



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive



National Ambulance Service (NAS)

Business Support Procedure for Authorised Use of Official Vehicles

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Revision date	31st December 2019	Responsibility for review and audit	Business Manager

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1.0 POLICY

- 1.1 Under the Major Emergency Management Framework 2006, the National Ambulance Service (NAS) is defined as a Principal Emergency Service (PES). Consequently, NAS Officers are required to respond to and fulfil various roles as set out in the Health Service Executive Major Emergency Plans.
- 1.2 The majority of NAS Officers hold Advanced Paramedic, Paramedic or Emergency Medical Technician qualifications and therefore have the capacity to provide a significant contribution to the operational delivery of emergency services to patients in addition to performing core duties.
- 1.3 In the context of current Health and Safety and Road Traffic legislation and the uncontrolled nature of the emergency services working environment, the HSE requires NAS Officers to respond to any emergency or serious untoward incident in a safe and timely manner. In the context of a 24/7 emergency service, these incidents or major emergencies can occur in any part of the country and at any time.
- 1.4 In addition to responding, wherever possible, to emergency calls, NAS Officers are required to provide an emergency response to serious untoward incidents such as:
 - A. Any Road Traffic Collision involving a NAS vehicle
 - B. Any physical assault involving a member of staff while on duty
 - C. To allow for clinical/operational supervision depending on the needs of the service
 - D. To enable specialist medical teams to be deployed into the pre-hospital environment when required
 - E. Any staff member injured while on duty
 - F. Prolonged entrapment or rescue of patients
 - G. Any incident involving the transfer of a Category III Infectious case
 - H. Any incident with three or more ambulances attending
 - I. Any chemical or biological incident requiring the mobilization of a Special Operations Team
 - J. Complaint from a patient or public about a staff member
 - K. Any report of lost or stolen controlled drugs (Morphine)
 - L. Notification of Medicines Recall from Pharmacy Service
 - M. Outbreak of Fire on NAS premises
 - N. Outbreak of Fire on NAS vehicle
 - O. Break in on NAS premises
- 1.5 The above list is not exhaustive.

2.0 PURPOSE

- 2.1 To provide NAS Officers with clear procedures on the authorised use of official vehicles provided for the purposes of fulfilling the requirements set out at Section 1.0 above.
- 2.2 To ensure that appropriate regulations are in place to effect compliance with the HSE's National Financial Regulations and Revenue Commissioner's requirements on the use of such assets by individual employees.

- 2.3 To ensure that NAS Officers use official vehicles appropriately and that HSE assets are efficiently and cost-effectively operated and managed.
- 2.4 To ensure effective control arrangements for the authorised use of official vehicles are in place.

3.0 SCOPE

- 3.1 This Procedure applies to all NAS Officers requested to operate any NAS vehicle.
- 3.2 This Procedure does not encompass fleet related practices and procedures which are encompassed by specific policies and procedures.

4.1 LEGISLATION/OTHER RELATED POLICIES

- A. HSE Code of Standards and Behaviour
- B. HSE National Financial Regulations
- C. Major Emergency Management Framework 2006
- D. Road Traffic Act 2006, 2010, 2011 and 2013 (pending)
- E. Duties and Responsibilities (relevant job description)
- F. Policy – NASP009 – Operational Driving of NAS Vehicles
- G. Policy – NASP010 – Vehicular Emergency Response
- H. Procedure – NASOF014 – Appropriate Use and Control of Fleet Fuel Cards

5.1 GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

5.2 “POOL CAR”

5.1.1 A vehicle can be treated as being in a “car pool” if:

- A. The car is made available to, and is actually used by more than one employee and is not ordinarily used by one employee to the exclusion of the others, and
- B. Any private use of the car by the employees is merely incidental to business use, and
- C. It is not normally kept overnight at the home of any employee UNLESS it is scheduled and verifiable that an Officer of the State (including an Officer of a statutory body) is obliged to be 'on call' outside of his/her normal working hours to respond to situations giving rise to possible contravention of law and, for this purpose, the Officer:
 - Is provided with a car during scheduled and verifiable 'on call' periods outside of his/her normal working hours; and
 - Keeps the car overnight on or in the vicinity of his or her home; and
 - The car would, but for the obligation in (C) above, be a 'pool car', then such car may be deemed to be a car in a 'car pool' for the purposes of the benefit in kind provisions.

5.3 ON CALL SITUATIONS

- 5.2.1 In circumstances where the Senior Manager as appropriate considers it necessary to request an Officer to be available (on-call), and further considers it necessary, because of that arrangement, for the Officer to park an official vehicle overnight at his/her home, the Senior Manager must approve such occasions.
- 5.2.2 **While parked at the Officer's home this vehicle may not, under any circumstances, be used for any private purposes.**

6.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 6.1 It is the responsibility of the National Ambulance Service Leadership Team to ensure the dissemination of this Procedure to all staff in their area of responsibility
- 6.2 The Area Operations Managers will be responsible for overseeing the application of this Procedure within their area.
- 6.3 The Operational, Support and Resilience Managers, assisted by Fleet, Logistics and Estate Managers will be responsible for the day to day monitoring and operation of this Procedure.
- 6.4 All those persons referred to within the Scope of this Procedure are required to adhere to its terms and conditions.
- 6.5 The responsibility for compliance with this Procedure lies with each affected employee.

7.0 PROCEDURE

7.1 RADIO EQUIPMENT

- 7.1.1 Official vehicles will be fitted with official radios and only used for official purposes
- 7.1.2 Official radios, including status update messaging, must be used to record performance reporting requirements when responding to emergency call outs.

7.2 ELIGIBILITY

- 7.2.1 Any NAS Officer may be deemed eligible for authorisation to use an official vehicle where they are either required to:
- A. Be available to fulfil a role as set out within the HSE's Major Emergency Plans
 - B. Respond to Serious Untoward Incidents (as set out in Section 1.0)
 - C. Be currently registered as an Emergency Medical Technician, Paramedic or Advanced Paramedic and be available to respond to emergency calls
- 7.2.2 Each relevant Senior Manager should ensure that a log of appropriate authorisations to use an official vehicle, are available for inspection. The log should clearly specify whether or the not the authorisation applies to business hours only, specific hours or all hours.
- 7.2.3 In this regard, each authorised NAS Officer must sign the appropriate Declaration (see Appendix II)

7.3 AUTHORISED USE WITHIN THE STATE

- 7.3.1 Official vehicles are allocated by Fleet, Logistics and Estate Managers for the use of authorised Officers where necessary for the conduct of official business, and may be driven only by NAS Officers who hold a full current unendorsed driving licence.
- 7.3.2 Official vehicles are to be used only for the purposes of official business. Their use for private purposes at any time is strictly forbidden and no unauthorised person may be carried as a passenger or allowed to drive or use an official vehicle.
- 7.3.3 All official vehicles, which are used in connection with official business, are indemnified by the State against third party claims and are exempted from the requirement to be in possession of a certificate of insurance under the provisions of Sections 53 and 54 of the Road Traffic Act, 1968. A letter of exemption should be carried in the vehicle at all times.
- 7.3.4 Drivers of official vehicles should clearly understand that in the event of an accident occurring during irregular or unauthorised use of the motor vehicle for any purpose the driver concerned will:
- A. have no right of indemnity against the State in respect of any claims arising against him/her for damages or costs as a consequence of an accident during any such misuse, nor will a plea for special consideration of indemnity be entertained;
 - B. be held liable for the cost of the vehicle if rendered a total loss or for the cost of any repairs to the vehicle, and
 - C. be left to arrange for his/her defence in any legal proceedings taken against him/her and to meet any fine, which may be imposed on conviction where proceedings are instituted.
- 7.3.5 Official vehicles are not insured and any irregular or unauthorised use of an official vehicle will render the driver liable to prosecution for contravention of the licensing and insurance provisions of the Road Traffic Acts and, on conviction, to a fine or imprisonment, apart from any disciplinary action, which may be taken by the HSE

7.4 USE OF BLUE LIGHTS AND SIRENS

- 7.4.1 Drivers of official vehicles (including motorcycles) will:
- A. Drive their vehicles, when the sirens are used, in a manner so as not to endanger themselves, escort(s) or other road users.
 - B. Proceed cautiously when passing through road junctions, whether controlled or uncontrolled.
- 7.4.2 Note that the use of sirens in certain circumstances could create a serious collision situation. For example, a timid driver or an elderly pedestrian crossing the roadway might panic, or a hard of hearing person might not hear the siren

- 7.4.3 The unnecessary use of sirens detracts from their effectiveness, generates public complaint and renders a willing and prompt response from the public less likely.
- 7.4.4 During the night and early morning, sirens should only be used in extremely urgent situations.
- 7.4.5 Flashing blue beacons and dipped headlights should be used simultaneously with sirens.
- 7.4.6 Hazard warning lights should not be used with sirens and flashing beacons while the vehicle is in motion.
- 7.4.7 For specific guidance, refer to Policy – NASP010 – Vehicular Emergency Response

7.5 AUTHORISED USE OUTSIDE THE STATE

- 7.5.1 The use of an official vehicle outside the Jurisdiction is subject to approval by the relevant Senior Manager in the first instance.

7.6 AUTHORISED PARKING

- 7.6.1 As a general rule, official vehicles should be parked overnight in official car parks. Where this is not feasible, alternative secure parking arrangements should be made.
- 7.6.2 Where staff are required to be available (on call) for all or part of a day, evening or night, sanction may be given for certain vehicles to be parked overnight at Officers' homes provided that the vehicles are secure and that they are needed in the event of a potential call-out. It should be clearly understood that the State indemnity referred to in Section 7.3.2, will cover only the use of the vehicle while it is driven directly between the Officer's home and the place where his/her official duties take place or the location of the call out.

7.7 SCHEDULED AND VERIFIABLE ON CALL

- 7.7.1 Where an NAS Officer is authorised to use an official vehicle and is requested to be available for specific periods outside of normal hours (on call), then appropriate records of availability should be maintained by ensuring the official vehicle is logged as available with the relevant Control Centre in whose functional area the authorised Officer resides.
- 7.7.2 Such records should be accessible and retrievable for audit
- 7.7.3 Further to Section 7.7.1, where an Officer authorised to use an official vehicle is requested to be available outside of normal hours and is logged as available with the relevant Control Centre but refuses to respond to a call, this will constitute a basis for either restricting or removing Authorisation to use an Official vehicle.

8.0 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- 8.1 This Procedure will be circulated electronically to all relevant NAS Officers
- 8.2 This Procedure will be available in electronic format in each Area Headquarters for ease of retrieval and reference
- 8.3 Each Operational Support and Resilience Manager will ensure that the Manager responsible for updating Policies and Procedures will return the Confirmation Form to NAS Headquarters to confirm document circulation

9.0 REVISION AND AUDIT

- 9.1 This Procedure will be formally reviewed whenever necessary following changes in procedures and/or legislation or a relevant event.
- 9.2 The Head of Business Support has the responsibility for ensuring the regular review and updating of this Procedure.

Revision History: (This captures any changes that are made to a SOP when it has been revised. This may be placed at the back or close to the front of the document according to local preference.)

No	Revision No	Date	Section Amended	Approved by

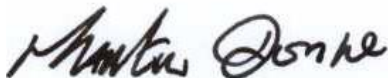
10.0 REFERENCES

- Employers Guide on operating PAYE and PRSI on Certain Benefits (February 2008)

11.0 APPENDICES

Appendix I – Form – Pool Car Protocol
Appendix II - Document Control Forms 1-3

12.0 Signature of Approval



National Ambulance Service Director
On Behalf of the National Ambulance Service

Date **3rd January 2017**

Appendix I



Feidhmeannas Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive



Protocols and Procedures for use of NAS Pool Vehicles

An NAS Vehicle has been provided to you for the performance of your duty. As part of your duty you are expected to be available for call-outs whilst on and off duty.

The vehicle shall be driven in accordance with the Rules of the Road, except in the case of an emergency call, and then only under the derogations provided to the Ambulance Service under the Road Traffic Act e.g. speed limits, parking, stopping, etc.

1. You will be expected at all times to hold the appropriate unendorsed driving licence and provide the Operational Support and Resilience Manager with a copy of same annually.
2. This vehicle is part of a pool of vehicles provided by the National Ambulance Service and you will be asked to change the type of vehicle you drive from time to time to suit the service needs.
3. The vehicle will only be used whilst on National Ambulance Service business.
4. You shall be responsible for all daily checks on this vehicle, filling out the appropriate documentation, reporting any defects to the Operational Support and Resilience Manager with responsibility for transport or other appropriate designated Officer and complete all journey logs required.
5. During periods of annual leave or time off, you advise the Operational Support and Resilience Manager and make arrangements for any vehicle to be left at Ambulance Headquarters until your return.
6. Refuelling of the vehicle may be by fuel card or directly from within the National Ambulance Service resources and you will be responsible for entering all appropriate data, e.g. date, time, odometer, registration number, etc. and sign all documentation.
7. All incidents/accidents must be reported as soon as possible to the appropriate person, e.g. Control, Operational Support and Resilience Manager, Area Operations Manager, and an accident report must be fully completed as soon as possible.
8. This vehicle is to be kept mechanically safe, hygienically clean, fully serviced and fuelled at all times.

All of the above are to comply with current National Financial Regulations, best practice and Fleet Operating Procedures.

I have read, understood and agree with this protocol.

Signed: _____

OSRM: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

Seirbhís Náisiúnta Otharchairr
Teach Dara, Ascaill an Crann Telle, Páirc na Milaíse, Nás na Rí, Co. Chill Dara

National Ambulance Service
Oak House, Millennium Park, Naas, Co. Kildare
Tel: 045 882592 Fax: 1890 252 125

Document Control No. 1 (to be attached to Master Copy)

NASBS003 Business Support Procedure Authorised Use of Official Vehicles

Reviewer: The purpose of this statement is to ensure that a Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline (PPPG) proposed for implementation in the HSE is circulated to a peer reviewer (internal or external), in advance of approval of the PPPG. You are asked to sign this form to confirm to the committee developing this Policy or Procedure or Protocol or Guideline that you have reviewed and agreed the content and recommend the approval of the following Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline:

Title of Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline:

NASBS003 Business Support Procedure Authorised Use of Official Vehicles

I acknowledge the following:

- I have been provided with a copy of the Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline described above.
- I have read Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline document.
- I agree with the Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline and recommend its approval by the committee developing the PPPG.

Name

Signature (Block Capitals)

Date

Please return this completed form to:

Name: Niamh Murphy
Contact Details: Corporate Office
National Ambulance Service
Rivers Building
Tallaght Cross
Dublin 24
email niamhf.murphy1@hse.ie

Document Control No. 2 (to be attached to Master Copy)

Key Stakeholders Review of Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guidance Reviewer Statement

Reviewer: The purpose of this statement is to ensure that a Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline (PPPG) proposed for implementation in the HSE is circulated to Managers of Employees who have a stake in the PPPG, in advance of approval of the PPPG. You are asked to sign this form to confirm to the committee developing this Policy or Procedure or Protocol or Guideline that you have seen and agree to the following Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline:

Title of Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline:

NASBS003 Business Support Procedure Authorised Use of Official Vehicles

I acknowledge the following:

- I have been provided with a copy of the Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline described above.
- I have read Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline document.
- I agree with the Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline and recommend its approval by the committee developing the PPPG.

Name

Signature (Block Capitals)

Date

Please return this completed form to:

Name: Niamh Murphy
Contact Details: Corporate Office
National Ambulance Service
Rivers Building
Tallaght Cross
Dublin 24
email niamhf.murphy1@hse.ie

Document Control No. 3 Signature Sheet:
(to be attached to Master Copy)

Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline:

NASBS003 Business Support Procedure Authorised Use of Official Vehicles

I have read, understand and agree to adhere to the attached Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline:

Print Name	Signature	Area of Work	Date