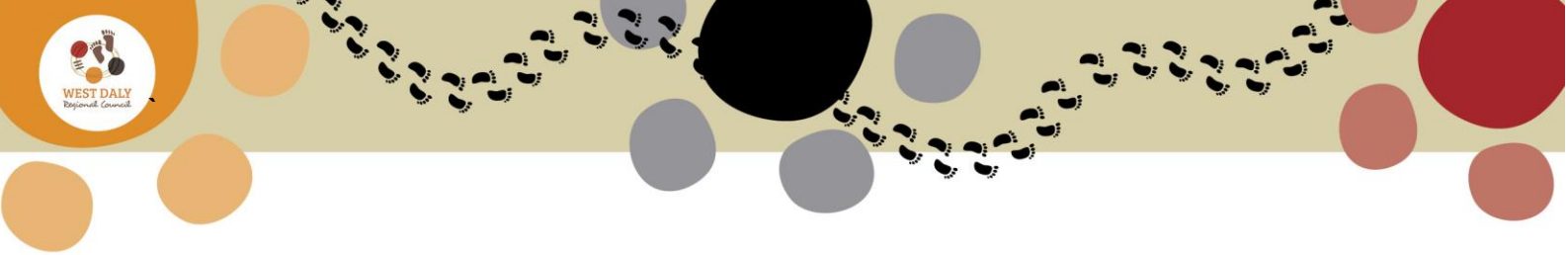
The Motor Vehicle Policy ('Policy') outlines guidelines, responsibilities, and expectations for the use of motor vehicles owned or operated by the Council.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees, appointed and elected members, contractors, or authorised personnel who operate or travel in Council-owned or leased vehicles ('Council Vehicle') for work-related and private purposes.

Policy Statement

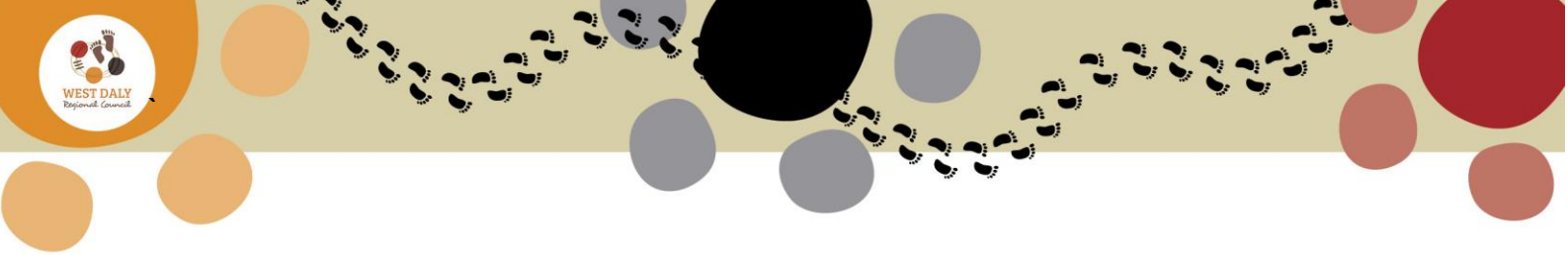
The safety of all employees is of utmost importance to the Council, especially pertaining to using motor vehicles. As per the *Work Health Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011*, the Council is responsible for ensuring the safety of all workers, elected and appointed members ('worker'). Hence, any worker who



uses the Council Vehicle for official and private purposes must adhere to the procedures for vehicle equipment, speed limits, crossing rivers/floodway fatigue, and general safety requirements.

1. Vehicle Operation and Compliance Policies

- 1.1. The Council puts great emphasis on the importance of adhering to the *Northern Territory Traffic Regulations 1999*, also known as the *NT Road Rules* when operating and using its fleet vehicles. It is expected that all employees who are responsible for driving Council-owned or leased vehicles will fully comply with these regulations during the course of their duties.
- 1.2. All Council vehicles, equipment, and machinery that are designed to operate on public roads and internal community routes are required to have a valid Northern Territory registration.
- 1.3. As a responsible driver, it is crucial to understand and follow the manufacturer's guidelines for operating your assigned vehicle. Drivers should always take necessary precautions while driving and make reasonable attempts to keep the vehicle well-maintained to ensure its safety, dependability, and efficiency.
- 1.4. All drivers operating Council vehicles must possess a valid Northern Territory vehicle license corresponding to the appropriate vehicle class.
- 1.5. If a driver's approved license expires, is revoked, or faces disqualification from driving, the driver must inform their supervisor immediately. They are not permitted to drive any Council vehicle until their license is valid again.
- 1.6. Employees who do not inform their supervisors and People and Culture about their driving license suspensions or cancellations and then proceed to operate the Council vehicles will be committing offences and will likely face severe consequences for failing to disclose, which is considered severe misconduct.
- 1.7. Elected or appointed members who do not disclose license suspensions/cancellations to the CEO, governance, or corporate manager and still operate the Council vehicles will not only violate offences but also face severe consequences for their failure to disclose, which is considered serious misconduct.
- 1.8. As per the Northern Territory ('NT') Government, individuals who establish residency in the NT are required to convert their interstate driver's license to an NT Driver's License within three months. The Council recommends the workers convert their interstate licence immediately if they intend to stay with the Council for over three months.
- 1.9. The Blood Alcohol Concentration ('BAC') must always be 0.00% when operating any Council vehicle.
- 1.10. No Driver should be under the influence of alcohol and other drugs.
- 1.11. The driver or operator of any Council vehicle is accountable for all incurred infringements and fines, as per the NT Government Fines Recovery Unit guidelines.
- 1.12. All workers are required to follow the designated speed limits that are applicable on all roads in the NT. It is also important for workers to drive carefully, taking into account the prevailing road conditions and adjusting their speed accordingly.
- 1.13. Workers should complete an approved (WDRC) 4WD driving course before they can operate vehicles on unsealed roads. They should also submit proof of successful completion to the People & Culture department for record purposes.
- 1.14. Drivers must acknowledge that they represent the Council, and the operation of the vehicle must align with Council policies and values.



2. Vehicle Safety and Prohibited Activities Policy

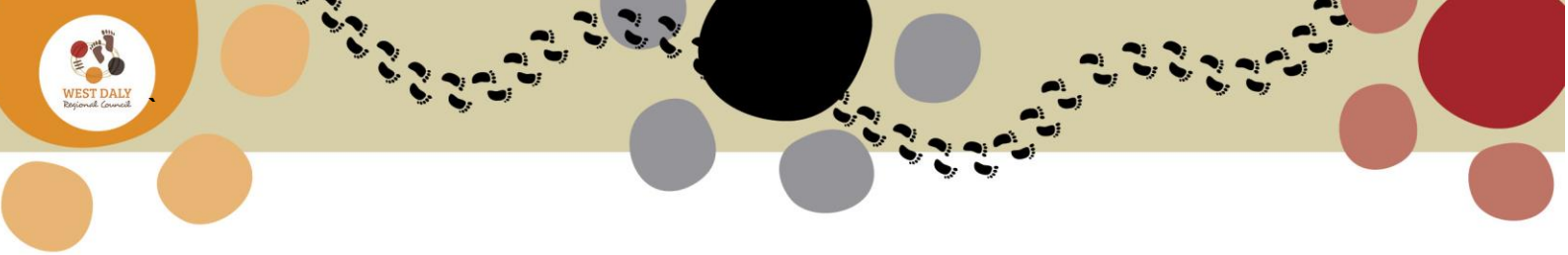
- 2.1. Smoking and Vaping is strictly prohibited in Council vehicles.
- 2.2. Alcohol and illicit substances are strictly prohibited from being carried at any time within the Council vehicles.
- 2.3. Weapons or firearms are strictly prohibited in Council vehicles.
- 2.4. Individuals using the Council vehicles are prohibited from operating vehicles while under the influence of prescription drugs that may impact driving or operating performance. Employees uncertain about the effects of their medication should seek medical advice.
- 2.5. Long driving at night going towards and away from West Daly Region or communities is prohibited unless the relevant Director/ Manager has granted explicit written permission.
- 2.6. Transporting animals in Council vehicle is prohibited unless written approval has been obtained from the relevant Manager. If approved, animals must be safely contained in appropriate cages to ensure their well-being during transportation.
- 2.7. In the event of an accident while the driver is intoxicated (above the legal blood alcohol limit or under the influence of drugs), insurance coverage will be voided. Under these circumstances, the driver will be personally liable for all costs relating to the damage and any injuries the driver or passengers might have sustained. When damage has occurred to a vehicle due to misuse or use outside the terms of this policy, the driver involved may require meeting costs incurred by the Council and also, may be subject to disciplinary action, which may include termination of employment.

3. Vehicle Ownership and Usage

- 3.1. All vehicles shall be under the management of the Technical Services Department of the Council.
- 3.2. Vehicles shall be utilised solely for work-related purposes unless approved by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or Department Executive for private use.
- 3.3. Pool vehicles are designated exclusively for work-related activities.
- 3.4. Private use of vehicles is permitted only by contractual agreements or when explicitly authorised by the Chief Executive Officer.
- 3.5. Where an Executive employee does not elect to have a private use Vehicle (fringe) benefit or have a clear designated condition in their contract, they will have use of pool vehicle as required for work purposes.
- 3.6. Spouse or Partner of an employee, where private use is applicable, who hold an appropriate driver's license may drive the vehicle.

4. Vehicle Maintenance, Safety Procedures, and Equipment Requirements

- 4.1. Drivers are required to report any observed or suspected damage and maintenance issues to their supervisors and workshop staff. Additionally, they must ensure the vehicle is clean and tidy while operating and upon returning.
- 4.2. Prior to starting journeys, it is mandatory to conduct a pre-travel check following the guidelines outlined in the 'Pre-Travel Checklist'.
- 4.3. Vehicles utilised within the community, Homelands, and those stationed outside the Darwin office are mandated to undergo a safety checklist once per week.



- 4.4. All 4WD vehicles designated for use in communities and community travel must be equipped with the following items:
 - a) First Aid Kit
 - b) Satellite phone (for travelling to remote areas with poor network coverage)
 - c) Five litres of clean drinking water
 - d) Spare wheel
 - e) Jack and lever
 - f) Shovel

5. Assurance and Fuel Card

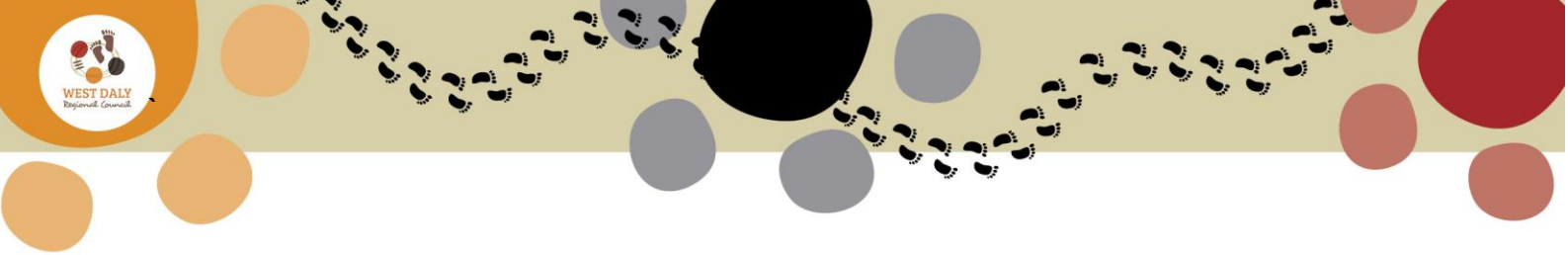
- 5.1. Security measures for vehicles to include:
 - a) Parking in safe and secure locations always.
 - b) Ensure vehicles are properly secured when unoccupied (remove keys and the doors are locked).
 - c) Do not leave confidential materials or expensive equipment unattended in vehicles.
- 5.2. Fuel cards can only be used for authorised purposes.
- 5.3. If the Fuel Card is lost or misplaced, it should be reported immediately to the Technical Services or Department Manager.
- 5.4. The council will cover the expenses associated with fuel used for private purposes as per the individual employment.

6. Water Hazards and Responsible Driving

- 6.1. Council vehicles are not permitted to drive through fast-flowing water.
- 6.2. Vehicles that are 4WD and fitted with snorkels should not be driven into the water more than 400mm in height.
- 6.3. Council vehicles that do not have 4WD or a snorkel must not enter a floodway or creek/river crossing where the water depth is 200mm.

7. Vehicle Garaging Practices

- 7.1. Vehicles shall be garaged at the premises of Council business unless written approval for limited private use has been granted by the CEO.
- 7.2. Certain shared pool vehicles or work vehicles assigned to specific roles may be authorised for home garaging or designated to an employee overnight. Approval for longer-term arrangements must be obtained from the CEO, while short-term arrangements of up to five nights may be granted by a departmental Director. Vehicles approved for home garaging may only be driven to and from work, or in cases where prior approval has been granted, for use in after-hours work-related emergencies.
- 7.3. Home garaging is permitted for employees who are required or may be required to be on-call.



References

[Northern Territory of Australia Traffic Regulation 1999](#)

[NT Traffic Act 1987](#)

[NT Local Government Act 2019](#)

[Work Health and Safety \(National Uniform Legislation\) Act 2011](#)

Definitions

In the context of this policy, the following definitions apply:

Term	Definition
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
COO	Chief Operations Officer
PC	People and Culture
TCM	Technical Service Manager
COM	Community Operations Manager
Council	West Daly Regional Council
NT	Northern Territory
Worker	Any person who carries out work for a PCBU, including work as an employee, contractor, subcontractor, self-employed person, out worker, apprentice or trainee, work experience student, an employee of a labour-hire company placed with a 'host employer', volunteers and undertake business as elected and appointed members.
Private Use	Vehicles used for both Business and Personal use including non-work related use.
Limited Private Use	Private use restricted to a limited area or purpose.
Shared Pool Vehicle	Vehicles that are shared by more than one driver and, often, across more than one department.
Work Use	Used only for approved work activities and tasks.

Appendix - Motor Vehicle Replacement and Rotation Procedure

Motor Vehicle Replacement and Rotation Procedure outlines the guidelines for replacing vehicles within the council based on the position of individuals, specified timeframes, or kilometre limits. Vehicles will be replaced according to the following criteria:

Tier: The replacement schedule varies depending on the tier of the position within the council.


Position: Each position within the council is assigned a specific vehicle type and replacement schedule.

When a vehicle reaches the specified replacement criteria (either in terms of kilometres or years), the replacement procedure will be initiated.

Tier	Position	Vehicle Type	Maximum Purchase Cost	Replacement Schedule (whichever occurs first)
1a	Mayor	Toyota Prado	\$95,000	70,000 km or 3 years
1b	Chief Executive Officer	Toyota Prado	\$95,000	70,000 km or 3 years
2a	Chief Operating Officer	Ford Ranger or Toyota Dual Cab	\$60,000	70,000 km or 4 years
2b	Managers Darwin	Rav 4 or equivalent, 4x4 Toyota Dual Cab or Ford Ranger	\$55,000	70,000 km or 4 years
3a	Community Services Managers	4x4 Toyota Diesel Dual Cab or similar approved vehicle	\$55,000	100,000 km or 4 years
3b	Tradesperson	4x4 Toyota SR Tray Back Ute or similar approved vehicle	\$50,000	100,000 km or 4 years
3c	Civil and Parks and Gardens	4x4 Toyota Dual Cab or similar approved vehicle	\$55,000	100,000 km or 4 years

Darwin Vehicles are scheduled for rotation to remote offices after three years.

Review History				
Version Number	Approval Date	Policy Number	Policy Name	Minutes ref./ resolution no.
3.0	30/01/2019	HR13	Motor Vehicle Policy	013/2019
4.0	23/05/2024	WHS01	Motor Vehicle Policy	OCM-2024/47 ID: 24946

Endorsement	
Signature:	
Date:	23/05/2024
Name and Position:	Mark Blackburn, A/Chief Executive Officer