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Policy & Process for Emergency RAV Access

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Contents

1	PURPOSE	4
2	POLICY	4
3	PROCESS	4
3.1	Period Permits	4
3.2	Special Approvals within Standard Parameters.....	4
3.3	Special Approvals outside Standard Parameters	5
3.4	Operation under Provisions of the Emergency Management Act	5

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Amendments

Revision Number	Revision Date	Description of Key Changes	Section
1	16/02/2023	Full review and reformat of original version (D07#54980).	All
2	04/06/2024	Expanded Process to clarify methods of approval.	s.3

1 PURPOSE

This document outlines the policy and process to be followed during an emergency, such as a bushfire or flood, where Main Roads Heavy Vehicle Services (HVS) may be required to grant emergency access to Restricted Access Vehicles (RAVs) required to assist with the emergency situation.

2 POLICY

During an emergency, Main Roads will issue special approvals to an Emergency Service Provider and/or contractor engaged by the Emergency Service Provider, provided the proposed operation:

- 1) does not present an unreasonable danger to other road users; and
- 2) is necessary for managing the emergency.

3 PROCESS

3.1 Period Permits

- 3.1.1 Where possible, Period Permits will be proactively issued to Emergency Service Providers and contractors engaged by the Emergency Service Providers to negate the need for them to seek a special approval during an emergency.
- 3.1.2 During an emergency, HVS will prioritise the processing of relevant permits to ensure the emergency does not escalate.

3.2 Special Approvals within Standard Parameters

- 3.2.1 Under the *Main Roads Delegation of Authority*, Heavy Vehicle Permits Team Leaders and the Heavy Vehicle Route Assessment Team Leader are authorised to grant access approvals in emergency situations.
- 3.2.2 Wherever possible, networks approved for similar RAVs should be utilised, or access approvals should be granted in consultation with the incident coordinator onsite, who can assist with assessing the risks.
- 3.2.3 Where the Team Leader is unsure of the route suitability, the RAV should be escorted by the Emergency Services Provider to mitigate the risks.
- 3.2.4 Oversize Overmass (OSOM) RAV approvals can be issued by the Heavy Vehicle Permits Team Leaders, without the need for a formal permit application. These approvals can be issued as a permit or via email. In urgent situations, the approval can initially be provided verbally and followed up with an email.
- 3.2.5 Approvals for OSOM RAVs should have appropriate conditions applied, in accordance with relevant *Period Permit Operating Conditions* or *Single Trip OSOM Vehicle Standard Operating Conditions*.

- 3.2.6 Where the Operating Conditions stipulate a requirement for a Traffic Escort Warden or Pilot, it is appropriate for the OSOM RAV to be escorted by the Emergency Services Provider, instead of a TEW or Pilot.

3.3 Special Approvals outside Standard Parameters

- 3.3.1 If approval is required to move a RAV outside the standard parameters, i.e. requiring exemptions not covered by a standard permit or order, approval must be obtained from the Manager Heavy Vehicle Road Network Access, Manager Heavy Vehicle Transport Compliance or Director Heavy Vehicle Services, as per the *Main Roads Delegation of Authority*.
- 3.3.2 Once approval is obtained, the Heavy Vehicle Permits Team Leader will issue a special approval authorising the vehicle to exceed statutory mass and/or dimension limits, as far as necessary to manage the emergency, provided manufacturers' ratings are not exceeded.
- 3.3.3 Regulation 188 of the *Road Traffic (Vehicles) Regulations 2014* provides for the exemption to be communicated orally to the driver or operator of the vehicle.
- 3.3.4 A written record of each exemption and the conditions to which it is subject must be maintained.

3.4 Operation under Provisions of the Emergency Management Act

Under the *Emergency Management Act 2005*, for the purpose of emergency management during an emergency situation or state of emergency, a hazard management officer or authorised officer may use a vehicle in any place and in any circumstance despite any requirement for a permit. In these situations, HVS staff will provide as much assistance and advice as possible to ensure the operation is conducted safely.