Trip Leaders are an important part of our club and are volunteers. Volunteers are not perfect- they make mistakes but they do their best, and deserve our support. If you are considering leading a trip there are some important things to consider. You do not need all the competencies; you just need to co-ordinate them. If you are not confident in leading a trip solo, consider co-leading with someone more experienced and share the responsibilities.

As a trip leader it is your duty to consider the issues raised on this page. These guidelines are to ensure SE4WDC trips are conducted in a safe and harmonious manner, within our obligations to our insurers, 4WDSA, and the conduct expected from SE4WDC members. Trip leaders are tasked with the safe running of a trip.

Suggested Trip Leader skills include:

* Communication and Organisation skills and ability to delegate.
* GPS and map reading skills.
* Radio communications and convoy procedures as per club policy.
* Trip preparation, trip planning and research, and trip rating knowledge.
* Recovery situations, emergency situations knowledge.
* Knowledge of environmental issues and regulations and area permits required.
* Four-wheel driving experience in varied conditions.
* Familiar with the Club rules including convoy procedure and radio etiquette.
* Ability to take charge and accept authority even in emergency situations.
* Ability to remain calm and in control even when under pressure.

Prior to the event, trip leader will discuss the proposal with Trip Co-ordinator who will prepare a trip sheet. Consider length and dates of the trip, fuel and water availability, accommodation type, trip rating and costs, as well as any specific equipment required, or permits needed. Discuss maximum number of vehicles to limit the trip to, or discuss splitting the convoy into two if required. Obtain current maps of proposed routes to be taken. Contact local Park Rangers for help, try the internet, local hotels, visitor centres, even local stores and pubs may be able to help. Checklists are available from the Club or other members may be able to help.

The Trip Leaders role is to:

* Conduct a pre-trip meeting to advise participants of their obligations, ensure everyone is introduced, and advise of any special equipment required, (chains? chainsaw? Camp cooker?) Remind participants to be on time, both when leaving to commence the trip and each day when leaving the campsite.
* Ensure each participant has completed a Trip Participation Form and pass these on to the Trip Co-ordinator.
* Ensure all vehicles are appropriate for the trip with for example, suitable tyres, recovery points, sufficient clearance, and recovery equipment. Advise participants of any additional equipment required. Advise drivers to check vehicle registration and roadworthiness.
* Nominate Tail End Charlie, and Communications Relay Vehicle (if required).
* Explain convoy procedures, radio protocol and Clubs Pets policy.
* Set convoy order ensuring less competent drivers are spread throughout the convoy from position 3 and not bunched together. Encourage participants who have not already done so to meet the drivers before and after them.
* Set convoy speed, giving due consideration to weather conditions, road or track conditions and participants experience. Consider vehicle capability at this point also.
* Undergo daily briefing (and de-briefing) sessions with participants and include head counts and radio checks after each stop.
* Remind drivers to undergo vehicle checks each morning.
* Advise participants to take firewood if it cannot be collected at camp.
* Nominate trip report writers who may be volunteers, and may be a different person for each day.
* Allow sufficient stops to include photo opportunities, comfort breaks, points of interest etc. (Remember it’s a holiday not a race!).
* You may be requested to advise on hazards encountered, correct gear selection and tyre pressures.
* Ensure minimal environmental damage, stick to tracks where possible and ensure stock and property are respected.
* When out of vehicle remain in communication by carrying a portable UHF radio (one can be borrowed from the Club if required).
* Encourage safe, responsible and legal driving practices at all times.
* Plan to set up camp well before sunset. All participants should assist in collecting firewood (if allowable) and be prepared to do so before setting up their camp.
* Appoint some-one to light the fire (or ask for volunteers) if fires are permitted.
* When breaking camp appoint someone to ensure fireplace is safe (use water).
* At trip completion arrange a meeting place to allow people to say goodbye. Announce this as trips end. Ensure participants are aware of how to get home.
* Ensure trip reports are sent to editor upon participants return home.
* Everyone in the convoy is responsible for their own first aid and must carry an appropriate kit.
* Vehicle damage is the responsibility of each driver and no-one should be forced to do something they are not comfortable with.

Trip Leaders should look to delegate some of the above to suitably qualified or experienced people if required.