



ACT Rural Fire Service
Standard Operating Procedure 3.2
Urgent Duty Driving

3.2
Operational
Management

Purpose

Urgent Duty Driving (UDD) is action undertaken when responding to an incident for the ACT RFS, where normal road rules may be breached while driving under lights and sirens.

This procedure details the use and limitations of UDD for ACTRFS operations. This SOP is directed to all ACT RFS members. UDD is only for responding to an incident, not for driving actions that may be taken while at an incident.

The onus of responsibility rests with the driver during “urgent duty driving” to prove that the response was carried out with due regard to safety.

Operating Procedure.

Note: Learner or provisional licence holders (L or P plate holders) are not permitted to undertake UDD.

RFS recognises that in any emergency, a driver may disregard motor traffic regulations, however, the service does not condone such actions in anything other than an emergency.

Whenever an RFS unit is directed to operate under UDD to respond to an incident, red and blue flashing (warning) lights and sirens must be used when traffic regulations are disregarded.

The driver must be in full control of the unit at all times and will be responsible for avoiding other vehicles and pedestrians when disregarding traffic regulations.

When using these warning devices speed limits set for the public may be exceeded. A driver may disregard motor traffic regulations that apply to the public concerning the direction of travel, traffic signs, traffic lights, direction of turns and parking once the risk has been fully assessed.

Vehicle operators are still accountable for their actions under UDD and should exercise caution at all times.

Before a person may undertake UDD they must complete an information session conducted by the brigade captain or delegate on this and other relevant SOP's and be deemed to have a full understanding of this SOP and the requirements of a driver undertaking UDD.



ACT Rural Fire Service
Standard Operating Procedure 3.2
Urgent Duty Driving

3.2
Operational
Management

All drivers who undertake UDD must have been an active member of an ACT RFS brigade or a relevant agency approved by the ACTRFS for a minimum period of two (2) years, obtained the unit of competency in “PUAVEH001A Drive vehicles under operational conditions” or have demonstrated sound driving skills and abilities and be endorsed by the Brigade Captain.

Execution of Urgent Duty Driving by Brigades

- Only upon receipt of a request from COMCEN or the RFS Duty Officer (RFS DO) to respond to an incident, and responding unit informing COMCEN or the RFS DO that the message was received.
- **“Respond”** to a fire means that UDD may be initiated, otherwise the unit is to **“proceed”** to the fire, requiring all road rules to be obeyed. While COMCEN or the RFS DO must initiate a unit to undertake UDD, the final decision rests with the driver. If the driver of the vehicle is not comfortable undertaking UDD then they are not obliged to undertake UDD and may **“proceed”**.
- RFS units may, during the initial response phase, **“proceed”** to a fire within their immediate area without being dispatched by COMCEN. They must notify COMCEN of their intentions, and cannot commence UDD unless COMCEN endorse their action and responded them to the incident. All units must comply with all instruction from the RFS DO.
- When responding under UDD, all vehicles must have working warning light(s) and siren. Warning lights must be used at all times when responding to a fire, however when proceeding through school zones, caught in traffic or conditions are such that the siren serves no useful purpose, it should be turned off until conditions change.
- Always apply caution as the primary action
- School zone speed limits must be adhered to at all times.
- On approaching a Stop Sign the vehicle must come to a complete stop and proceed with caution, only when safe to do so.
- On approaching a Red Traffic Light the driver of the vehicle is to slow down, stop and proceed with caution, only when safe to do so.
- On approaching a GIVE WAY sign the driver of the vehicle is to ensure their approach speed allows them to stop the vehicle completely if required.



ACT Rural Fire Service
Standard Operating Procedure 3.2
Urgent Duty Driving

3.2
Operational
Management

- On approaching a green traffic light, the driver of the vehicle is to approach at such a speed that the vehicle can come to a complete stop should the lights change.
- All drivers must exercise extreme caution and due care when undertaking UDD and must take all reasonable measures to provide for the safety of all crewmembers and public.
- The driver of the vehicle is to cease UDD immediately when notified by COMCEN to downgrade their response or return to their standby location.
- The driver of the vehicle is to cease UDD immediately when requested by COMCEN to “**proceed**” (continue at road speed).
- The driver of the vehicle is to cease UDD when, in their opinion, it is unsafe or unreasonable to continue with UDD. The driver or crew leader of the vehicle is to notify COMCEN of this action.
- If any vehicle faults are detected during UDD the driver of the vehicle is to notify COMCEN and inform them if they are able to continue to the incident applying normal road rules or, if they are unable to continue, ask COMCEN to make arrangement for the repairing of the vehicle.
- If the RFS DO has advised that there is no urgency in the response, then COMCEN must tell the vehicle that it must “**proceed**” (i.e. under normal road rules).

Maintained By: Manager, Operations

Approved By: Andrew Stark

Position: Chief Officer RFS

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Andrew Stark', written over a light green rectangular background.

Date: 15/02/2011

Cross Reference SOP/s: SOP 4.1 Response
SOP 4.2 Weight of response
SOP 5.4 Resource location tracking

Amendments: