

Diamantina Shire Council

Policy Document



USE OF COUNCIL'S PLANT AND VEHICLE POLICY

CONTROL	
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<i>Policy Type</i>	Administrative
<i>Authorised by</i>	Council
<i>Head of Power</i>	Local Government Act 2009
<i>Responsible Officer</i>	Chief Executive Officer
<i>Adopted / Approved</i>	20 January 2025, Resolution CNL/25/008
<i>Last Reviewed</i>	15 November 2021
<i>Next Review Due</i>	June 2026
<i>Version</i>	4

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE

To give clear guidance to staff and contractors on the use and management of Council's Plant and Vehicles.

1.2 POLICY OBJECTIVES

The primary aim of this policy is to ensure the effective, efficient and safe use of Council's plant, machinery and motor vehicle fleet.

The policy is intended to ensure that the:

- operators have access to appropriate training and support; and
- fleet is appropriately managed and maintained.

1.3 COMMENCEMENT OF POLICY

This Policy will commence on adoption. It replaces all other specific Use of Council's Plant and Vehicles policies of Council (whether written or not). Provision of Plant and Equipment to Assist in Non-Emergency Situations.

1.4 SCOPE

This policy addresses a number of aspects of plant, machinery and motor vehicle usage including:

- Maintenance responsibilities
- Safe driving and operating
- Records relating to qualifications, tickets and licenses
- Accidents
- Fines and traffic infringements
- Damage repairs and insurance claims

2. POLICY

2.1 CONTEXT

This policy applies to the use of Council plant and vehicles for Council business only except where private use has been authorised by the CEO in accordance with clause 3.1.9.

2.2 POLICY STATEMENT

All users of Council plant and vehicles must be appropriately qualified and licenced and abide by the guidelines provided in this policy.

3. STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

3.1 SPECIFIC AND STANDARD

3.1.1 Plant and Vehicle Operations

- Employees must have a current Queensland driver's license to operate any Council vehicle or plant whether on public roads or not. If a plant operator loses their driver's license, Council will endeavour to find alternate employment until the license is restored.
- Contractors may operate with an interstate current driver's licence for a period of no longer than one (1) month.
- Employees who operate vehicles or plant must also hold the necessary licence or certificate of competency usually a current Occupational Health and Safety Licence or Certificate of Competency. Evidence of appropriate training and instruction for the type of plant to be operated could include:
 - a statement of attainment or other nationally recognised qualification
 - training completed at an industry training school 'on-the-job'
 - training conducted by an experienced competent person
- In addition to competencies and licences, employees must also complete a Council Validation of Competency before using any plant.

- NOTE: As per the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (WHS Act) in Queensland on 1 January 2012, earthmoving or particular crane (EPC) occupational classes are no longer required to be licensed. Plant which falls under the EPC class is:
 - backhoe
 - front end loader
 - excavator
 - skid steer loader
 - road roller
 - grader
 - scraper
 - dozer
 - bridge and gantry remote control crane.

3.1.2 Responsibilities of Driver/Operator

- Keep the vehicle or plant clean and tidy and treat it with respect;
- Lock the vehicle or plant when left unattended or parked. Keys must be stored in the camp office, nearest depot or administration building;
- Reverse park all vehicles or plant whenever possible;
- Ensure that cargo, chemicals and dangerous goods are carried in cargo areas in a safe manner;
- Do not overload a vehicle or plant. If you are unsure of the weight limit on a piece of plant or vehicle. Consult the manufacturer's handbook, the Workshop Coordinator or your Supervisor;
- Perform regular routine maintenance including checking tyre pressures (including spares), tyre condition, oil levels and water levels. The manufacturer's handbook is the primary reference for the routine maintenance issues including recommended tyre pressures. If you are unsure contact your Supervisor and or the Workshop Coordinator;
- Ensure there is always an inflated spare tyre in the vehicle and change or repair punctured tyres as soon as practicable. Do not drive on deflated tyres;
- Do not drive or operate vehicles or plant when fatigued;
- Due to the risk of a collision with wild life. Driving at night or during dusk or dawn should be avoided or limited as much as practicable. If driving during these periods is unavoidable, ensure your Supervisor is notified of your departure and estimated arrival times;
- Do not knowingly drive an un-roadworthy vehicle. Tag the vehicle out and report it to your Supervisor and the Workshop Coordinator;
- Report all incidents and accidents as soon as possible;
- Complete Plant Time Sheets and Workshop Running Sheets. Once complete ensure they are handed to your Supervisor for verification and signing. Supervisors must ensure these are handed to the appropriate Administration officer as soon practical upon completion and verification;
- In accordance with Council's Smoking Policy, do not smoke inside any Council vehicle or plant;

- In accordance with Councils Drug and Alcohol Policy do not operate any Council vehicle or plant when under the influence of prescription drugs, illegal drugs or alcohol;
- Ensure all cargo is restrained using approved load restraints. (Available in the Store);
- Mobile phones are not to be used unless the vehicle is equipped with "Hands Free" mobile technology such as Bluetooth connectivity;
- Headphones and ear buds to listen to music or radio are not to be used;
- Satellite phones are not "Hands Free", so should only be used while the vehicle is stationary; and
- Privately owned firearms are not permitted to be stowed or stored in any Council owned vehicle or work camps without approval from the CEO.

3.1.3 Navman

- Most Council vehicles will be fitted with a Navman tracking system to record distances travelled and with a duress button that can be used in emergency. The duress button will send a message to the Council office for action; and
- Vehicle operators are deemed to have provided consent to the use of the Navman Tracking system by accepting tasks that involve the use of the vehicle in accordance with this policy.

3.1.4 Records

- The Operator/Driver will complete Plant Timesheets and Workshop Running Sheets as required;
- The Workplace Safety Officer will ensure that all new employees provide copies of required qualifications/licences and complete the required Council Validation of Competency tests. All copies of certificates and licences will be stored on Councils EDRMS in the employees personnel file;
- The Workplace Safety Officer will maintain a skills register; and
- All supervisory staff must be familiar with the qualifications and licences that their staff hold.

3.1.5 Incidents and Accidents

- An incident or accident is defined as any situation that results in damage to plant or vehicle or injury to person;
- In the case of an accident that involves another vehicle:
 - Full names, addresses, workplace details, telephone numbers, insurance and registration of all drivers, passengers, witnesses and other motor vehicles are to be recorded.
 - No discussion about negligence or fault of any party is to be entered into.
 - Police must be notified if:
 - any driver fails, has failed or is refusing to provide details;
 - death or injury (requiring medical attention from a qualified ambulance office, nurse or doctor) has occurred;

- there is confirmed involvement of drugs and/or alcohol.
- If police are unable to attend the scene, the employee should report to the nearest Police Station and make a written statement;
- An ambulance must be called if any person is seriously injured;
- Where the vehicle has to be towed ensure that the tow truck operator supplies all documentation confirming the tow and the details of where the vehicle will be taken;
- The Workplace Safety Officer and the manager/supervisor of the employee should be advised as soon as possible after the incident or accident so that the necessary investigations and reporting arrangements can be made. Vehicles involved in an accident are not be moved until advised by the Workplace Safety Officer and inspect by a qualified mechanic and deemed safe to drive/operate;
- The employee must report all incidents and accidents, using Incident Report Form, to the Workplace Safety and Quality Coordinator as soon as possible;
- The Workplace Safety and Quality Coordinator receives and reviews all incident forms and will continuously monitor the condition of plant to ensure that employees are meeting their requirements to report damage;
- The Workshop Coordinator will report all damage to plant or vehicles to the Workplace Safety and Quality Coordinator.

3.1.6 Fines and Traffic Infringements

- Parking and other traffic fines associated with the use of Council vehicles are the responsibility of the employee using the vehicle at the time the infringement occurs;
- However, if the fine relates to un-roadworthy condition of the vehicle and the employee was unaware of the vehicle's condition, the employee will not be held liable; and
- Any outstanding fines that are paid by Council will be invoiced to the employee.

3.1.7 Use of Private Vehicle for Council Business

- Use of private vehicles for Council business must be approved in writing by the Chief Executive Officer.

3.1.8 Use of Council Plant – Private Works

- Other than in the case of vehicles which are approved for private use under the Motor Vehicle Policy, no non Council employees should be on or in Council plant, machinery or vehicles unless specifically authorised by the CEO and only after they have completed a Council Validation of Competency; and
- In order to encourage private business operators, wherever possible Council will refrain from making plant available for private works when this is in competition with private operators.

3.1.9 Use of Council Vehicle or Plant – Assistance in Non-Emergency Situations

- Where it is safe to do so, Council will assist at no charge where non-council vehicles or vehicles carrying supplies are in difficulty and it is deemed by Infrastructure Manager that the situation was unavoidable and resulted from following Council advice. This may include situations where vehicles become stuck: o after they have been advised that they can travel on a road; or o due to travelling on a road at the specific request of Council;
- Council will if required and in accordance with clause 3.1.8 provide assistance under its normal private works arrangements if vehicles break down, or become bogged or stuck whilst travelling on closed roads, against Councils advice or if negligent or illegal actions have resulted in their predicament;
- Council will provide vehicles and plant to assist in disaster prevention strategies such as preparing fire breaks; and
- Council vehicles or machinery must not be used to assist/move vehicles involved in an accident, unless there is an imminent risk to life by not doing so. This is particularly important where the private vehicle has sustained damage which would make it unroadworthy or unsafe. Eg. using a vehicle to pull a bulbar from rubbing on a tyre so the vehicle is driveable but likely to have sustained damage to the point where it does not operate in a safe manner.

3.1.10 Use of Council Vehicle or Plant – On Council Owned Housing

- Council encourages improvements to appearances that can be made through landscaping works on Council residences in our towns;
- Employees may utilise available plant to carry out yard landscaping works on Council residences, in their own time, at no cost to the employee if they have completed a Council Validation of Competency and hold the appropriate certificates/licences;
- The employee must complete a Plant Hire Request form and attach an approved Property Improvement Request form to book the use of the vehicle or plant through the Infrastructure Manager;
- The employee must ensure that all normal safety and operational procedures are adhered to while carrying out this work;
- The employee must ensure that the plant running sheet is completed in accordance with normal procedures;
- The vehicle or plant must be returned in a clean and tidy state. Any damage to machinery will be invoiced to the employee; and
- Any damage to property while operating machinery must be reported to the Manager Infrastructure in writing.

4. REFERENCE AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

4.1 DEFINITIONS

To assist in interpretation, the following definitions shall apply:

WORD / TERM	DEFINITION
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
Council	Diamantina Shire Council
Accident or Incident	Where a situation results in damage to plant or vehicle and/or injury to person.

4.2 RELATED POLICIES, LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

LINKS TO SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION
Motor Vehicle Policy
Incident Report Form
Plant Running Sheet/Timesheet

4.3 VERSION CONTROL

VERSION NUMBER	DATE ADOPTED/APPROVED
Version 1 (Original)	January 16 2017; Minute No. 2017.01.16-OM-8
2	December 17 2018; Minute No. 2018.12.17-OM-9
3	November 15 2021, Minute No. 2021.11.15-OM-8
4	January 20 2025; Resolution No. CNL/25/008