



RRCV Convoy Procedures

The following are the RRCV convoy procedures for trip participants. This document should be read in conjunction with the RRCV Trip Leaders Information and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ'S) document on the club website under Advice

For any queries or questions please contact the RRCV Trip Coordinator at trips@rangeroverclub.org.au

The convoy

A convoy comprises a Trip Leader (TL), participants and a Tail End Charlie (TEC). The TEC always remains at the rear of the convoy.

At the pre-trip briefing, the TL will confirm to the participants, the radio channel to be used, the number of vehicles in the convoy, the name and vehicle of the TEC and, if required, confirm with the participants their knowledge of the club's convoy procedures.

Radio checks

Once participants are in their vehicles at the commencement of the trip or at the commencement of each day for multiple days, the TL will undertake a radio check to ensure all vehicles in the convoy are "on channel", being the channel nominated to the participants at the pre-trip briefing.

TEC

See also **Tail End Charlie Procedures** later in this document

When the convoy moves off, either at the start of the trip or after any stops along the way, the TEC will advise the TL that the convoy "is on the move" and the TL will acknowledge receipt.

Stopped vehicle

Should any vehicle in the convoy have a need to stop, then the participant is to advise the TL that their vehicle has stopped and the reason for stopping. The TL will respond, depending on the reason for the stoppage, by either directing the convoy to stop or to continue, albeit slowly. Depending on the reason for stopping, vehicles behind the stopped vehicle may elect to go past the stopped vehicle or to stop behind the vehicle, possibly to render assistance. TEC will always remain behind the stopped vehicle and keep the TL informed with respect to the stopped vehicle.

Intersections

At intersections, the TL will advise the convoy of which direction the convoy will take eg. "we are turning right into McGuire Track" or "we are continuing straight ahead". The TL will then advise the vehicle behind to either "mark the corner" or advise all vehicles to "stop and go". The TL will indicate which method on an intersection by



intersection basis, depending on which method is appropriate, generally in relation to how spread out the convoy may be but always taking into account the safety of any stopped vehicle.

Sometimes some vehicles do not necessarily hear the directions from the TL in regard to an intersection, so if a vehicle approaches an intersection with a stopped vehicle, without having heard instructions from the TL, then that vehicle should approach the intersection with caution and check with the stopped vehicle as to the intersection arrangements. Drivers should not assume what is required at an intersection unless it is clear from the TL as to what is required.

The methodology for each of the direction indicators is as follows:

“Mark the corner” – The TL will advise the convoy that the intersection will be “marked” and will then instruct the vehicle behind to stop at the intersection in a safe place and “mark the corner”. If a turn is required, then the marking vehicle will indicate the direction to turn by either a left or right flashing indicator light and may also move onto the track that is being turned into, if the vehicle behind can see the marking vehicle.

If the direction is to continue straight ahead and not make a turn, then if it is a T- intersection, the marking vehicle can, if safe to do so, either block or partially block the incoming track and indicate the direction by either a left or right flashing indicator. If the intersection is a crossroad, then the vehicle is to proceed just past the intersection and pull off to the side, indicating to the following vehicles, the direction of travel through the intersection. Once all vehicles, except TEC have passed the marking vehicle, TEC will then advise the marking vehicle that their vehicle has been seen, with the marking vehicle then falling back into the convoy, in front of TEC. When TEC arrives at, and passes through the intersection, TEC will advise the TL that all vehicles have passed through the intersection, after which the TL will acknowledge receipt of that message.

“Stop and Go” – The TL will advise the convoy of a “stop and go” at the intersection and will then instruct the vehicle behind the TL to stop at the intersection and only move off once vehicle behind acknowledges (by radio or turning indicators) that it sees the stopped vehicle. The procedure is then repeated for all vehicles passing through the intersection. When TEC arrives at the intersection, TEC will advise the TL that all vehicles have passed through the intersection, after which the TL will acknowledge receipt of that message.

Long or spread-out convoys

At times, there may be some considerable distance between the TL and TEC due to such factors as a large number of vehicles in the convoy or vehicles are spread-out to avoid dust or to maintain speed over corrugations. Other times radio contact between the TL and TEC may be lost due to the nature of the terrain in these situations, messages may not be received by the TL from TEC or from TEC to the TL. On these occasions, it would be necessary for participants in the convoy, to relay messages along the convoy between TL and TEC.



Distance between vehicles

For mountain tracks and roads, all vehicles should remain a safe distance apart, particularly on steep ascents and descents or where the track is slippery. Where there are drainage culverts across tracks on hills, then a following vehicle should remain one culvert distance behind the vehicle in front should the vehicle in front need to reverse back for another runup over a steep ascent or the following vehicle goes into an uncontrolled slide on a descent.

Where possible, excessive distance between vehicles should be avoided. Convoy members should occasionally monitor their rear-view mirror for the following vehicle. Visual or radio confirmation should be made to ensure the convoy has not broken. i.e. people drive at different speeds; maintain a speed that does not lose the vehicle behind unless previously agreed.

For desert tracks and roads where there are significant corrugations, vehicles may need to travel at speed to ride above the corrugations. In this situation, vehicles should refrain from frequently stopping or from slowing down and speeding up due to dust, as both situations places undue pressure on shock absorbers. In these situations, the distance between vehicles may be up to a kilometre apart.

Messages from TL to convoy and TEC

At times, the TL may advise the convoy of matters of importance such as on-coming vehicles, adverse road conditions, obstructions on the road etc. TEC and only the TEC, will acknowledge receipt of the message to the TL and in doing so, the TL should generally be confident that all vehicles in the convoy have received the message.

If TEC does not acknowledge due to being out of range or missing the message, then a vehicle generally in the middle of the convoy may need to convey that message to TEC and TEC will then convey receipt of that message to the TL via that vehicle.

Sometimes, due to various reasons such as noise in a vehicle, distractions (inside and out) or even accidental bumping of the channel, it cannot always be assumed that all vehicles receive such messages therefore drivers should always operate in a safe and responsible manner. Drivers are always responsible for their own actions to ensure the safety of theirs and other vehicles in the convoy.

Finally

The convoy is a team and the participants are team players with the TL as the captain of the team, with TEC as the vice-captain. The success of a convoy in undertaking a trip is largely dependent on that convoy working as a team and helping each other to a successful and safe outcome to the trip.



Tail End Charlie Procedures

'Tail End Charlie' - The person nominated to take up the rear position in the convoy on a trip. Nobody should drop behind TEC's vehicle.

Probably the most misunderstood and underrated job in group activities.

The Trip Leader (TL) LEADS the group, but 'Tail End Charlie' (TEC) CONTROLS the group.

Responsibility:

- Safety of the group and to maintain the integrity of the group.
- Assist the TL in making the activity enjoyable for all, building confidence of individuals and the group.
- Assist the TL in monitoring the group and the environment, conservation and environmental awareness, the elements, emergencies and conflicts, navigation, communication, risk perception and risk management.

Management:

- Be the 'eyes' of the TL and the 'voice' when necessary.
- Assist the TL in practical planning considerations and problem solving, supporting and assisting the TL according to the trip plan and manage any incident or emergency strategy if the TL becomes injured or incapacitated.

Commencement of the Trip at the Meeting Place –

- Monitor UHF radio during the TL's trip briefing at Meeting Place and advise the TL of any 'late arrival' messages received.
- Assist the TL to leave the Meeting Place in a timely manner.

During the Trip –

- Vehicles 'marking corners' - assist the TL with convoy procedure, advising the 'marking' vehicle over the radio to proceed when safe, when all vehicles other than TEC have passed. Note – 'marker' does not move until advised.
- Advise the TL if one or part of the group is delayed on track for whatever reason or situation i.e. keep the TL informed of the progress or delays of the group.
- Provide the TL with regular information on the progress (or delays) of the rear of the convoy i.e. 'all left camp', 'all turned off highway', 'all back on the bitumen', 'all group crossed the (named) River'. This is to keep the TL informed at all times of the 'strung out' position of all vehicles and to assist the TL in calculating the length and 'time' of the convoy.
- TEC ensures gates are left open or closed as found by the lead driver (TL).
- Provide the TL with information on the movement of other vehicles i.e. another vehicle overtaking the convoy from the rear (TEC may need to advise the



group to pull over when safe to allow traffic to pass), and/or another vehicle passing down the convoy travelling in the opposite direction has cleared the group.

- Assist in highway lane changes at the discretion of the TL.
- Watch for any hazards or problems with any of the vehicles of the group.
- Provide the TL with information on vehicles in the convoy stopping. TEC STOPS with them. Do not allow convoy vehicles to fall to the rear of TEC.
 - If 'stop' is only brief, TEC notifies the TL when stopped, and when travel is resumed.
 - If 'stop' is for mechanical or other problem, TEC notifies the TL and requests the convoy to stop, assesses situation and requests assistance as required.
- Assist the TL at convoy stops and overnight camps to leave in a timely manner. TEC is the last to leave every 'stop' and camp and has the responsibility to undertake a final check on 'environmental impact'.
- Advice via the radio, convoy vehicles leaving rest/scenic/lunch/fuel stops and overnight camps to maintain their designated convoy position according to the TL's Trip List.
- Provide the TL with an alternative Leader in cases such as:
 - the group is required to turn around i.e. locked gate or impassable route
 - the TL is required to split the group and use an alternative route
 - delayed departure
 - illness
 - injury
 - mechanical problems that leads to the TL withdrawing from the trip.
- If any participant indicates by voice or action or attitude that they do not wish to, or are unable to follow the TL's directions or rules, the TL/TEC has the responsibility and duty to remind that person of group safety.

At the end of the trip -

- TEC assists the TL in returning the enveloped Personal Details Forms to the respective participants.

Thanks to Graeme Allen, Graeme Carter and Rob Butterworth for pulling this together.