



# MTHCS Fleet Vehicle Users Handbook

Mallee Track understands the dangers on our roads and is committed to the safety of all its employees, volunteers, clients, contractors and visitors. Mallee Track has safe driving procedures in place to better understand everyone's responsibilities and most common factors contributing to road crashes and casualties. We all need to work together to reduce the risks on the road.

Mallee Track Health &  
Community Service

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### **Important contact numbers**

Volunteer Coordination	5092 2133
Mobile	1800 065 358
Ouyen Administration	5092 1111
Sea Lake Administration	50702155
RACV	13 11 11
Holden Wise	1800 033049

**Staff and Volunteers are to acknowledge they have read and will abide by the Safe Driving Procedures outlined in this handbook as part of their Vehicle induction process. All vehicle users are to undergo Orientation prior to driving fleet vehicles. This orientation is the responsibility of Service Area Coordinators.**

## Introduction

Work related driving in Australia is a major risk exposure for employers. About 30% of all vehicles registered in Australia are used for business purposes and over 50% of all new vehicles purchased are for commercial use.

Staff/Volunteers intending on using a Mallee Track vehicle are required to agree to the Mallee Track safe driving policy before taking possession of any vehicle owned by Mallee Track. Staff / Volunteers are to represent the Mallee Track in a professional and responsible manner on the road, and act as role models for other road users.

## Occupational Health & Safety

Vehicle and driver safety is covered by both OHS legislation and road traffic laws. A workplace includes a passenger vehicle used for work related purposes. Under section 21 of the OHS Act, an employer has a duty or responsibility to provide and maintain as far as is reasonably practical a safe healthy working environment for its employees. Volunteers undertaking duties for the organisation are considered employees.

### Employer requirements include:

- Purchasing 4 star ANCAP rating or higher and maintaining a safe and roadworthy fleet
- Ensuring employees have the relevant appropriate driver licenses
- Scheduling work out account for speed limits and managing fatigue
- Providing information on work related driving safety
- Monitoring safety of work that requires driving

### Employee responsibilities:

Under section 25 of the OHS Act, employees also have a duty to cooperate with the measures that an employer has developed to eliminate or reduce risks applied to work related driving.

Employee duties include:

- Holding a current valid driver's license
- Abiding by all road rules
- Refraining from driving if impaired by tiredness or medication
- Reporting incidents
- Carrying out pre start checks required by the employer
- Following MTHCS vehicle procedures

Both employers and employees have duties to each other and to others who might be affected by the work they undertake including passengers and people at locations where the driver stops to carry out work.

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# Driver Vehicle Management Guidelines

## Safety inspection

Driver of the vehicle is responsible to ensure the vehicle they are driving is in a safe condition to drive.

## Pre Start of vehicle is to include:

- Enough Fuel in the gauge to get to the destination
- Check condition of tyres
- Ensure windows and mirrors are clean and adjusted and that windscreen washer reservoir has liquid
- Check driving adjustments such as seat and steering wheel
- Check for engine or warning lights
- Notify Administration if the vehicle is suspected to be unsafe. Don't use the vehicle if suspected of being unsafe.

## Fuel

Check fuel gauge before you depart. On your return please fill if gauge is under half full.

Fuel Cards require a PIN when paying. The PIN for Shell Cards is Ouyen's Post code, 3490 and the PIN for Caltex Cards is the last four digits on the card number. The Cards are attached to the keys or in the cars folder.

Ideally fill up at any Shell Service Station due to the discount we receive with this provider.

Locations nearby that accept Shell cards:

Benetook Ave. opp. TAFE

The corner of 8<sup>th</sup> street and Orange Ave Mildura,

Mallee Route Café in Gregory Street Ouyen,

Shell Service Station, Calder Hwy, Berriwillock.

Locations nearby that accept Caltex Cards:

Heenans' Caltex Service Station in Farrell Street Ouyen.

Tasco Inland – Calder Hwy – Sea Lake

Fuel available also at Peers Motors – Murrayville and Gloster's Garage –

Underbool

On your return please fill if gauge is under half full. Return receipts to Admin in vehicle folder please.

## Cleanliness

All vehicle users are responsible for the cleanliness of vehicles. All rubbish should be removed from vehicles at the conclusion of use and any food crumbs and drink spillages whipped over or vacuumed up. Car cleaning

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equipment can be located in the workshop and in Volunteer Coordinators offices.

NO smoking or animals in vehicles unless assistance animals.

## Log book

Each vehicle has a log book located in its folder. Please complete at the conclusion of each trip.

## Breakdowns

Newer Sedans are covered by Holden assist. Buses and older vehicles – ring RACV 13 11 11 – RACV details in vehicle folder.

Holden assist – 1800 033 049

## Vehicle Maintenance

MTHCS vehicles are serviced according to manufacturer's instructions. MTHCS maintenance staff checks the oil, water, tyre pressure and condition on a regular basis of vehicles and busses housed at Ouyen and Sea Lake and Mallee Minors.

Vehicles that are housed privately are the responsibility of the said staff member for maintenance checks in between regular services.

Outreach Vehicles are to be checked by designated MTHCS staff on a regular basis.

Issues noticed by staff and volunteers driving vehicles are to be reported on the **Fleet Vehicle Incident/Issues Reporting form** and handed to administration at the conclusion of the trip for follow up.

Maintenance and service records for each vehicle are to be kept in the vehicles folder for all staff/volunteers using the vehicle to have access to.

## Stowing of Goods

Mallee Track recognises the dangers to drivers and passengers presented by incorrectly or poorly stowed items.

Goods should be stowed according to the following:

- Items shall be carried behind cargo barriers, in designated storage areas or in containers secured using floor tie down system, whenever practicable.
- Walking frames should be restrained using the wheelchair restraint assembly or a vehicle seat belt.



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- Passengers may keep their handbags or other small personal items with them but they must be kept on the floor.
- In the buses ALL equipment must be stowed on the floor of the vehicle or secured on a seat using a seatbelt or tie downs provided.
- Occupied and Unoccupied wheelchairs should be restrained using the wheelchair restraint assembly.
- Use of motorised Wheelchairs is to be assessed by Occupational Therapist prior to use to determine need and safety of passenger and staff.

### Use of Mobile Phones

The use of hands free mobile phones should be kept to a minimal.

The use of hand held mobile phones is illegal and must not be used at all whilst driving. If you must take the phone call pull over when safe to do so and answer the phone when the vehicle has stopped.

### Speeding

Persons driving a Mallee Track vehicle should drive within the speed limits at all times. You should drive at speeds that are safe for the conditions, recognising that, in some circumstances (such as rain or fog) this may be below the posted speed limit. When considering a safe speed, you should give consideration not only to the weather and road condition, but also the potential impact of a collision on road-users who are inherently vulnerable, such as pedestrians, motorcyclists and cyclists.

Drivers are responsible for their own speeding and traffic offences.



### Alcohol, Drugs and driving

- Mallee Track has adopted a zero drugs and alcohol policy for work related driving;
- Mallee Track is to use alternate transport at functions with alcohol (designated driver, taxi);

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- Take into account the influence of medications before driving.

### **In-vehicle distractions**

Distractions divert the driver's attention from the driving task and impact on safety critical measures, such as stopping distance. These risks can be reduced by:

- Not eating or drinking whilst driving;
- Pre-set music/radio and climate;
- Secure any loose objects;
- Pull over to adjust equipment, check maps, or attend to personal grooming;
- Asking passengers for help (e.g. checking map for directions).



### **Courteous Driving**

Mallee Track Health & Community Service promotes courteous driving and encourages all staff, volunteers, contractors and visitors to drive appropriately for the road conditions, driving courteously by letting other vehicles merge and being patient at pedestrian crossings. This will discourage the potential for aggressive behaviour with others sharing the road.

### **Adverse conditions**

At times with the extremes of weather or other events such as flooding, bushfires or even just driving on a gravel road the risks from driving increases the following factors should be taken into account:

- Using alternate routes;
- Rescheduling trips to times of less extreme conditions;

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## Disabled Parking



Mallee Track Health & Community Service has been issued with a disability parking permit.

This can only be used if your volunteer transport service passenger qualifies for usage.

You can only park in a Disability Parking zone if you have a passenger with you who has a disability.

## Vehicle Incidents and issues

Any issues or incidents whilst responsible for MTHCS fleet vehicle should be reported using the vehicle Incident Reporting form.

The Vehicle reporting form is to be used to report any damage including scratches or dents, first aid kit usage and replacement, vehicle performance, cleanliness, fuel usage or maintenance issues.

Form is to be completed to report any issues relating the vehicle and handed to Volunteer Coordinators or Administration staff for follow up with relevant service area.



### If involved in an accident:

- Exchange the following information with the driver/s of any other vehicles involved in the accident:
  1. Name
  2. Address
  3. Vehicle registration
  4. Name of Insurance Company covering the vehicle (if known).

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- If persons have been injured and no police present, the nearest Police Station is to be contacted and the accident reported.
- Provide any information that may be requested by Police present.
- If the service vehicle requires towing, contact the nearest RACV agent. Refer to brochure in vehicle wallet or contact Administration.
- Complete Incident /injury Investigation report as soon as possible

## Medical Emergency Guidelines

Should the person you are supporting experience sickness, or experience a medical emergency whilst they are in your care:

- Pull over in the safest place possible, preferably in the shade.
- Attend to the person's needs as best you can.
- If required. Ring for an ambulance on 000 or seek assistance required.
- If passenger not acutely ill, proceed to the nearest Accident & Emergency facility in a calm manner.
- If driver not feeling well as soon as practicable inform Volunteer Coordinators. If unobtainable please ring the MTHCS Office.
- On return to the office please fill in an Incident Report Form. There is a blank one available in the rear of this booklet.
- A basic first aid kit is in the vehicle you are driving. If anything is used from this kit please complete the Fleet Vehicle Incident/Issues Reporting form for restocking.

## Looking After Yourself

- Take breaks during the day. Get out of the vehicle every 2 hours, stretch and walk around. Go for a walk, a swim or lie on the floor for a while at the end of the day to relieve your back. Drink plenty of fluids on hot days.
- Bottled Water is available from the Volunteer Coordinators to take with you on your drive.
- MTHCS has set up a coffee account for volunteers to get a free coffee at **"K Lounge"** located on the corner of 13<sup>th</sup> St & Ontario Ave (on the corner of the Tristar Building) and Mallee Bakery in Ouyen. Please present your volunteer badge to receive a coffee on us.

Some situations arise in any workplace which Volunteers/Staff may find stressful. It is important that you recognise and respond positively and proactively in these situations. It may be that you:

- Find yourself in an unfamiliar environment, where you are unsure of what to do or how to interact with others;
- Feel overwhelmed by the needs of whom you are supporting;

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- Experience personality clashes with other volunteers, staff or clients;
- Feel unable to perform your role due to lack of knowledge or skills;
- Have problems at home or outside your workplace which influence your feelings and your ability to do your job.

If you find yourself feeling stressed or uncomfortable for any reason within your role, please discuss this with the Volunteer Coordinators or your service area coordinator.

## **DRIVING TIPS**

### **Medicines and Driving**

Some medicines affect your alertness and make it unsafe for you to drive.

Some can make you:

- drowsy or tired; Shaky
- dizzy, light headed or faint;
- not think clearly;
- angry and aggressive;
- feel sick; and
- have double or blurred vision.

It is an offence to drive while:

- impaired by a medicine or other drug; or
- under the influence of a medicine or other drug to such an extent as to be incapable of having proper control of the motor vehicle.

If your medicine affects your driving, **stop your driving**, not your medicine, and talk to your doctor and pharmacist. If you take either prescription or over-the-counter medicines, these tips on medication and driving may be helpful:

- Read warning labels. Check with your doctor or pharmacist **before** driving if there is a warning on the label like these:
  - “This medicine may cause drowsiness and may increase the effects of alcohol. If affected do not drive a motor vehicle or operate machinery”
  - “This medicine may affect mental alertness and/or coordination. If affected, do not drive a motor vehicle or operate machinery”
- When starting a new medicine that can impair your driving, **do not** drive until your body has adjusted, usually a few days.
- Avoid combining medicine and alcohol.
- Keep to the prescribed doses and time instructions.

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- Always tell your doctor and pharmacist about prescribed and over the counter medicines you take. Ask if it is safe to drive.
- Use only your own medicines.
- Avoid driving if you miss a dose of medicine that helps your driving ability (such as epilepsy).
- Avoid driving if you are:
  - drowsy or tired;
  - dizzy or light headed;
  - unable to think clearly;
  - angry or aggressive; and,
  - nauseous or otherwise unwell.

Be aware that you may not notice the effect of the medicine until you are in a situation where you have to react quickly and correctly to avoid a crash.

(Source: Australian Drug Foundation Website)

## Driver Fatigue

Fatigue and tiredness can decrease a driver's alertness. These are some of the factors that can contribute to driver fatigue:

- Lack of sleep
- Driving when you would normally sleep
- Working long hours
- Driving long hours
- Not taking rest breaks
- Being under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs

The two main causes are lack of quality sleep and driving when you would normally sleep.

These are some of the signs to look out for:

- Yawning or feeling drowsy (nodding off)
- Drifting attention (drifting off at traffic lights or when stationary)
- Difficulty concentrating (missing traffic signs, driving at different speeds, vehicle wandering, not using indicators)
- Slowed reactions (not reacting when traffic lights turn green)
- Heavy, sore, tired eyes or blurred vision (rubbing your eyes)

Individuals are unreliable judges of their level of fatigue. Consequently, the role of Mallee Track in the planning and scheduling of work to minimise fatigue is paramount.

The following guide will assist to manage the risks of fatigue:

- Consider sharing the driving;

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- The use of alternatives, taxi, bus, or plane;
- Plan longer trips to allow for regular breaks;
- Encourage drivers to take power naps if sleepy;
- Minimise night driving (avoid the time you would normally be sleeping)
- Enable persons to stay overnight in motels where necessary;

Cures such as coffee, loud music, air conditioner blasting in your face are **myths**.

## ***The only cure for fatigue is sleep.***

### **Driver Posture and Exercises**

Being a driver or a passenger in a vehicle can get tiring and uncomfortable after a while. Basic good posture and a few simple exercises can improve your comfort and help avoid problems.

#### **Seating Position**

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- Make sure you are sitting comfortably. When driving, adjust the seat so that you have good leg room and your elbows are comfortably bent.
- For the driver and assistant, recline the back of the seat by 10 – 15degrees. It is a good idea to vary the angle from time to time but do not adjust your seat while the vehicle is moving.
- Make a small arch behind the small of your back to give you lumbar support.
- Some cars have a built-in adjustable back support or you can buy one separately. You can also use a tightly rolled towel – anything that is hard and supportive.

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#### **Top to Toe Exercises**

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- Stretch your head towards the roof of the vehicle, as high as you can, allowing your whole body to elongate. At regular intervals gently push your head against the head rest.
- Slowly nod your head up and down but beware of quick neck movements.
- Check you are not frowning. Relax your eyebrows and the centre of your forehead.

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- If it is a bright day, wear sunglasses but ensure that colours are easily recognised when viewed through the lens.
- For drivers, do not clench your teeth or grip the steering wheel tightly.
- Lift the shoulders a little then relax them completely, breathing out slowly as you do so.
- Circle your shoulders backwards.
- Arch your back away from the seat.
- Wriggle your weight from one buttock to the other and check that you are evenly balanced.
- Tighten your abdominal muscles, hold for 5 seconds then relax.
- Separate your knees then relax them together.

## **Drivers should practice the following fuel efficiency measures:**

- Ensure the vehicle being driven is maintained to manufacturer's recommendations.
- Ensure tyres are correctly inflated.
- Check and ensure all engine fluid levels are correct.
- Allow a comfortable amount of time for the journey.
- Avoid constant braking and acceleration by keeping enough space from the vehicle in front.
- Accelerate evenly and do not allow the vehicle to idle for unnecessary amounts of time.
- Reduce travel speed by 5km/hour.

## **References and Further Information**

### **Work Safe**

- **Work Related Driving – Selecting Safe Vehicles**
- **Working Safely in Community Services - 2005**
- **Guide to safe work related driving - 2008**

To provide feedback on this MTHCS handbook please forward to the Quality Coordinator PO BOX 130 OUYEN 3490.

Safe Driving

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