

Vehicle Recovery

The ACT Rural Fire Service Chief Officer has issued this standard operating procedure under Section 38(1) of the *Emergency Act 2004* – A Chief Officer may determine standards and protocols.

Purpose

This standard operating procedure (SOP) is to ensure RFS Vehicles are recovered from being immobilised while maintaining member safety, adherence to Work Health Safety legislation and to avoid further damage to vehicles.

Scope

This SOP is applicable to all personnel from the ACT Rural Fire Service, as defined in the Emergencies Act 2004.

Responsibilities

Officer in charge of the vehicle (OIC)	Ensure all personnel are safe Advise ComCen/Out of Area Commander Provide details to ACTRFS DO.
ACTRFS DO	Contacts ESA Workshop to arrange recovery (within ACT). Contacts interstate IMT to arrange vehicle recovery.
ESA Workshops	Checks that vehicle is roadworthy before returning it to service.
interstate RFS Duty Officer	RFS DO of another jurisdiction will arrange vehicle recovery if requested.
ACT Interstate Liaison Officer (LO)	Advises ACTRFS DO that a vehicle has been immobilised

Standard operating procedure

An ACTRFS vehicle requires recovery if it becomes bogged, immobilised, damaged, stranded, mechanically broken down in an off-road situation or broken down in an 'on road' situation.

Note: the officer in charge of the vehicle is not to attempt to recover or repair the vehicle. This SOP applies when a vehicle cannot be driven safely, but does not include minor damage such as a flat tyre which may be changed by crew following safe working practices and equipment supplied on the vehicle.

Within the ACT

1. The OIC:
 - a. must firstly ensure that no member is placed at risk as a result of the situation with the vehicle
 - b. contacts ComCen or the Incident Controller, advises them of their situation and requests that the ACTRFS Duty Officer (DO) contact them as soon as possible
 - c. advises the ACTRFS DO of the nature of the problem and location of the vehicle.
2. The DO contacts the ESA Workshop to arrange for a suitably equipped and qualified staff member to attend the location.
3. The ESA Workshop is responsible for the recovery of the vehicle and if necessary, a mechanical assessment, prior to it returning to service.
4. The OIC or DO enters details of the incident into Riskman.

Outside the ACT – vehicle involved in an operation

1. The OIC:
 - a. must firstly ensure that no member is placed at risk as a result of the situation with the vehicle
 - b. contacts the ACT Out of Area Commander, advises them of their situation and requests that the interstate RFS Duty Officer (DO) contact them as soon as possible
 - c. advises the ACT Interstate Liaison Officer (LO) or RFS DO of the nature of the problem and location of the vehicle.
2. The ACT Interstate LO or RFS DO confirms that the vehicle recovery will be addressed via the local IMT using suitably equipped and qualified vehicle recovery staff.
3. With consultation between ESA workshops, IMT and RFS DO, ESA may elect to manage vehicle recovery and transport.
4. Prior to returning to the ACT/Service, the ESA Workshop ensures the vehicle is inspected as roadworthy before it is returned to service and advises the ACTRFS DO.

Outside the ACT, vehicle not involved in an operation.

1. The OIC:
 - a. must firstly ensure that no member is placed at risk as a result of the situation with the vehicle
 - b. contacts ComCen, advises them of their situation and requests that the ACTRFS Duty Officer (DO) contact them as soon as possible
 - c. advises the ACTRFS DO of the nature of the problem and location of the vehicle.
2. The DO will contact the ESA Workshop to arrange for a suitably equipped and qualified staff member or contractor to attend the location.


- The ESA Workshop is responsible for the recovery of the vehicle (if necessary via a suitably qualified contractor) and conducting a mechanical assessment of the vehicle before it is returned to service or the ACT.

Important: Vehicle recovery by ACTRFS crews is only permitted in urgent, life-threatening situations. It must only be conducted if no other means of crew removal from a dangerous situation is available.

Version history

Author	Version	Version Approval Date	Summary of Changes
Andrew Stark	1.0	15/02/2011	1 st Version
Rohan Scott	2.0	15/07/2020	Reviewed, updated and reformatted
Steve Quinlan	2.0	29/03/2023	Administrative review

Approved by

Name	Title/Role	Signature	Date
Rohan Scott	CO ACTRFS		08/02/2024

Document Owner

Position	Section
RFS Director	Operations

Next review due: 01/02/2027

Related documents

Document name
Work Health and Safety Act 2011
Riskman Incident Reporting form

Signed documents will be scanned and filed in TRIM.