

INDIAN AFFAIRS MOTOR VEHICLE SAFETY HANDBOOK

25 IAM 4-H



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FOREWORD

This handbook documents the procedures required to implement the corresponding Indian Affairs' (IA) Motor Vehicle Safety policy, 25 IAM 4. It supersedes 25 IAM H: Indian Affairs Safety and Risk Management Program Handbook, issued (updated) 10/05/2004, and all policies and procedures related to motor vehicle safety that may have been created and/or distributed throughout Indian Affairs previously.

This handbook is intended to primarily assist managers who administer the IA Motor Vehicle Safety policy and IA employees who are required to operate a government-owned or leased motor vehicle, or to operate their personal vehicle as part of their official duties or while on Federal Government business.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This handbook documents the general motor vehicle and equipment safety requirements, inspection techniques, and servicing and repair requirements for government-owned or leased motor vehicles and equipment. It also provides employees with information on safely operating vehicles and heavy equipment like scrapers, loaders, dozers, and graders.

Chapter 2: General Standards and Requirements

2.1 Federal, State, Local and Agency Requirements for Operating a Government Vehicle

It is important that the employee understand the requirements and restrictions for operating a government-owned or leased motor vehicle. Specifically:

- 1) All motor vehicle operators using Federal Government-owned or leased motor vehicles must comply with Federal Government requirements for operating a government vehicle.
- 2) Authorization to operate specialized equipment (i.e., 4x4 vehicles, dump trucks, front-end loaders, dozers, forklifts, backhoes, skid-steer equipment, snowmobiles, All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs), Utility Terrain Vehicles (UTVs), etc.) must be noted in the Official Personnel File or be maintained by the applicable supervisor.
- 3) Federal law requires all vehicle occupants wear safety belts.
- 4) The Executive Order issued October 1, 2009, *Federal Leadership on Reducing Text Messaging While Driving*, prohibits text messaging while the vehicle is in motion.
- 5) Electronic equipment use (i.e., mobile phone, tablet, or Global Positioning System (GPS)) in vehicles must be restricted as follows:

The driver of a government-owned, leased, or a privately owned motor vehicle, while on official Federal Government business, must ensure compliance with all state and local laws governing the use of cellular telephones and similar devices while operating a motor vehicle. Hands-free cellular devices may be used when permitted by law. Use of cellular telephones and/or similar devices not equipped for hands-free operation is prohibited while operating a government-owned or leased vehicle or privately owned vehicle while on official Government business.

- 6) The General Services Administration (GSA) prohibits the use of tobacco products in GSA fleet vehicles. Federal Government agencies are encouraged to prohibit the use of tobacco products in motor vehicles owned or leased by the agency.
- 7) All vehicle occupants must not consume alcohol or use prohibited substances or prescription medicines (if operation of a motor vehicle is prohibited pursuant to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) or manufacturer's instructions) while in a government-owned or leased motor vehicle.

2.2 Special Requirements for Operation of Commercial Motor Vehicles

In addition to established IA policy governing issuance of a Motor Vehicle Authorization Card (see section 2.6 below for more information), IA employees who drive commercial motor vehicles (having either a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of 26,001 or more pounds, towing a vehicle with a 10,000 pound or more GVWR, hauling hazardous material requiring the vehicle to display the required signage and notifications, or operating a vehicle designed to transport more than 16 people including the driver) must:

- 1) Have a valid commercial driver's license (CDL) medical card or certificate if required by the state of domicile or location of employment.
- 2) Notify their supervisor if convicted of any traffic violation other than illegal parking.
- 3) Possess only one CDL, not be prohibited from holding a CDL in any state, and must be at least 21 years old.

2.3 Special Requirements for Transporting School-Age Children

Drivers who transport school-age children must be licensed in accordance with regulations administered by the Federal Highway Administration and the states wherein the children are transported. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring drivers comply with all applicable requirements set forth by the Federal Highway Administration and respective state(s).

2.4 Use of Privately Owned Vehicles (POV) for Official Business

When an employee is authorized (via an approved Travel Authorization) to use a POV to conduct official business, the authorization must be in writing and the head of the bureau or office must also consent to liability for the damages. Otherwise, use of the personal vehicle will be at the risk of the employee and no payment will be authorized. Reimbursement for the use of the POV is on a cost-per-mile basis.

2.5 Driving Limitations

- 1) **Maximum Driving Time Restriction:** Employees will not exceed eight (8) hours of driving time (behind the wheel), to include use of specialized equipment, during a 16-hour duty period.
- 2) **Maximum Incident Operations Driving Time Restriction:** Employees actively engaged in wildland fire or all-hazard activities, including driving while in support, mobilization, and demobilization to an assigned incident, or during initial attack fire response (includes time required to control the fire and travel to a rest location), will not exceed more than 10 hours (behind the wheel) within any duty day.

An exception to the maximum driving time is allowed when multiple drivers in a single vehicle may drive up to the duty day limitation (16 hours), provided no driver exceeds the individual driving (behind the wheel) time limitation of 10 hours.

- 3) Rest Requirement: At least eight consecutive hours of rest, without duty, are required prior to each duty period requiring driving. Breaks of 15 minutes are recommended every two hours when driving continuously. An exception to the minimum off-duty hours is allowed when essential to:
 - a. accomplishing immediate and critical suppression objectives; and/or
 - b. addressing immediate and critical firefighter or public safety issues.
- 4) Managers or employees may place further limitations on the above hours of duty or driving time due to hazard factors (e.g., fatigue, weather, poor road conditions, distance, illness, driving hours between 10 p.m. and 5:00 a.m, etc.).

2.6 Authorization Procedures

- 1) All full-time operators must annually submit to their supervisor GSA Form 3607, Motor Vehicle Operator's License and Driving Record, for renewal. In completing the form, individuals will provide a response to all questions (Section II) and certify that their statements are true and correct to the best of their knowledge (Section III). This form can be found on the GSA webpage here: <https://www.gsa.gov/forms-library/motor-vehicle-operators-license-and-driving-record>.
- 2) Supervisors will review the GSA Form 3607 for accuracy and completeness, complete and sign Section IV - Supervisory Review, and forward it to the appropriate Safety Office.
- 3) The designated Safety Office will review the submitted form and request a copy of the applicant's driving record from the appropriate state motor vehicle office(s), document any conflicts or concerns with respect to an employee's driving qualifications, and return GSA Form 3607 with certification to the supervisor after processing.
- 4) Upon a receipt of a favorable review of the driving record, the designated Safety Officer for the assigned duty station(s) will complete Section V - Certification of Eligibility and Authorization, and sign and date it, certifying that the individual meets IA driver qualifications.
- 5) With the Safety Officer's certification, the supervisor may issue an IA Motor Vehicle Operator Authorization Card. The card will be issued for a period of five years. The IA Motor Vehicle Operator Authorization Cards are available from the servicing Safety Office and are also located on the IA Online Forms webpage here: <https://www.bia.gov/policy-forms/online-forms>.
- 5) If the Safety Officer's report indicates that the applicant is not qualified, the supervisor will not issue, or will revoke, a Motor Vehicle Operator Authorization Card. Supervisors are reminded that they may be personally liable if they authorize an employee to operate a motor vehicle on Federal Government business if an employee is determined not to be qualified by virtue of failing to meet qualification standards.

- 6) All incidental operators must annually submit to their supervisor the IA Annual Incidental Motor Vehicle Operator's Certification. This form can be found on the IA Online Forms webpage here: <https://www.bia.gov/policy-forms/online-forms>. In completing the form, incidental operators will certify that their statements are true and correct to the best of their knowledge. The supervisor must submit a copy to the servicing Safety Office within 10 business days. Motor Vehicle Operator Authorization Cards are not issued to incidental operators.

2.7 Periodic Medical Evaluation

CDL operators must demonstrate they are medically qualified to operate the vehicle safely and employees with a CDL must meet the requirements of their position description. Documentation of medical qualifications will be maintained by individual employees. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that CDL operators maintain a valid certification. When there is any question as to any driver's ability to perform their tasks, the employee must be referred for a medical examination. Supervisors should refer to their Human Capital Management Office to accomplish this action.

2.8 Penalties and Corrective Actions

Employees must be informed of the potential penalties (see 49 CFR 383 and 391) for failure to operate motor vehicles in a safe and lawful manner.

Unsafe drivers will not drive on official business. Any driver who has been involved in two or more accidents in a 12-month period while on official duty, or is careless, uses poor judgment at the wheel, or has numerous driving violations, may have their IA driving privileges suspended or revoked even though they possess a valid state driver's license. Immediate supervisors will investigate and report to the next level of supervision the circumstances and action taken in regard to the driving record of subordinates, and notify the Human Capital Management Office if driving privileges will be revoked.

Supervisors are reminded that they may be personally liable if they authorize an employee to operate a motor vehicle on Federal Government business even though an employee is determined to be not qualified by virtue of failing to meet the qualification standards. Employees will be denied authorization to operate a government vehicle and/or be subject to disciplinary action as a result of the following situations:

- 1) Leaving the scene of an accident.
- 2) Operating a vehicle under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.
- 3) Revocation or suspension of an employee's state license.
- 4) Recurring traffic or safety violations.
- 5) Physical or mental impairments, pursuant to 5 CFR 930.113f.

- 6) Operating a vehicle in a reckless manner.
- 7) Driving without a seat belt or allowing passengers to ride without a seat belt.
- 8) A report from the state that reflects the above situations or that may contain additional information indicating a review of the license application.

2.9 Driver Training Requirements

- 1) All full-time operators must successfully complete a defensive driving course within three months of his/her official start date, and refresher driver training every three years. The GSA online defensive driving course content meets the intent of this training. The course can be found here:
<https://www.gsa.gov/acquisition/products-services/transportation-logistics-services/vehicle-leasing/national-safety-program/online-driver-safety-offerings>
- 2) All employees are encouraged to refresh their safety awareness in the operation of motor vehicles by undertaking the course of instruction.
- 3) Training requirements for specialized equipment such as Off-Road Vehicles (ORVs), UTVs, dozers, loaders, graders, etc. are contained in the 25 IAM 3-H, Volume 1: IA Occupational Safety Handbook.

Chapter 3: Motor Vehicle and Equipment Safety

3.1 Vehicle Operation

While operating a motor vehicle or equipment the operator should do the following:

- Stay alert – pay attention to the actions of other drivers.
- Avoid assumptions – do not assume other drivers are going to do the obvious.
- Use turn signals – always use turn signals before making a lane change or turning.
- Obey stop signs and traffic lights.
- Obey speed limits – do not exceed the posted speed limit.
- Adjust for weather – use extra precautions when the weather is less than perfect (i.e., rain, snow, or fog).
- Be predictable – do not make sudden stops or lane changes.
- Know where you are going – plan your travel route ahead of time.
- Use headlights when needed – headlights are helpful when driving in the rain or fog, turning them on helps other drivers see your vehicle.

3.2 Vehicle Equipment

Government-owned or leased vehicles should be kept in good mechanical condition and have a kit for emergencies that includes the following:

- A properly inflated spare tire, lug wrench, and jack
- Jumper cables
- Basic tool kit
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Reflective triangles or road flares
- First-aid kit with gauze, tape, bandages, antibiotic ointment, aspirin, a blanket, nonlatex gloves, scissors, hydrocortisone, tweezers, and instant cold compress
- Nonperishable, high-energy foods such as unsalted nuts, dried fruits, and hard candy
- Drinking water
- Reflective vest
- Car charger for your cell phone
- Fire extinguisher
- Duct tape
- Rain poncho

In addition to this general list, vehicles should have items specific to winter conditions or desert conditions, if applicable. Emergency kits should be checked every six months and expired items replaced.

Seat belts must be available and used in all IA, GSA, rental, or personally owned vehicles used for official government business.

All heavy, self-propelled equipment fitted with rollover protective structures must have a seat belt for the operator. Seat belt use by the operator is mandatory.

Approved fire extinguishers are required in buses, ambulances, fire engines, fire trucks, heavy motorized mobile equipment, special use vehicles, and as required by the U.S. Department of Transportation (e.g., hauling of hazardous materials such as gasoline, explosives, chemicals).

Fire extinguishers installed in or on vehicles must be installed in approved strap-type brackets specifically designed for the extinguisher. All fire extinguishers must be thoroughly inspected annually and maintained.

All IA-owned or leased motor vehicles, including ORVs and special use equipment, will carry a packet containing all accident report forms and other information needed by the driver in case of an accident or other emergency. These packets will be motor vehicle accident reporting kits and will include the following GSA forms:

- GSA Standard Form (SF)-91 Motor Vehicle Accident (Crash) Report
- SF-94 Statement of Witness

3.3 Vehicle Malfunction

Defective vehicles must be immediately reported to the supervisor/fleet manager and removed from service until repaired. If a government-owned or leased vehicle breaks down while in transit, the driver should take the following actions:

- 1) Slow down and pull off the road.
- 2) Turn on the vehicle's hazard/emergency lights.
- 3) Turn the front wheels away from the road and put on the emergency brake.
- 4) Stay in the vehicle.
- 5) Be visible; let other drivers know the vehicle is disabled by raising the hood.
- 6) Set up emergency flares or triangles.
- 7) Call the supervisor and fleet managers for help.

Drivers may make only authorized emergency repairs to a government-owned or leased vehicle. Authorization must be received in advance from the fleet manager before work is done. The operator may have a disabled vehicle towed, but only after receiving direction from their supervisor or fleet manager.

3.4 Vehicle Inspections

Monthly vehicle inspections will be performed and documented by the vehicle operator or designated person and will include the following:

- Tire pressure and condition
- Spare tire pressure and condition
- Lights and turn signals operational
- Windshield wipers functional
- Windshield intact (no cracks or breaks)
- Heater and defroster operational
- Oil and fluids (windshield cleaner, transmission, brake fluid) at required levels
- Brakes functional
- Mirrors are present, properly adjusted, and clean
- Vehicle loads are secure
- Emergency equipment (fire extinguishers, accident reporting kit, vehicle registration, first aid kit, jack, and lug wrench) should be present in the vehicle.
- General vehicle condition is appropriate. Scrapes, scratches, dents, or other damage should be reported before taking the vehicle on the road.

3.5 Vehicle Servicing

Motor vehicles and equipment should be operated and maintained according to the manufacturer's instructions. Motor vehicle and equipment maintenance must also comply with GSA and IA requirements on use, care, maintenance, and inspections contained in the vehicle book in each vehicle.

Individuals responsible for motor vehicle and equipment servicing and repairs should also do the following:

- 1) Ensure that records are maintained for all vehicle and equipment inspections and repairs.
- 2) Ensure that maintenance is done by a qualified mechanic.
- 3) Passenger vehicle and light truck tires should be replaced when any tire fails the "penny" test. Insert a penny into the tread midway across the tire. If all of Abraham Lincoln's head is visible (1/16th inch), the tire needs to be replaced.

- 4) On larger vehicles (more than 10,000-pound GVWR), tires should be replaced when the tread depth on either of the front tires is less than 1/8th inch.
- 5) Comply with local laws on using studded tires.
- 6) The interior and exterior of vehicles should always be kept clean and free of trash and loose items.
- 7) Secure emergency equipment and tools carried inside vehicles.
- 8) Ensure that hydraulic lifts on larger trucks are secured in place with safety locks or other devices to prevent accidental lowering.
- 9) Whenever servicing or repairing components on the chassis of a dump truck that require the dump box be in an elevated position, secure the dump box with blocks or props to prevent accidental lowering.
- 10) Use only approved safety cans for storage and transportation of gasoline and other flammable liquids.
 - Always place gas can on ground before refueling.
 - Touch can with gas dispenser nozzle before removing can lid.
 - Keep gas dispenser nozzle in contact with can inlet when filling.

3.6 Towing Trailers less than 10,000 pounds GVWR

All drivers towing trailers must be properly qualified and authorized. Vehicles towing trailers must comply with local, state, and federal regulations concerning the size and weight of the towing vehicle. Towing vehicles must have sufficient brakes and be heavy enough to ensure complete control when stopping and holding the trailer. Additionally:

- 1) All trailers will be equipped with suitable warning devices (i.e., reflective triangles) for use in an emergency.
- 2) All trailers will be equipped with standard workable trailer lights and stop lights.
- 3) All horse and similar trailers will be equipped with trailer jacks and loading gear.
- 4) Using safety chains is required.
- 5) Trailers having 1,500-pound gross trailer weight and over must be equipped with brakes adequate to stop and hold the trailer.
- 6) Trailers must have an electric breakaway switch to automatically apply trailer brakes if the trailer comes loose from the towing vehicle.

3.7 Off-Road Vehicles (ORVs)

Operating ORVs, snowmobiles, and motorcycles requires training in safe operating procedures and appropriate protective equipment (e.g., helmets, gloves, goggles, boots).

Training on these vehicles must be documented and maintained at the site, school, or facility where the employee works. Employees must have specific authorization from their supervisor to operate an ORV on official business. Where required by state law, operators must have a special state endorsement to operate ORVs.

Chapter 4: Heavy Equipment

4.1 Hazardous Conditions

Under hazardous conditions or in hazardous locations (i.e., weather conditions or environmental features that increase risk), radio contact should be maintained with operators. When radio contact cannot be maintained, another employee should accompany the operator.

Load weight, width, height limits, and other requirements for transporting equipment and materials will comply with applicable regulations. Loads will be secured and flagged as required.

4.2 Job Hazard Analysis (JHA)

Before operating equipment and performing job tasks, a JHA should be completed (see 25 IAM 3-H, Volume 1: IA Occupational Safety Handbook for guidance). The JHA should be conducted jointly by the supervisor and employees, and their product reviewed by the Safety Manager.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will be provided and used in accordance with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and IA requirements. Roll-over protective structures (ROPS) and falling object protective structures (FOPS) are required on equipment per OSHA standards. Seat belts must be installed and used on all equipment equipped with ROPS or FOPS.

Backup alarms will be installed on all bi-directional heavy equipment such as rollers, compactors, loaders, track mounted excavators, dump trucks, or bulldozers. The alarms must always be operable and be heard above the background noise at the work site.

4.3 Timber Operations

A. Machines.

OSHA defines "machine" as a piece of stationary or mobile equipment having a self-contained power plant, that is operated off road, and is used to move material. Timber operations employ many different machines that are unique to logging, forest road construction, fuels treatment, and other forest management activities. Many of these specialized machines are purpose-built, sized, and designed for a particular forestry task.

Machines fell standing trees, delimb, cut them to desired log lengths, and move the logs to the roadside landing. Machines sort logs at the landing and load them on trucks for transport to mills. There are also machines to maintain trees and roads, as well as construct the forest roads needed to manage the forest.

B. Timber Operations - General Requirements.

Each machine, including machines provided by an employee, must be maintained in serviceable condition. Each machine must be inspected before initial use and before each work shift. Defects, damage, missing, or incomplete safety equipment must be replaced, repaired, or the machine tagged "out of service" until repairs are made.

The work area should be assessed for hazards, such as dangerous snags, green trees, trees uprooted while piling brush, and blowdown. Operating and maintenance instructions should be available on the machine or in the area where the machine is being operated. Each machine operator and maintenance employee must comply with the operating and maintenance instructions.

C. Timber Operations - Heavy Timber Equipment.

Heavy equipment will only be operated by an IA, BIA, or BIE-authorized operator. The rated capacity of any machine or heavy equipment will not be exceeded. Machines will not be operated on any slope greater than the maximum slope recommended by the manufacturer.

Before starting or moving any machine or piece of equipment, the operator will determine that no employee is in its path. The equipment operator will not operate movable elements (boom, grapple, load) close to or over other employees. Machines should be operated at enough of a distance from employees and other machines that the operation will not create hazards for anyone.

No employee other than the operator will ride on any machine or piece of equipment unless seating, seat belts, and other protection devices are provided and used when the machine is traveling. Employees will never ride on any load.

Before the machine operator dismounts, the parking brakes will be applied and blades, buckets, and shears grounded. After the machine's engine is shut down, pressure or stored energy from hydraulic pneumatic storage devices will be discharged.

The rated capacity of any vehicle transporting a machine will not be exceeded. Machines or heavy equipment should be loaded on transport vehicles, secured, and unloaded in a way that does not create a hazard for any employee. Equipment controls will be checked to assure proper function and response before work is started. A seat belt will be provided for each machine and heavy equipment operator.

4.4 Heavy Equipment Safety

The operator should assess and correct hazards before moving equipment into operating positions. Machines and heavy equipment should not be operated in an area where there is a danger of blasts or cave-ins. Equipment, or heavy equipment, should not be moved into blasting areas until instructed to do so by the foreman or blaster in charge. Additionally:

- 1) Heavy-equipment operators should be provided with observers when needed to ensure safety or to assist with work.
- 2) When changing operators, make sure that the person in charge discusses the plan for the work, known hazards, and hand signals with the new operator and crew.
- 3) Do not stand directly in front of, or behind, a self-propelled machine while it is being started.

- 4) Do not go under or around equipment without notifying the operator.
- 5) Never get on or off moving equipment.
- 6) Rope off the area of equipment swing radius to provide ample clearance between any solid material and tail swing of a dragline, shovel, or crane.
- 7) Stop all engines before refueling.
 - When filling fuel tank, keep funnel or container in contact with tank to prevent static spark.
 - Never fill tank over a hot engine.
 - Provide grounding as appropriate.
- 8) Always leave the movable parts of machines, such as shovels, buckets, and skip loaders resting on the ground while not operating.
- 9) Do not operate internal combustion engines indoors, except with proper ventilation.
- 10) Have a qualified person inspect machinery or equipment when it is received or repaired to ensure it is in safe operating condition before turning it over to the operator.
- 11) Operators should continually inspect their machines and promptly notify supervisors when repairs are needed. Shut down defective machinery until repairs are made.
- 12) All gears, sprockets, shafts, augers, drivebelts or chains, pulleys, drums, gears, fans, or other hazardous moving parts must have guards.
- 13) Operating platforms should be surfaced with nonskid materials on foot walks, ladders, steps, handholds, guardrails, and toe boards before operating machinery.
- 14) Provide suitable protection for the operator against falling objects, swinging loads, overhead electrical wires, and similar hazards.

4.5 Heavy Equipment Battery Servicing

Recharging batteries generates explosive hydrogen gas, and the acid electrolyte can cause severe burns. Additionally:

- 1) Always use appropriate PPE including face shields and gloves when servicing batteries.
- 2) Use battery chargers in well ventilated areas without ignition sources.
- 3) Shut off battery chargers before batteries are tested or connected.

- 4) A sign with the charging procedures should be located near the battery charger.
- 5) Before charging the battery, check the vent caps to ensure function.
- 6) When preparing electrolyte solutions, pour acid slowly into the water. Never pour the water into the acid.
- 7) Keep battery acid away from skin, clothing, and metal.

Reports and Forms

The Motor Vehicle Operator Report must be submitted by the Regional Safety Manager (RSM) and the BIE Safety Program Manager (SPM) to the Chief, Division of Safety and Risk Management (DSRM) no later than the 10th day of each month. The report is submitted for the previous month's activities. The report template can be located on the IA Online Forms webpage here: <https://www.bia.gov/policy-forms/online-forms>

As discussed above in section 2.6, all full-time operators must annually submit to their supervisor GSA Form 3607, Motor Vehicle Operator's License and Driving Record, for renewal. This form can be found on the GSA webpage here: <https://www.gsa.gov/forms-library/motor-vehicle-operators-license-and-driving-record>.

Additionally, all incidental operators must annually submit to their supervisor the IA Annual Incidental Motor Vehicle Operator's Certification. This form can be found on the IA Online Forms webpage here: <https://www.bia.gov/policy-forms/online-forms>. More details on this procedure are also found in section 2.6 of this handbook.