



Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley
Council Policy Manual
OHS 6

POLICY No:	OSH 6
DIVISION:	Occupational Safety and Health
SUBJECT:	Vehicle and Driving Procedures
REPORTING OFFICER:	Executive Manager Engineering and Development Services
ENABLING LEGISLATION:	Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984

OBJECTIVE:

This policy is designed to ensure that those who work for Council do so in an environment which, as far as is practicable, is free from traffic hazards. This policy aims to establish guidelines which will help reduce the risk of personal injury and property damage whilst driving in remote areas.

As an employer, the Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley has a duty under the Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984 to provide a safe working environment and to protect all employees from hazards in the workplace. In keeping with this requirement, all employees should adhere to the following procedures regarding speed limits, crossing rivers/floodways, fatigue and general safety requirements.

POLICY:

The following procedure shall be adhered to by all employees using Shire vehicles or their own vehicle for official Shire business.

Speed Limits

The Local Government has adopted guidelines in respect of speed limits for machinery, trucks and light vehicles. Be advised that Council accepts no liability or responsibility for any operator of its plant for speed related offences. Council expects all staff will abide by the posted State Road Speed Limits.

All drivers must be aware that roads throughout the State are subject to storm damage, which may create dangerous wash outs, scours and rough road surfaces. During the wet season rivers and flood ways can become extremely hazardous, as water levels can rise very rapidly. Further, some roads are inclined to break up during dry spells producing bull dust holes, severe corrugations or areas of loose sand.

Maximum travelling speeds must therefore match road conditions at the time. Drivers must be conscious of the conditions and adjust their speed accordingly.

The following guideline maximum speeds are considered appropriate when conditions are good:



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- On all unsealed roads of dual width – maximum speed of 90km/hour or in accordance with the applicable speed limit signage.
- On all unsealed roads of single lane width – maximum speed of 60km/hour or in accordance with the applicable speed limit signage.
- On bitumen surfaced roads – in accordance with the applicable legal speed limit.
- When travelling on unsealed roads the speed of vehicles should be further reduced when passing oncoming traffic.
- Vehicles headlights must be on at all times whilst travelling on unsealed roads.
- When moving in the Shire Depot a maximum of 8 kph must be observed. Exceeding this limit within the Shire Depot may be considered a dismissible offence.

Crossing Rivers/Flood Ways

It is Council’s policy with respect to crossings rising or fast flowing floodways/river/creeks that employees are not to attempt a crossing if water levels are 0.4 metres or higher or if employees believe that doing so is not safe. Commonsense must prevail. During the wet season when creeks, rivers and flood ways are rising or flowing swiftly then attempts to cross are ill advised.

Crossing at deeper water levels may be appropriate if all the following conditions are met:

The water is not flowing swiftly/rising rapidly;	✓
Visibility is good (i.e. the driver can clearly see potential dangers such as the edge of the crossing);	✓
The vehicle is appropriately equipped (e.g. Snorkel and enough weight to ensure that it will not lose traction easily);	✓
The driver is experienced in four wheel driving;	✓
The crossing is free from visible hazards;	✓
There are no road signs preventing crossing; and	✓
The driver is a competent swimmer.	✓

Where a crossing is attempted the following shall apply;

- All windows shall be opened prior to attempting a crossing as it may be impossible to open doors should problems occur (too much pressure on the doors from the water).
- Seat belts shall not be fastened, as rapid evacuation may be required.
- A person shall walk across the water first to establish how deep the water is, how strongly it is flowing, what the state of the surface beneath the water is like etc. This person shall be a competent swimmer. A safety rope will be tied between the person and the vehicle before the person enters the water. The person crossing shall not do so if the current is moving too fast, the water is too deep, they have not got a safety rope, there is a risk of crocodile attack and/or they do not feel comfortable doing so.
- If there is any doubt in the driver’s mind as to the safety of crossing, then they are to either wait for the waters to subside or attempt to retrace their journey. Employees electing to wait must remain in close proximity to their vehicle so that they will be easily found should a search party attempt to locate them. Attempts should be made to park the vehicle on higher ground.



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- Engaging in risky behaviours is prohibited as it could result in drowning or substantial damage to the vehicle.

For information on Private use of Council Motor Vehicles see HR7 in the Council Policy Manual.



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Fatigue

Drivers and passengers must be aware of, and able to identify, the symptoms associated with fatigue and respond by stopping to rest or change drivers.

Where possible, work should be planned to avoid:

Driving into the sunset or sunrise	X
Driving excessive distances or for extended periods;	X
Driving at night	X

The Consumption of Alcohol and Drugs

No employee is permitted to drive or control machinery whilst under the influence of drugs or alcohol. This policy operates in conjunction with the vehicle use, and the Drug and Alcohol Policy of the Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley which can be found within the policy manual.

General Safety Requirements

Prior to each journey, the driver must ensure that:

A vehicle pre-start and safety check is conducted;	✓
All loose articles (which may become dangerous if the vehicle is stopped suddenly) are securely restrained;	✓
Any faults or damage to the vehicle are reported as soon as possible;	✓
The vehicle is safely parked when using a mobile/satellite phone, unless a hands free system is fitted;	✓
They have notified a reliable person of their travel plans including the make of vehicle, estimated time of arrival, colour of the vehicle, proposed route of travel and destination;	✓
They remain with the vehicle in the event of a breakdown, becoming bogged or other such situation that prevents them from reaching their destination;	✓
They are adequately trained in tyre changing (the maintenance supervisor will provide training in tyre changing etc. on request);	✓
Drivers are expected to provide assistance to other motorists in the event of an emergency;	✓
The plant maintenance supervisor will provide training in tyre changing etc. on request.	✓