

Road Safety Travel Guidelines



THE UNIVERSITY
OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

CREATE CHANGE

Transport

This guideline is intended only to raise awareness of the issues and highlight strategies which could help reduce the risk of a serious accident while travelling. This should not be considered the sole risk mitigation measure or the sole source of information relating to travel risk mitigation. It is not intended to replace any UQ policies and procedures related to travel, including requirements to conduct a risk assessment and submit a work off campus plan.

Managing your trip

Preparing for the trip:

We recommend the following actions before your drive to ensure you arrive safely:

- Make sure your vehicle is safe to drive and you have sufficient fuel or charge to get you to your next fuel or charging source – your vehicle must be **roadworthy and registered**.
- Check that you have current and appropriate **vehicle insurance** (preferably comprehensive insurance) and strongly recommend getting a roadside assistance package (these are included in some comprehensive insurance policies or stand-alone such as RACQ).
- If a UQ vehicle is to be used, staff must ensure that vehicles are booked in advance to ensure availability. Properly maintained and roadworthy, vehicles can also be booked through the GoGet system.
- **Plan your trip** and allow adequate travel time. gov.au/transport/safety/holiday-travel/planning.
- **Check for traffic updates** (call 131940) and changes to road conditions. qld.gov.au/transport/conditions/roadworks/road-closures/.
- **Look at weather forecasts** (BOM website) and beware of flooded roads qld.gov.au/transport/safety/road-safety/wet-weather/.
- **Check tyre pressures, oil, water and coolant levels in the engine of the vehicle before departure.** As well as looking for any other defects or signs of damage. Ensure you have a spare tyre for the vehicle.
- **Get plenty of sleep** before you leave and do not drive if you are unwell or feel impaired in any way.

When planning travel consider alternatives to driving e.g.:

During the drive:

- **Drive within the limitations** of both driver and vehicle and to road conditions; if wet, smoky or foggy, slow down or stop in a safe place until the situation is resolved.
- **Share the driving if you can**, take regular breaks to refresh, drink and eat as needed. A 15 min break every two hours is recommended by Department of Transport & Main Roads. Use the free Driver Reviver stops when available.
- Eat well balanced meals, **do not consume alcohol**.
- **Avoid being distracted**, ensure you connect your phone to vehicle audio via Bluetooth for handsfree operation.
- **Obey the road rules, observe speed limits** and comply with safety advisory signage.
- **Always wear seat belts** and ensure loads are adequately secured with suitable restraints or cargo nets.
- Ensure you have a spare tyre. If you need to change it you must ensure the procedure is carried out, in accordance with the manual supplied with the vehicle and **ONLY** if it is safe to do so. you can't get professional Roadside Assistance,
- If following other cars (especially in wet conditions or on unsealed/dusty roads), remember to keep a **safe distance**.

Fatigue

Fatigue isn't just about falling asleep while driving. Brief lapses in concentration can have serious consequences.

On average, between 2015 to 2019, approximately 12% of lives lost on Queensland roads were from fatigue-related crashes. This figure is likely to be higher, as it can be difficult to tell when fatigue is a contributing factor in crashes.

It is important to recognise the warning signs of fatigue and take appropriate action.

Being awake for more than 17 hours has a similar effect on performance as having a [blood alcohol concentration](#) of more than 0.05. So don't put yourself at risk.

Do not rely on short-term remedies to offset symptoms e.g., turning up the music, drinking coffee or energy drinks.

The only cure or preventative measure for fatigue is **sleep**.

Investigate overnight stays on location prior to an early start in the workplace or at the end of a long day if a significant return journey is required.

In addition to increasing risks to safety while driving tired, fatigue can carry over into the workplace and is a significant work accident risk factor.



Tips to Avoid Driving Tired

Before driving:

- Get a good night's sleep
- Avoid driving at times you normally sleep
- Avoid long drives after a day's work
- [Understand the effects any medicine](#) you're taking might have on your driving
- Plan ahead – work out rest stops and overnight stops.

When driving:

- Take regular breaks – you should stop for at least 15 minutes every 2 hours
- Share the driving if you can
- Use rest areas, tourist spots and driver reviver stops
- Stop and rest as soon as you feel tired
- Never drive for more than 10 hours in a single day



Fatigue can combine with these factors to increase the risk of a serious accident

- Excessive speed for the road conditions
- Alcohol or drug use
- Driver inexperience
- Extreme weather conditions
- Unfamiliar vehicle,
- Unfamiliar driving conditions
- Monotony
- Poorly maintained roads, differing road surfaces and narrow or unsealed roads.
- Reaction time - Animals and farm machinery on the roads

If you have any of these fatigue symptoms, do not drive

- Excessive yawning, feeling drowsy or falling asleep.
- Short term memory problems
- Inability to concentrate.
- Impaired decision-making and judgment
- Reduced hand-eye coordination.
- Slow reflexes
- Headaches
- Dizziness
- Blurred vision or impaired visual perception

Speeding

Speeding is one of the major causes of fatalities on Queensland roads. Speeding is defined as driving over the posted speed limit or at a speed that is inappropriate for the driving conditions (e.g. rain, fog, traffic volume, traffic flow). Speeding is not safe in any circumstance.

Driving within the speed limit maximises your [stopping distance](#), giving you more time to react to:

- The actions of other road users around you like vehicles, pedestrians, bicycle and personal mobility device riders.
- Changes to the road environment itself such as
- Potholes and obstacles.

Speed limits are set and enforced to reduce crashes and save lives. [Fines and demerit points](#) apply when a person is caught driving a vehicle above the posted speed limit.

'During 2022 there were 88 fatalities as a result of crashes involving speeding motorists, representing approximately 30% of the Queensland road fatalities.'

Driving in Rural and Remote areas

Driving in Rural and Remote areas requires a Heightened level of awareness and caution due to the unique conditions and risk associated with these areas.

- If it is going to be a long journey, **share the driving** with another licensed and competent driver whenever feasible.
- **Avoid driving at dawn or dusk**, as these times have increased wildlife activity - try to modify work patterns to allow a later start and/or earlier departure when intending to travel to and from work to avoid driving at dawn and dusk.
- **Print directions** as you may not have mobile phone coverage at all times on your trip (check your service provider coverage map).
- **Include rest stops** on long trips so you don't drive tired <http://www.tmr.qld.gov.au/Safety/Driver-guide/Driving-safely/Driving-tired.aspx>.
- **Pack spare water, warm clothing, and a first aid kit. Do not forget personal medications.**
- **Read and understand** the - HMBS - Risk Assessment #43362 - Driving in Rural and Remote areas <https://prod.riskcloud.net/Management/OHSRiskRegister.aspx>.
- **Ensure you arrange suitable communication**, i.e. mobile phone, and that you have a charging cable in the vehicle.
- **Watch out for moving vehicles** (i.e. tractors or school buses) and vehicles entering the road from farms or side roads.
- **Avoid undue risks** such as driving across flooded roads, bush fires, road shoulders and unsealed roads.
- **Overtake only when necessary** and safe to do so - try to only overtake in designated overtaking lanes, allow ample road space, do not overtake over solid lines and crests. Use particular caution with Road Trains, they are at least 36m meters long.
- **Stay with your vehicle** in the event of a breakdown or incident.
- **Keep in touch with supervisors or family** during the journey and notify them on arrival at destination or end of leg; let someone know if the itinerary changes.



Animals on the Road

Every year we hear the sad news that staff or students travelling has had an accident – luckily no one has been injured, but the damage can be very expensive. Kangaroos account for 90% of crashes involving animals.

While it's important to be **extra vigilant during the winter months**, in animal collision hotspots, and during dawn and dusk, drivers should always follow these safety tips when driving.

- **Stay alert** and expect the unexpected.
- **Avoid driving at dawn and dusk**, if possible.
- If you see one kangaroo, expect others to be nearby.
- **Do not swerve.** Slow down and brake.
- If you notice roadkill, slow down and pay extra attention. It's an indicator of wildlife in the area.
- As **kangaroos move in groups**, if you spot a kangaroo crossing the road it's a sign that there could be more following.
- If you're involved in a collision with an animal, move off the road, if possible, put your hazard lights on, check for injuries and seek medical assistance. If it is safe to do so, check the welfare of the animal. If the animal is alive and injured, call the local wildlife rescue service.
- **Watch out for other traffic** which might not expect to see you on the road or roadside.
- **Use your peripheral vision and be aware of your surroundings**, especially when travelling through forest or grassland areas where animals are not clearly visible.

'Please watch out for kangaroos... We got into an accident in our first week with a kangaroo while going at 100 kph. The other medical student's car has been scrapped with no insurance because of irreparable damage. We were stuck in the middle of a remote highway with no tow or taxi services coming for us on a Saturday night.'

Emergency Services Contacts

Police, Fire and Ambulance	Triple Zero (000)
State Emergency Service (SES) for flood and storm emergency assistance	132 500
13HEALTH	13 43 25 84
Energex	13 19 62
Ergon Energy	13 16 70
Policelink (general enquiries)	13 14 44
Road traffic and travel information	13 19 40
Lifeline	13 11 14
Translating and Interpreting Service 24/7	13 14 50
National Relay Service	1800 555 677
RSPCA QLD 24/7 Animal emergencies	1300 264 625
RSPCA QLD Lost and found	1300 363 736
Department of Primary Industries - to identify owners of lost cattle	13 25 23
Community Recovery Hotline	1800 173 349
Local Government / Council	13 74 68
RACQ	13 1111



