

A7615 (2430)

May 10, 2012

Memorandum

To: All Employees

From: Director /s/ **Jonathan B. Jarvis**

Subject: Motor Vehicle Driving Policy while on Official Travel

This memorandum communicates policy for all National Park Service (NPS) employees operating government-owned vehicles and personally-owned vehicles driven in the performance of official duty, including travel for permanent changes of station, temporary duty, Special Events Tactical Team details, the Law Enforcement Training Center Field Training and Evaluation Program, and any other official travel not listed.

The National Leadership Council received a briefing on a Serious Accident Investigation where a NPS employee was killed while driving on official travel. The Investigation highlighted that we do not have a national policy restricting the number of hours an employee may drive a vehicle. However, this accident clearly illustrates that NPS employees are at risk due to driver fatigue. A corrective action from the investigation report recommended the establishment of a policy to help prevent another tragedy.

I have approved national policy prohibiting employees from driving more than 10 hours, to include breaks and rest stops, during a 24-hour period. Employees embarking on travel after working a partial shift will still be limited to a maximum of 10 hours driving time to include the hours worked earlier that day. This time constraint applies regardless of the number of drivers in the vehicle. Time spent traveling as a passenger by common carrier (e.g., air, rail, bus, or boat) is excluded from the 10-hour limitation. Once the destination for that day's drive has been reached, employees are authorized to drive the vehicle within the local area of their lodging facility or final destination for necessities, such as food and fuel.

When travel involves two or more days, employees and supervisors will conduct and discuss the results of a risk assessment (e.g. Operational Leadership Green/Amber/Red or Severity/Probability/Exposure analysis) prior to departure. A checklist of items (attached) has been prepared to assist in this discussion. The risk assessment should address factors including the route, weather conditions, fatigue, distance between overnight stops, traffic congestion, illness, emergency contact procedures, and vehicle type and condition.

Typically, employees may only exceed these restrictions when documented approval has been given by a supervisor following a risk assessment; however, during conditions where the employee's safety and health may be jeopardized by continuing to travel, the employee has the right and responsibility to seek shelter and then to notify a supervisor once a safe haven has been reached. In these instances, employees may be exempted from the 350-mile, daily minimum

driving distance and still receive reimbursement for additional travel time needed, in accordance with 41 C.F.R. 302-4.201.

This change in policy will be incorporated in the next revision of the Director's Orders for Safety and for Travel.

For clarifications, please contact Michael May, Deputy Chief, Office of Risk Management, at michael_may@nps.gov or 202-513-7222, or Timothy Bailey, AOC Supervisory Assistant Fiscal Operations Specialist, at timothy_bailey@nps.gov or 703- 487-9129.

Attachment



Official Travel Checklist for Supervisors.docx

OFFICIAL VEHICLE TRAVEL CHECKLIST

	CHECKLIST ITEM	YES	NO	N/A
1.	Has the traveler planned the trip to include rest stops and overnight stays?			
2.	Has the traveler checked the weather forecast for the intended route and planned accordingly?			
3.	Has the traveler been briefed not drive more than 10 hours in a 24-hour period? (note 1 & 2)			
4.	Have you briefed the traveler on the need to get at least 8 hours of rest prior to departure?			
5.	Have you discouraged the traveler from driving during late hours?			
6.	Have you stressed the importance of obeying speed limits and wearing seatbelts?			
7.	Have you briefed the traveler to inspect the vehicle prior to departure? (note 3)			
8.	Have you discussed the results of the risk assessment required prior to multi-day trips? (note 4)			
9.	Does the traveler have a cell phone, in-car charger and is he or she aware that texting is prohibited while driving while on official Government business? (note 5)			
10.	Does the traveler have the appropriate phone numbers in case of an emergency?			
11.	Does the traveler have maps that cover the planned route?			
12.	Is the vehicle equipped with an emergency kit? (note 6)			

Notes

1. *If traveler has worked any portion of his or her shift prior to departure, time worked must be added to driving time to equal a maximum of 10 hours.*
2. *Traveler can exceed 10 hour driving time only if an emergency situation necessitates the need.*
- 3.
4. *The following items shall be inspected (by the traveler or qualified person) prior to departure:*
 - a. *All fluids (fuel, coolant, windshield washer fluid, oil, brake fluid, power steering fluid and transmission fluid)*
 - b. *All lights*
 - c. *Tires to include spare (tread depth, air pressure and overall condition)*
 - d. *Jack and necessary equipment to change tire*
 - e. *Windshield wipers*
 - f. *Horn*
5. *Risk assessment (e.g., Operational Leadership Green/Amber/Red or Severity/Probability/Exposure analysis).*
6. *Texting is prohibited when driving by Presidential Proclamation 8610. It is recommended the traveler use a cell phone only when stopped; however, if this is not possible, a hands-free device will be used.*
7. *Emergency kit should contain:*
 - a. *Water*
 - b. *Food (energy bars, etc.)*
 - c. *Blanket(s)*
 - d. *Road flares*
 - e. *Flashlight*
 - f. *First aid kit*
 - g. *Candle*
 - h. *Lighter or matches*
 - i. *Jumper cables*
 - j. *Any other item the operator or supervisor deems necessary*

Supervisor's Signature

* Provisional Supervisor's Signature

Traveler's Signature

* Temporary supervisors during LE Training, FTET, details etc. In these cases, both supervisors are required to sign.