

Towing Policy

Aim

The aim of this policy is to set the requirements for operations involving the use of an Adelaide University Scuba Club (*AUSC*) *Tow Vehicle* and/or towing of an *AUSC Boat*.

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1 Background

Towing a trailer requires additional knowledge and skill. All trailers affect the performance of the towing vehicle.

They affect fuel consumption, acceleration, braking ability, general control and manoeuvrability. These effects increase as the size and weight of the trailer increase relative to that of the towing vehicle. The extra length and width can be hard to manage, with wind, road roughness and passing vehicles having a greater effect than on the vehicle alone. This puts additional responsibilities on a driver.

Note: Majority of insurance claims for damage to equipment have occurred as a result of towing accidents.

2 Revision

This policy is to be maintained and reviewed by the *AUSC* Committee.

3 Application

This policy applies to all members who tow a club boat and/or drive *AUSC*'s tow vehicle.

4 Requirements

Requirements for towing *AUSC*'s boat(s) and/or driving *AUSC*'s tow vehicle include:

1. *AUSC* shall maintain a register of *Approved Towers*
2. An *Approved Tower* shall be approved by the Boating Officer or an Executive Committee Member.
3. A driver under the instruction of an *Approved Tower* shall be considered an *Approved Tower* whilst under instruction.
4. The *AUSC Tow Vehicle* shall only be driven by an *Approved Tower*, for an *Authorised Purpose*
5. The *AUSC Boat* shall only be towed by an *Approved Tower*
6. The *Approved Tower* shall be fully licenced for the *tow vehicle*
7. The *Approved Tower* shall be a member of *AUSC*
8. The *Approved Tower* shall be suitably qualified and experienced in towing and backing boats/trailers
9. The *Tow Vehicle* shall be adequate for the trailer being towed

A summary of *AUSC*'s boat(s) is shown in Table 1. Consideration should also be given to additional loads, such as scuba diving equipment and tanks, additional fuel etc.

Table 1 *AUSC*'s trailer mass summary

Item	Mass (kg)
Boat- Vitamin Sea	~1,800

An analysis of Vitamin Sea's mass is included in Appendix A.

5 Definitions

AUSC: The Adelaide University Scuba Diving Club Inc.

Approved Tower: A Driver approved for driving the *AUSC Tow Vehicle* or a Driver under instruction for the purpose of becoming an *Approved Tower*

Approved Purpose:

- Towing an *AUSC Boat*
- Driving the *AUSC Tow Vehicle* for the purpose of servicing/repair
- Taking AUSC Scuba Tanks to/from a Hydro Testing station
- Other Club Related activities as authorised by the AUSC Committee or a member of the Exec Committee

AUSC Boat: A Boat owned by AUSC

AUSC Tow Vehicle: *Tow Vehicle* owned by AUSC

Tow Vehicle: Any vehicle used to tow an *AUSC Boat*

6 Driving guidelines

Driving with a trailer takes practice. Remember:

- Allow for the trailer's tendency to 'cut-in' on corners and curves
- Allow longer distances for braking, overtaking and joining a traffic stream
- When reversing, it is advisable to have someone outside the vehicle giving directions
- Avoid sudden lane changes and changes of direction
- Look further ahead than normal so you can react to changes in traffic or road conditions
- Use the accelerator, brakes and steering smoothly and gently at all times
- Use a lower gear when travelling downhill to increase vehicle control and reduce strain on brakes
- Slow down well before entering corners and curves
- Trailers tend to jerk the back of the vehicle around and can cause sway (snaking). If a trailer starts to sway, the vehicle's brakes should not be applied, except as an absolute last resort. If the trailer's brakes can be operated by themselves they should be applied gently, otherwise a steady speed or slight acceleration should be held if possible until the sway stops
- Take care not to hold up traffic unnecessarily
- Plan more rest stops and shorter travelling days as towing is more stressful and tiring than normal driving
- There is no specific speed restriction while towing a trailer. However, the posted speed limits must not be exceeded. Always drive to the road, traffic and weather conditions.

When guiding the trailer within the West Beach Sportsground, in particular when the trailer is being reversed into the club sheds, it is strongly recommended that a spotter be designated and act as a guide to mitigate the risk of an accident.

6 Checks

Before each trip, check:

- Vehicle and trailer are roadworthy and registered;
- All tyres are properly inflated
 - 60 PSI for Vitamin Sea trailer tyres
 - In accordance with *Tow Vehicle* Tyre Placard (Usually inside Drivers door)
- Trailer's wheel-bearings, suspension and brakes work properly;
- Trailer hitch is properly mounted on tow ball;
- All lights work and safety chains are properly connected;
 - Safety chains has appropriate rated shackle;
- Oil, water, brake fluid, battery and other service checks on the vehicle;
- Trailer's reversing flip switch is configured so the trailer's inertial brake will work; and
- Trailer hand-brake is off.

For the boat trailers, ensure:

- Winch is locked;
- Winch handle is in the anchor rope well;
- Boat engine is resting on the support strut;
- Boat security chain is affixed;
- Flag can be seen on boat propeller;
- Antennae are down and stowed properly / tied down;
- Bungs are ready for use; and
- Tie down straps are in place and secure.

At regular intervals during the trip, check:

- Couplings, all doors, hatches, covers and any load or equipment are still properly secured.
- Tyres are still properly inflated and not rubbing on suspension or body work.
- If travelling to another State, check with the relevant roads authority whether there are different rules.

7 Boat ramp fees

It is the boat towing member's responsibility to ensure any relevant boat ramp fees are paid and to seek reimbursement from AUSC.

If the boat towing member fails to pay the boat ramp fee, and is subsequently given a fine, AUSC will not be held liable for this financial obligation.

8 Insurance

The *AUSC Tow Vehicle* shall be comprehensively insured by *AUSC* at all times. In the event of an insured incident involving the *AUSC Tow Vehicle*, any excess will be paid by *AUSC* if the *Approved Tower* is deemed not to be at fault.

In the event the *Approved Tower* is deemed at Fault, the *Approved Tower* will be liable for the excess unless the Exec Committee, after considering the facts of the incident, decides that the club will pay the excess.

As of 2023 our insurance policy has a general excess of \$500 per a claim for drivers over the age of 25. For those aged between 22 and 24 there is an additional excess of \$500 for a total excess of \$1000 per a claim. For those aged 21 and under the additional excess is \$600 for a total excess of \$1100 per a claim.

Please note Insurance does not cover the *Approved Tower* driving the *AUSC Tow Vehicle* for typical insurance exclusions including but not limited to reckless driving, driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or driving at excessive speed. For a full list of exclusions and conditions you may request a copy of our insurance Product Disclosure Statement.

If in the last five years, you have had any insurance, policy declined or refused for any reason other than nonpayment, of premium or a claim rejected, either individually, or jointly with another party. you are obligated to notify *AUSC* as our policy may not be able to provide coverage or we may need to discuss the specific circumstances with our insurance provider to provide cover.

If in the last five years you have been charged, been convicted, received a bond for or have charges pending for any criminal or civil offence including arson, burglary, or theft, acts of violence, drug related activities, fraud, or deception, or aiding or assisting another in crime you are obligated to notify *AUSC* as our policy may not be able to provide coverage or we may need to discuss the specific circumstances with our insurance provider to provide cover.

Furthermore, our policy has conditions that In the last five years, none of the likely drivers have had any claims, motoring charges or infringements, including any pending, altered licence conditions or loss of licence in relation to the use, care, control, or management of any vehicle. You are obligated to notify *AUSC* as our policy may not be able to provide coverage or we may need to discuss the specific circumstances with our insurance provider to provide cover.

9 Fines

The *AUSC Tow Vehicle* shall be registered by *AUSC* at all times.

Any fines arising from an *Approved Tower's* driving, parking or other action in relation to their use of the *AUSC Tow Vehicle* or personal *Tow Vehicle* are the responsibility of that *Approved Tower*.

10 Towing fuel levy

For instances where an *Approved Tower* uses their own vehicle on a regional boat dive trip, towing levies are calculated at the rate of \$15 / 100 km per vehicle. A number of locations for reimbursement are given in Appendix B.

The towing levy should be charged to all participants evenly under the following principles:

- For the boat trailer(s), members who used that equipment, or had the intention/plan of using that equipment; and
- The towing levy expense is to be known prior to the trip, with all participants aware of the cost.
- Knowledge of the levy payable encourages members to spread the expense over more boat dives.

Some scenarios for towing the boat to a regional destination to consider are as follows:

- A member who does one dive from the boat will pay the same boat towing levy as a member who makes multiple dives on multiple days from the boat;

- A member who pulls out of a trip, or cannot conduct a boat dive when a boat has been towed is still subject to the towing levy;
- Boat towing levy is to be charged and reimbursed if a boat is towed to a regional destination but cannot be launched due to inclement weather; and
- A member who declares and/or documents to the Trip Organiser that they will be attending the regional activity with no intention of diving from the boat will not be subject to the boat towing levy.

Where a scenario has not been described and a dispute/issue arises, the issue should be resolved by the *AUSC* Committee.

11 References

Roads and Maritime Services (2015) – *Towing*, last updated 11 June 2015,
<http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/roads/safety-rules/road-rules/towing.html>.

12 Document control

Revision (Date)	Person	Comments
0 (13/10/2015)	Author: David Warren Reviewed: Committee (via Meeting 13/10/2015) Approved: David Warren	Document released to club membership. Note: Section taken from Dive Organisation policy. Integrated SOP 4 <i>Boat Operator Responsibilities</i> (developed by Tim Brown) into policy.
1 (21/11/2020)	Author: David Warren / Jack Morelli Reviewed: Peter Cetra, Information Officer Approved: Jack Morelli, President	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removed Crayon and added new boat Vitamin Sea; • Added requirement for allowed towing to be done by full AUSC members upon Committee approval and Boat Handlers; • Added consideration for spotter when guiding trailer around club rooms; • Under Section 6 <i>Checks</i>, added additional checks to be performed, such as prop flag, antenna down, and reversing lever to be configured correctly; • Under Section 6 <i>Checks</i>, added requirement to deflate <i>Stargazer</i> since its width exceeds legal requirement of 2.5 m; • Added Appendix A <i>Vitamin Sea mass</i> as an estimate by Tim Brown; and • Added Appendix D <i>Towing boats considerations</i>. • Removed compressor trailer references • Added Section 9: Towing boat diving credit
2 (12/11/2023)	Author: Jack Morelli Reviewed: Jade Bruggeling, President Approved: Jack Morelli, Boating Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major Update for addition of AUSC Tow Vehicle • Removal of Information relating to Stargazer • Removal of references to 2004 AU Sport Manual • Removal of section 9: Towing boat diving credit • Addition of Towers Register

Appendix A Vitamin Sea mass

The mass of *Vitamin Sea* has been estimated by Tim Brown as per the analysis below.

Item	Mass (kg)	Comment
Hull (empty)	620	Per specifications. Not sure about console.
Engine	206	
Targa Bar	50	Estimate
Trailer TARE	520	Estimate
Fuel	150	Estimate, potentially more
Batteries	30	Unsure if already estimated in hull mass
Anchor and chain	20	
Anchor holder	15	
Ladder	15	Estimate
Tank rack	25	Estimate
Miscellaneous	50	Estimate – Safety kit, spare weights etc.
Oxygen tank and provider equipment	15	Estimate
Subtotal	1715	Boat without scuba equipment
Dive tanks, qty 10	160	
Dive equipment, qty 5	50	Minimum
Dive weights, qty 5	40	
Total	1965	Boat with scuba equipment

Appendix B Towing reimbursement agreed amounts

Refer towing calculator spreadsheet.

Location	Distance Return (km)	Cost (A\$)	Rounded /Approved (A\$)	Comments
Ardrossan	314	47.10	50.00	
Beachport	807	121.02	125.00	
Cape Jervis	221	33.09	35.00	
Ceduna	1,566	234.84	235.00	
Coobowie	460	68.97	70.00	
Marion Bay	582	87.24	90.00	
Mt. Gambier	890	133.44	135.00	
Port Victoria	394	59.10	60.00	
Pt. Lincoln	1,315	197.19	200.00	
Rapid Bay	207	31.11	35.00	
Second Valley	190	28.56	30.00	
Victor Harbor	175	26.22	30.00	
Whyalla	781	117.18	120.00	
Wirrina	180	26.94	30.00	

From Coobowie

Marion Bay	185	27.69	30.00	
Port Victoria	153	22.98	25.00	

Appendix C Towing worked example for finances

For example, take the trip to Marion Bay with 2 boats and banks trailer with 20 people.

C.1 Amount to reimburse tower

The distance from Adelaide to Marion Bay is 300 km. Therefore, the total distance is 600 km for the round trip. Each towing vehicle will be reimbursed $\$15 / 100 \text{ km} \times 600 \text{ km} = \90 .

C.2 Amount to charge individuals on trip

Since there are three vehicles at \$90 each, then the total is \$270. Taking into account the number of people, then $\$270 / 20 \text{ people on trip} = \13.50 to charge individuals for the towing levy.

Note that it is at the Trip Organiser/Treasurer's discretion as to whether or not to round up towing levies. For instance, \$13.50 is a pretty round figure, but if it were to come out at \$13.55, then round up to \$14.

As the tower also uses the equipment then they too are charged a towing levy. Their net reimbursement for towing will then be $\$90 - \$13.50 = \$76.50$. This formula should be recorded through the books, or preferably two transactions showing the \$13.50 going into the club as income, and then \$90 showed as an expense.

Appendix D Towing boats considerations

Additional considerations for towing boats:

- Always use two single straps to anchor each side of the stern to the trailer.
- Only one anchor point should be used forward of that and that should be at the winch. Tied down so, the trailer can flex under the boat and take most of the road shock instead of transferring it to the hull.
- Use a tie down system at the winch post, separate from the winch cable or strap and then back off the tension of the winch. This will avoid 'chopping' out the bush bearing in the winch housing.
- Finally, always attach a loose-fitting safety chain and any other securing line as you see fit. But only attach to the one point on the boat and release the chain only when the boat is to be launched off the trailer.