**Remote area travel information**

**The national parks code**
Help protect your national parks by following these guidelines:
- Leave your pets at home.
- Take your rubbish with you.
- Observe fire restrictions, usually 1 November to 30 April. Check CFS hotline 1300 362 361.
- Conserve native habitat by using liquid fuel or gas stoves.
- Camp only in designated areas.
- Respect geological, cultural and heritage sites
- Keep our wildlife wild. Do not feed or disturb animals, or remove native plants.
- Keep to defined vehicle tracks and walking trails.
- The use of generators and chainsaws are not permitted.
- Be considerate of other park users.

Thank you for leaving the bush in its natural state for the enjoyment of others.

**Local emergency numbers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>000 or 131 444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambulance</td>
<td>000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire</td>
<td>000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Further information**
Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, SA Arid Lands Region
PO Box 78
Port Augusta SA 5700

Desert Parks Pass Administration Officer
Phone: (08) 8648 5328

Phone Information Line (08) 8204 1910
Email desertparks@sa.gov.au
Website parks.sa.gov.au

**Driving on unsealed roads**
- Engage 4WD and lock hubs when driving on unsealed tracks and in potentially dangerous terrain. Remember to disengage 4WD when returning to sealed roads.
- Travel at speeds appropriate to road conditions. Reduce speeds on dirt roads where potholes, corrugations and loose stones may cause vehicle damage and accidents.
- Adhere to speed limits. The speed limit in parks and reserves is 40 km per hour unless otherwise signed.
- Avoid wet-weather driving. Dirt roads can become impassable, dangerous and easily damaged.
- Take extreme care at creek crossings. Water levels can rise unexpectedly with unknown heavy rains falling upstream.
- On dirt roads, slow down and keep well left when passing oncoming vehicles to avoid possible windscreen damage from stones.
- Keep a safe distance from the vehicle travelling in front of you.
- Pull over and stop when dust limits visibility. Never overtake through a dust cloud, there may be another vehicle coming towards you.
- Look out for wildlife and stock on roads particularly at sunrise and sunset. Slow down when passing birds of prey feeding on road kill as they take some time to get airborne.

**Driving through sand**
- Engage 4WD and lock hubs when driving in sand and in potentially dangerous terrain. Remember to disengage 4WD when returning to sealed roads.
- A good start is to reduce tyre pressures to around 60% of your highway pressure when driving in sand. You may need to decrease more as optimum tyre pressure in sand varies dependent on the vehicle and load. Always reduce speeds when driving with lower tyre pressures to avoid tyres coming off rims. Remember to reinflate tyres when leaving sandy areas.
- Keep as far left as track conditions permit when crossing dunes crests. Lead vehicles should carry a tall flag to warn oncoming traffic of their approach to dunes (flags are now mandatory in the Simpson Desert).
- Maintain a constant speed when driving through sand in low range third or fourth gear or high range second or third gear. Do not apply brakes abruptly as this will bury the front wheels. Do not change direction sharply.

**In emergencies**
If you become bogged in sand, do not spin the wheels. Remove sand from the front of all wheels and under the chassis. Check your tyre pressure. It is possible to go as low as 11 psi. Jack up each wheel in turn and backfill under it. Lay tracks of sticks or brush and lower the wheels onto that bed. When driving out, release the clutch very gently, initially keeping your revs as low as possible until the vehicle starts to move forward. Maintain a constant speed once you are under way. Remove sticks or brush once out of the bog.

If your vehicle breaks down or is immovable:
- stay calm
- do not leave your vehicle
- radio or phone for assistance if possible
- ration food and water
- conserve energy, remain in shade
- wait for assistance to arrive
- collect firewood to burn with some green vegetation to produce dark smoke, or flash a mirror to attract searchers if you hear a nearby plane or vehicle.

**Enjoy your trip**
A trip to the outback can be the experience of a lifetime if you are well prepared, make sure a friend or family member knows where you are, and are aware of the potential risks you may face out there.

Remember that these risks can quickly increase outside the peak tourist season as the temperature rises (temperature regularly exceeds 40ºC) and the number of other people on the road varies dependent on the vehicle and load. Always reduce speeds when driving with lower tyre pressures to avoid tyres coming off rims. Remember to reinflate tyres when leaving sandy areas.

If you have any further questions before heading out, contact the Desert Parks Pass Administration Officer to find out more on (08) 8648 5328 or email desertparks@sa.gov.au
Ensure you carry enough fuel to safely get you between fuel stops that are the greatest distances apart. Frequent low gear and 4WD work uses fuel faster than high gear travel so allow for an extra day or two to cover this travel. So:

- spare – at least two extra tyres and two tubes, but if possible take two extra complete wheels.
- tools – long-handled spade, tyre levers, tyre pressure gauge, air compressor, spanners, multi-grips, screwdrivers, pliers, hammer, electrical tape, WD40, spare fan belt, radiator hoses, coolant, engine oil, transmission oil, spark plugs, fuses, spare fuel filter, hose and wire and plastic tubing, etc.
- recovery equipment – jack, jack plate, wheel brace, tyre levers, tube mending kit, tow rope, leather gloves, winch, winch sling, tree protector, D shackles, snatch block and straps, jumper leads (booster cables), etc.
- first aid kit – travellers should have a well equipped first aid kit. Medical assistance can be days away, so be prepared for an emergency. St John Ambulance provide a range of suitable first aid kits.
- sun protection – sunscreen, hat, sunglasses and long-sleeved loose shirts to avoid sunburn, heat stress and heat stroke.
- communications equipment – take a satellite phone or HF radio to keep in contact or for emergencies. UHF radio can be used to communicate between vehicles in convoy. EPIRBs (Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons) are also recommended for use in emergency situations. Ensure someone in the party has a thorough understanding of how to use these devices.
- navigation – maps, compass, GPS.

Weather conditions vary seasonally in the outback. Check weather forecasts and road conditions prior to travel via www.dpti.sa.gov.au/OutbackRoads or by phoning 1300 361 033. Alternatively call the Desert Parks Pass Administration Officer on (08) 8648 5328.

Safe driving in the outback

The safest way to cross the desert is in a well-equipped and well-provisioned four-wheel drive (4WD) vehicle with high ground clearance and an experienced driver at the wheel. Drivers should be familiar with their vehicles, understand vehicle capabilities, and be able to execute appropriate driving techniques to suit different terrains and weather conditions.

Know your vehicle

- Be familiar with your 4WD vehicle. Ensure it is well-maintained, serviced, and roadworthy. It is recommended that your 4WD has high ground clearance if travelling through sand.
- Know how to operate your 4WD transmission before you leave. Know if your vehicle is fitted with locking hubs and how to engage them.
- Inspect your vehicle every morning before you start driving for the day. Check tyre pressures and fluid levels. Clean air filters and the windscreen. Look underneath for leaks and damage to cables and hoses and remove any dry vegetation that could catch fire.

Vehicle access

- Keep to designated public access tracks, parking areas and campgrounds. Vehicles are more likely to get damaged or stranded off-track.
- Mining and petroleum infrastructure is not to be accessed by the public.
- Do not camp in creek beds or watercourses in case of flash flooding.
- Do not camp under trees that may drop limbs.
- Do not drive on salt lakes.