

Welcome to the United States Antarctic Program's Light Vehicle Driver Training.

The purpose of this video is to explain and demonstrate the proper operating procedures, safety guidelines, and responsibilities for driving a light vehicle while working in Antarctica.

All light vehicle operators must follow the rules and guidelines outlined in this training. Failure to comply may result in the loss of driving privileges.

Additionally, disciplinary action may be taken according to your organization's approved HR rules or personnel guidelines.

If your job requires the use of a vehicle, the supervisor, trainer or representative from your department, organization, or work center will introduce you to the specific vehicle you will be operating and review your responsibilities.

You are not allowed to use vehicles for recreation or personal use.

All drivers must have a valid and current driver's license with photo identification from their country of origin. Driver's license must be valid for a period of one year upon arrival.

Before the vehicle is started, the first operator for the day or shift is required to perform an inspection of the vehicle condition and document the inspection on the "Vehicle Checklist", which is located in each vehicle.

The Vehicle Checklist is an important tool for monitoring the condition of the light vehicle fleet.

Begin the vehicle inspection by checking under the hood.

Inspect the battery terminals for loose connections and corrosion.

Inspect the radiator, belts, hoses, and hydraulic lines for visible weeps, cracks, or other obvious defective connections.

Inspect fluid levels.

To avoid a spill, use an absorbent pad or rag to check fluid levels.

Ensure the radiator cap, oil cap and other fluid reservoir caps are on tight.

Dipsticks and caps are made of plastic and are fragile. Please handle with care.

Continue the inspection by doing a walk-around of the vehicle to check for leaks and any damage.

Inspect tires for loose lug nuts and differing tire pressure.

Keep in mind that improper tire inflation greatly affects drivability.

If your vehicle is low on oil, power steering fluid, brake fluid, coolant, air in the tires or any other issues, contact the VMF, the Vehicle Maintenance Facility.

Upon completing the walk-around inspection, unplug the electrical heater cord and stow it properly.

Inside the vehicle, inspect the general vehicle condition, including vehicle cleanliness and wear and tear.

Note the fuel level.

Document any minor concerns.

Log the hour meter reading and check the preventive maintenance date tag.

The hour meter and PM Tag are used to keep track of the vehicle maintenance.

Vehicles are serviced every 400 metered hours.

As the operator, you are responsible for arranging for repairs and preventive maintenance.

When a vehicle is within 25 metered hours of its scheduled service, call the VMF work-order scheduler to make an appointment.

Be sure the Vehicle Checklist is with the vehicle when it is turned in for repair or service.

After completing the vehicle inspection and only if there are no concerns, remove the chock block and start the vehicle.

All vehicles are fuel injected, so do not depress the accelerator pedal while starting.

Do not turn the starter for more than 5 seconds at a time and only make three attempts to start the engine.

If the engine does not start, contact your supervisor and report the issue to the VMF.

Do not leave vehicles idling while unattended.

If you are in a Ford F350, the Mico Brake must be disengaged before for driving the vehicle.

To disengage the Mico Brake, rotate the Mico handle to the release position.

Do not ignore warning lights. Contact the VMF immediately if a warning light illuminates.

Each vehicle is equipped with a spill kit. Know where the kit is located in the vehicle and be familiar with its contents.

Seatbelt use is a requirement for the driver and all passengers in any USAP vehicle. No Excuses and No Exceptions.

Become familiar with the vehicle you will be driving.

Four-wheel drive vehicles do not perform the same as passenger cars. They tend to under steer or steer slow.

Keep vehicle in Four Wheel drive HIGH at ALL times.

Always be aware of your surroundings.

The size and height of the vehicle lowers visibility.

Be aware of the many blind spots of the vehicle.

Vehicle travel is limited to established roads, and not all vehicles are allowed on every established road.

For example, the VXE6 transition road between the helicopter hanger and building one fifty-nine is for tracked vehicles only.

Wheeled vehicles are strictly prohibited on this road. Ask your supervisor for information on the restriction of established roads.

Obey all speed limits.

The speed limit on the road between building one fifty-five, the dorms, and transitions is 5 mile per hour.

The speed limit in town and airfields is 15 mile per hour.

On out of town roads the speed limit is 25 mile per hour.

Do not exceed these speed limits.

In fact, it is advisable that you drive slower to be prepared for changing conditions.

Here are a few tips for driving in ice and snow.

To slow down on hills, down shift and do not step hard on the brake pedal; pump or pulse the brakes instead.

Anti-lock brakes will not stop a skid.

Turn into the direction of a skid.

Keep in four-wheel drive at all times.

And most importantly, slow down, what's the hurry?

Before driving on the snow roads, make sure the vehicle is free of excess dirt and rocks.

There is a clean-off station prior to the transition.

Please, be gentle on the vehicle body and glass.

Do not hit the body of the vehicle with handles or scratch the paint with brooms or brushes.

Snow roads are limited to wide-tire vehicles.

When driving on snow roads pay attention to flags and signs.

Driving lanes will be open or closed depending on conditions.

Travel lanes will be clearly marked with flags and signs.

Drive only on the open lanes.

Use the entire travel lane on snow roads.

The speed limit on snow roads is 25 mile per hour.

Tire pressure for vehicles constantly using the snow roads during the summer season should be set at twenty pound per square inch.

Do not change lanes between the flags, as the vehicle will get stuck in this softer snow.

Closed driving lanes will be marked with a rope or chain.

Keep in mind that high speeds, heavy usage, and warmer temperatures damage the snow roads.

To prevent premature road deterioration, limit the amount of traffic using the snow roads.

When parking, position the vehicle for a forward exit whenever possible.

Always park a vehicle into the wind so the doors open against the wind, not with it. This will prevent doors from bending at the hinges.

On the Ford F 350, engage the Mico brake when parking.

To engage the Mico brake, rotate Mico handle to lock position.

Press on the brake pedal firmly, and then turn off the engine.

Do not use the parking brake – The brakes will freeze and not release.

Always “chock” the vehicle when parked – even on a level surface.

On slopes, always place the “chock” on the downhill side of the tire.

Avoid backing-out whenever possible.

If this is unavoidable and you are backing-out from a tight space or blind spot, use a spotter.

The driver and the spotter must discuss the situation prior to any vehicle movement.

Review the visual signals you will be using to communicate with each other.

Here are the hand signals the driver and spotter must know:

Prior to starting the backing out maneuver, the driver and spotter must make verbal and visual contact with each other.

The spotter should stand 10 feet to the left rear of the vehicle.

When the spotter has determined it is safe to start the backing out maneuver, a hand signal and verbal cue will be relayed to the driver.

The spotter must signal to stop the vehicle if any hazards are observed or if uncertain of the direction that the driver is maneuvering.

If, as the driver you cannot see or hear the spotter at any time during the backing maneuver, stop the vehicle!

A VHF radio is installed in every vehicle.

There are specific radio use procedures, as well as proper check-out procedures that must be followed.

Each will be covered in detail by your supervisor.

If you are unsure whether or not a checkout is needed, contact the Firehouse at extension 2555 or Radio Channel 5.

Additionally, you should carry a backup handheld radio when leaving town.

To review your driving responsibilities:

All operators must hold a current driver's license with photo identification.

Drivers are required to complete the Vehicle Check List, which includes a 360 degree walk around, at the beginning of each day or shift change.

Vehicle Checklist will be submitted to the VMF work-order scheduler at the end of each month.

Call the VMF to arrange service 25 metered hours before service is due.

Each vehicle is equipped with a spill kit.

Know where the kit is located in the vehicle and be familiar with its contents.

Do not use the accelerator during start up; and turn the starter no more than five seconds at a time, and only make three attempts to start the vehicle.

If the engine does not start, contact your supervisor and report the issue to the VMF.

Do not leave vehicles idling while unattended.

Before driving away, ensure the electrical heater cord is unplugged and the chock block has been removed.

Seatbelt use is always required.

Vehicles must remain in four wheel drive HIGH at all times.

Know the correct fuel for your vehicle.

Most light vehicles use only unleaded gasoline, additional fueling instructions will be provided by your supervisor.

Obey all speed limits.

The speed limit on the road between building one fifty-five, the dorms, and transitions is 5 mile per hour.

The speed limit in town and airfields is 15 mile per hour.

On out of town roads the speed limit is 25 mile per hour.

Do not exceed these speed limits.

In fact, it is advisable that you drive slower to be prepared for changing conditions.

When driving on snow roads, vehicles must remain clean and free of rocks, dirt, and debris.

Know the VHF radio checkout procedures.

To avoid bending in vehicle doors, always park into the wind.

Parked vehicles must be chocked even on level surfaces.

To set the Mico brake, move lever to right or left; press on brake pedal and then turn off engine.

To release the Mico brake, move lever to the center position.

Don't drive without visibility.

If a vehicle is caught in a White-Out, remain in vehicle and call for help on VHF radio.

Report all accidents and damage to the VMF as soon as practical.

Thank you for your attention and please stay safe while operating any vehicle.