

## Preparing for a Club Trip

These suggestions will assist you to prepare for and enjoy a Club (or any) 4WD trip.

1. Do your homework so that you know what you are getting yourself into. Check with the Trip Leader.
2. Make sure your vehicle and skill levels are adequate for the expected level of difficulty. Activity Information Sheets detail what is required. The trip grading / level of difficulty is based on the skills expected of a driver who has basic 4WD driving skills. A person completing the Club's driver training course or equivalent, or has extensive experience would have the required level of competence for a Grade 3 (moderate) trip.
3. For a Grade 3 (moderate) trip, you require a vehicle with good All Terrain tyres, good ground clearance, low range capability (or a crawler gear), proper rated recovery points front and rear, and basic recovery gear i.e. a quality snatch strap (suggest 8,500 kg breaking strain); a sturdy bag or canvas to drape over the snatch strap during recovery for safety in case the strap breaks; and two rated bow shackles that will fit the recovery points on your vehicle – eg 4.75 tonne rating. Club members are expected to use their own recovery equipment if they get stuck.
4. For a Grade 4 (difficult) trip, you require good All Terrain or Mud Terrain tyres and raised suspension and for a Grade 5 (very difficult) trip, you also require a vehicle with electronic traction control or diff locks, and good recovery gear (e.g. a winch).
5. Check your vehicle and make sure it is well serviced and everything works. If in doubt seek advice.
6. The Activity Information Sheet will also list any items of personal gear you require plus any safety issues etc.
7. A few days before the trip, confirm with the Trip Leader that you will be attending.
8. Take adequate water and food supplies for the trip (suggest morning and afternoon tea and lunch for a day trip), plus an emergency supply in case you get stranded. Keep alcohol for around the camp fire at night.
9. Have adequate fuel for the expected journey or distance to the next refuel point. – allow a safety margin.
10. Take your wallet, drivers licence, mobile phone and any essential medications.
11. Ideally have an up to date Emergency Health information booklet or sheet in the glove box (available from the Club).
12. Take suitable clothing. Weather can change quickly especially in the mountains so it is wise to cater for all conditions. Even if it is hot at low altitudes it can get very cold in the mountains and can rain at any time.
13. Wear closed in footwear – the ground underfoot is often rough or slippery, and a cut foot or stubbed toe etc can be a problem on a trip.
14. Wear adequate sun protection – e.g. hat and sunscreen.
15. Take toilet paper for emergencies in the bush. Remember ALL human waste must be buried!
16. Take all rubbish home.
17. Take a folding chair so that you are comfortable during lunch stops, long delays or around the campfire.
18. Carry a first aid kit and first aid manual (and knowledge to use it) in case .....
19. Make sure your jack will lift the vehicle, can be used on rough ground and will fit under the vehicle with a flat tyre. Practice using it on rough ground. Include a jacking plate (e.g. thick ply) to put under the jack to stop it sinking in soft ground. A high lift jack is not necessary. A good hydraulic bottle jack may be best.
20. Check that your wheel brace (for removing wheel nuts when changing tyres) is good quality and works.
21. Carry a long handled shovel for clearing under a bogged vehicle, digging a toilet hole & working camp fires.
22. Sturdy leather gloves are advised to protect hands during recovery operations, collecting firewood, changing wheels, and around the fire etc.
23. You need a UHF radio for convoy communications. Channel 10 is the designated off road channel. A good quality 5 watt hand held could be used but a wired in unit is better.
24. Carry a basic tool kit of spanners, screw drivers etc suitable for your vehicle. Include tapes, glues etc and a fire extinguisher of a type suitable for electrical or fuel fires.
25. If possible, carry a tyre air pressure gauge and good quality heavy duty compressor able to pump up 4WD tyres. It is good to adjust tyre pressure to suit the driving conditions and it is best not to rely on other people. Make sure the gear is readily accessible.
26. Ideally carry navigation aids – e.g. maps of the area, GPS, compass, etc to know where you are going – and how to find your way home again.
27. Carry a small tarp for crawling under vehicles, radiator blind for deep water crossings, emergency shelter etc.

28. Do not carry too much – weight is your enemy. Be careful with packing – heavy items forward and low in the vehicle and well secured so that they do not fly around on rough tracks or in accidents.
29. If you are unsure about anything, ask an experienced club member.
30. Have a desire for adventure, a sense of fun, a caring attitude towards others and the environment, patience and tolerance. Remember our Code of Ethics, Trip Rules and Tread Lightly. Plan for the worst. Hope for the best .... and take what comes. It is all part of *Living the Adventure!*

## Expectations

All four wheel drivers should abide by the following Code of Ethics of Four Wheel Drive Australia.

Club members are also expected to abide by the Club's Activity Rules and Code of Conduct of the Club when participating in Club activities or representing the Club. The Code of Ethics has been developed in the interests of promoting responsible recreational vehicle use, and the Club rules have been developed over many years of Club activities. Basically they are all common sense and are in no way meant to be restrictive. Their purpose is to ensure maximum safety and orderly conduct to promote the enjoyment of our recreation.

## Code of Ethics of Four Wheel Drive Australia

- Obey the laws and regulations for recreational vehicles that apply to public lands.
- Respect the cultural, heritage and environmental values of public/ private land, by obeying restrictions that may apply.
- Respect our flora and fauna. Stop and look, but never disturb.
- Keep to formed tracks.
- Keep the environment clean. Carry your own, and any other, rubbish out.
- Keep your vehicle mechanically sound and clean to reduce environmental impact.
- Adopt minimal impact camping and driving practices.
- Seek permission before driving on private land. Do not disturb livestock or watering points, leave gates as found.
- Take adequate water, food, fuel, basic spares and a first aid kit on trips. In remote areas travel with another vehicle and Royal Flying Doctor Service, or equivalent, radio contact.
- Enjoy your recreation and respect the rights of others.
- Plan ahead and lodge trip details with a responsible person.
- Support four-wheel drive touring as a responsible and legitimate family recreational activity. Consider joining an affiliated four-wheel drive Club.

## Club Activity Rules and Code of Conduct

1. The convoy/trip leader is in charge at all times and is responsible for overseeing the negotiation of all hazards or vehicle recovery.
2. The trip leader shall nominate a "tail end Charlie" sweep car at the beginning of a trip. Vehicles should maintain their position in the convoy unless the convoy leader permits a change.
3. Speed limits are to be observed at all times.
4. Convoy communication is by UHF channel 10. Because it is public and important for safety, communication is to be sensible.
5. Do not drive too close to the vehicle in front. Allow a generous distance between vehicles, particularly on hazardous tracks. Only one vehicle to negotiate an obstacle at any one time.
6. Each driver is responsible for the vehicle behind and must keep it in sight at all times. DO NOT leave an intersection or obstacle until you are sure the vehicle behind knows where you are going or has crossed the obstacle.

7. Persons leaving the convoy MUST notify the trip leader and the following vehicle, and if possible give details of their intentions.
8. No vehicle shall pass the trip leader except in emergency.
9. All gates are to be left as found. The trip leader will advise tail end Charlie whether to leave the gate open or closed.
10. No driver shall drive in a manner, or at a speed, that could endanger themselves or other people, or break traffic regulations.
11. When stopping in convoy, allow plenty of room between vehicles.
12. Before any recovery operation, make sure all safety precautions are observed. All people must stand well clear of cables and straps – allow a minimum of 1.5 times the length of the cable or strap. The winch operator or the driver of the towing vehicle is in charge of the operation under the supervision of the trip leader.
13. Chainsaws are potentially very dangerous. Operators must concentrate fully on the job and wear safety equipment (including safety chaps). All spectators must keep well clear as the operator may not be aware of others nearby. Anyone assisting is to take direction from the operator.
14. A first aid kit is to be carried on all Club trips.
15. Take all rubbish home, leave campsites clean and tidy, and ensure all campfires are out. Always use existing fireplaces if possible.
16. Observe good hygiene. Bury all human waste. Do not pollute waterways.
17. In the interests of conservation, all vehicles are to remain on formed roads while in the bush unless directed by the trip leader to bypass an obstacle.
18. Always observe all regulations laid down by regulatory and management authorities e.g. NPWS, LLS, Local Government. Do not enter private property without permission.
19. A reconnaissance should be done before each trip, and for safety should be done in pairs.
20. Vehicles participating in trips MUST carry basic recovery equipment. The MINIMUM required is a suitably rated snatch strap, recovery points front and rear of the vehicle, shovel and suitably rated shackles. A person needing assistance is expected to use his/her own recovery equipment wherever possible.
21. Pets are **not** allowed in National Parks and are discouraged from Club outings.
22. Observe the Code of Ethics of the Australian National Four Wheel Drive Council.
23. For insurance purposes ALL participants must be recorded on the attendance register.
24. Visitors on Club trips must apply for temporary Club membership using the *Temporary Member / Visitor Trip Participant Form*.
25. Participants travel at their own risk. Vehicle damage or injury is always a possibility. Neither the trip leader nor the Club are liable for such injury or damage.
26. It shall be the sole responsibility of each vehicle driver to decide whether or not to start or continue to participate in the trip. It is recommended that advice is sought from the trip leader.