


<b>ROWLETT CITIZEN CORPS COUNCIL ORGANIZATIONAL POLICY</b>	
<b>TITLE: RCCC Vehicle Operations Policy</b>	
<b>APPROVAL SIGNATURE:</b> 	<b>DATE:</b> 8/18/2016
<b>NAME: Whitney P. Laning</b>	<b>POLICY NO.:</b> 16-136
<b>TITLE: RCCC President</b>	<b>PROGRAM :</b> RCCC
	<b>SECTION:</b> Operations
	<b>PAGES:</b> 7

**Policy Overview:**

This policy supports the safe and effective operation of all vehicles used in support of RCCC programs and services; this includes passenger vehicles, response trucks, trailers, rehab units, command and support units, privately owned vehicles (POVs), and any other vehicles operated by RCCC members in the performance of their duties.

**Authority:**

Authority for this policy comes from the RCCC Board of Directors, related City of Rowlett Vehicle Operations policies and state statutes. If there is conflicting language, RCCC policy will prevail only for RCCC owned assets.

**Applicability:**

This policy applies to all RCCC members who operate a Rowlett Affiliated Program vehicle within the scope of their duties and responsibilities as RCCC members, including a privately owned vehicle (POV) or rental vehicles. This policy applies to all vehicle operations, including activations, social and other activities.

**Policy:**

**1. Driver Eligibility:**

- 1.1. In order to be eligible to drive RCCC and Rowlett City vehicles (as authorized), the following pre-requisites must be met:
  - 1.1.1. Be an active member in good standing of a RCCC program for a minimum of one year
  - 1.1.2. Must be 21 years of age or older.
  - 1.1.3. Hold a valid Texas Driver's License
  - 1.1.4. Have not had a chargeable accident in the last 3 years
  - 1.1.5. Have not had a moving violation (does not include criminal non-traffic violations) in the last year
  - 1.1.6. Have not had a conviction of DUI / DWI in the last ten years (subject to review by the RCCC President and CERT Director)
  - 1.1.7. Submit to a driving history check
  - 1.1.8. Must complete the RCCC Driving Class
- 1.2. Vehicles shall only be driven/operated by individuals who comply with the applicable state driver's license requirements and have successfully completed the RCCC Driving Course.
- 1.3. Basic driver training shall be completed before a member is authorized to drive any RCCC vehicle.
- 1.4. The initial driver training program shall include, at a minimum:
  - 1.4.1. Traffic laws

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- 1.4.2. Traffic and highway safety review
- 1.4.3. Basic vehicle dynamics
- 1.4.4. Trailer towing and backing procedures
- 1.4.5. Inspection and maintenance procedures
- 1.4.6. Competency course
- 1.4.7. Off road vehicle training
- 1.5. Upon completion of the basic driver program, a member may be authorized to drive RCCC vehicles and trailers. This classification may include passenger vehicles, vans, pick-up trucks, UTV's, ATV's and trailers.
- 1.6. The RCCC reserves the right to deny, revoke or suspend in whole, or in part, the driving privileges of any member, at any time, on any vehicle, for reasonable cause.
- 1.7. Driving privileges are contingent on good standing with a RCCC Affiliated Program, and the approval of program and RCCC leadership. Completion of the RCCC Driving Course does not automatically qualify a member to be a driver.

### 2. Driving Records

- 2.1. Before operating a RCCC vehicle during a response, RCCC members must meet the following requirements:
  - 2.1.1. The RCCC will obtain and review a copy of the member's motor vehicle record from the Department of Public Safety for individuals who are assigned a driving position.
  - 2.1.2. Each authorized driver's motor vehicle record shall be reviewed periodically to ensure that the individual maintains safe driving habits.
  - 2.1.3. A driver who has been charged with an offense that could result in a suspension or revocation of his or her driver's license is required to notify their program director immediately. The individual will be suspended from driving RCCC vehicles, or transporting RCCC volunteers, pending disposition. Such charges could include:
    - 2.1.3.1. Driving while intoxicated or under the influence of drugs
    - 2.1.3.2. Negligent homicide or gross negligence
    - 2.1.3.3. Assault with a motor vehicle
    - 2.1.3.4. Reckless driving
    - 2.1.3.5. Leaving the scene of an accident
- 2.2. The authorization to drive may be suspended or revoked as a result of such reviews and/or additional training may be required to maintain driving status.
- 2.3. Members, and Officers that supervise those members who repeatedly fail to comply with RCCC driving policies and procedures or violate traffic laws while driving RCCC vehicles, may be re-evaluated or disciplined if necessary.

### 3. General Operations

- 3.1. The highest emphasis should be placed on safety, and particularly on safe vehicle operations.
- 3.2. RCCC members are expected to comply with all applicable traffic laws, as well as City of Rowlett safety policies and standard operating procedures at all times.
- 3.3. The officer-in-charge (OIC) of an RCCC vehicle is responsible for supervising the driver and all other assigned members; this includes ensuring that the driver complies with traffic laws, RCCC policies, and SOPs.

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### 4. Safety

- 4.1. The driver of an RCCC vehicle is responsible for the safe operation of the vehicle at all times, including compliance with all traffic laws, as well as RCCC policies and SOPs.
- 4.2. All members are required to comply with all safety policies and procedures while operating, riding in or performing any function that involves an RCCC vehicle.
- 4.3. All persons driving or riding in RCCC or personally owned vehicles (POV) shall be seated in approved riding positions with seatbelts or safety restraints fastened at all times when the vehicle is in motion.
- 4.4. The driver shall not begin to move the vehicle until all passengers are seated and properly secured.
- 4.5. All passengers shall remain seated and secured as long as the vehicle is in motion.
- 4.6. Seatbelts shall not be loosened or released while in route to dress or don equipment.
- 4.7. Members shall not attempt to mount or dismount from a moving vehicle under any circumstances.
- 4.8. The vehicle driver has a duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all other persons and property.

### 5. General Driving Guidelines

- 5.1. All drivers shall comply with all of the traffic laws and rules of the road that apply to all other vehicles. This includes the use of POVs by RCCC members.
- 5.2. No person shall drive a vehicle at a speed greater than the posted speed limit and that is reasonable and prudent under the conditions and having regard to the actual and potential hazards then existing.
- 5.3. The use of warning lights and audible warning devices is not authorized.
- 5.4. Approved warning lights may be used when the vehicle is maneuvering or stopped in a location where it creates a traffic hazard.
- 5.5. All vehicles shall come to a full stop at unguarded railway grade crossings. Caution shall be exercised at grade crossings where warning lights and/or gates are provided.
- 5.6. RCCC vehicles shall not pass a school bus that has stopped with red lights flashing to load or discharge passengers.
- 5.7. The vehicle shall comply with the directions of a sworn law enforcement officer, including a signal to stop.
- 5.8. Law enforcement officials may also direct the specific positioning, or repositioning, of responding vehicles on an incident scene in order to maintain traffic flow, reduce bottlenecks, enhance scene safety, and prevent secondary collisions. Compliance with such direction is required of all vehicle (RCCC or POV) drivers
- 5.9. Aggressive driving reflects poorly on the Rowlett Citizens Corps Council and affiliated programs and will not be tolerated.
- 5.10. It shall be the policy of the RCCC to avoid the positioning of vehicles near roadways or incidents with moving traffic.
- 5.11. Under NO circumstances will an RCCC vehicle be positioned to block or control traffic on divided highways, freeways, or turnpikes.
- 5.12. RCCC approved drivers are authorized to use the traffic pre-emption system (Opticom) on activation responses. Use of the emitter system does not guaranty a green light, not does it require

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traffic to grant a right-of-way. [The RCCC is categorized as an other Emergency Service within state statute which grants the authority to use such a device.]

- 5.13. Use of a RCCC vehicle requires advanced notification of program leadership for non-activation related activities. Use of some RCCC vehicles may require advanced reservations or notification of City staff.

### 6. Backing:

- 6.1. Before backing an RCCC vehicle or trailer, the driver shall ensure that the intended path is clear of hazards or obstructions.
- 6.2. The driver shall stop, dismount, and visually perform a 360-degree check around the vehicle before backing, with emphasis on the area behind and to both sides.
- 6.3. One or more spotters shall be employed as guides in all situations where a trailer is being backed, or the driver does not have a clear vision of the path of travel.

### 7. Alcohol and Substance Abuse:

- 7.1. RCCC members are not permitted to respond to incidents, participate in non-social RCCC activities or to drive or operate vehicles, nor to perform any other duty-related functions while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- 7.2. Drivers involved in an accident with a RCCC vehicle may be subject to drug testing and law enforcement investigation. Refusal of such testing or noncompliance with law enforcement is grounds for immediate suspension and possible termination from all RCCC programs.
- 7.3. The RCCC follows the Zero-Tolerance leadership policy statement as described below:

#### **Reference: Zero-Tolerance for Alcohol & Drinking in the Fire & Emergency Service**

*A Leadership Policy Statement from the International Association of Fire Chiefs:*

"This policy statement is most easily described as a "zero-tolerance" standard about the use of alcohol by members of any fire or emergency services agency/organization at any time when they may be called upon to act or respond as a member of those departments.

Basically, if someone has consumed alcohol within the previous eight (8) hours, or is still noticeably impaired by alcohol consumed previous to the eight (8) hours, they must voluntarily remove themselves from the activities and functions of the fire or emergency services agency/organization, including all emergency operations and training.

No member of a fire & emergency services agency/organization shall participate in any aspect of the organization and operation of the fire or emergency agency/organization under the influence of alcohol, including but not limited to any fire and emergency operations, fire-police, training, etc. "

### 8. Privately Owned Vehicles (POV)

- 8.1. Personnel must follow all laws and regulations for the State of Texas that apply to non-emergency vehicles, unless the state statute allows POVs to operate as response vehicle.
- 8.2. All POV's will have:
  - 8.2.1. Current inspection and registration
  - 8.2.2. Current Texas liability insurance
- 8.3. Damage, injuries, or accidents occurring during a response are the responsibility of the vehicle owner or driver and the RCCC shall hold no liability for resulting losses or damage.
- 8.4. Amber courtesy lights are permitted for POV's being used in a response. The use of a courtesy light does not provide any special privileges or exemptions to traffic laws. Other drivers are not required to yield the right-of-way to a vehicle that has a courtesy light in operation. The only

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purpose of the warning light is to request that other drivers yield the right-of-way; the POV driver is required to comply with all traffic laws.

- 8.5. Warning devices (sirens, etc.) or courtesy lights other than amber colored are not authorized on POV's responding to an RCCC authorized incident or event. The unauthorized use of a siren or warning device on a POV while responding to an RCCC activation will be treated as a disciplinary matter and may result in suspension or expulsion from the RCCC.

### 9. Accident Reporting & Investigation

- 9.1. All vehicular accidents should be reported to the Police or net control immediately.
- 9.2. The report should include the following:
  - 9.2.1. Unit ID and vehicle
  - 9.2.2. Exact accident location
  - 9.2.3. An indication for need for medical assistance
  - 9.2.4. An estimate of the extent and nature of the injuries and vehicle damage
  - 9.2.5. Indication on whether the vehicle is drivable
  - 9.2.6. Indication of need for cover assignment
- 9.3. While at the accident scene:
  - 9.3.1. Initiate appropriate medical care
  - 9.3.2. Do not discuss the incident with anyone other than RCCC leadership, Fire or Police officers
  - 9.3.3. Do not move your vehicle unless it is creating a traffic hazard
  - 9.3.4. If you must move your vehicle, chalk the position of your tires prior to moving.
  - 9.3.5. Obtain witness names and contact information
  - 9.3.6. Remain at the scene until the police and fire representatives have completed their investigation
- 9.4. All RCCC vehicle accidents will be investigated. The process will include the following:
  - 9.4.1. Fact Finding Review
    - 9.4.1.1. Separate interviews with the driver, all crew members, accident witnesses
    - 9.4.1.2. Notes recorded at each interview
    - 9.4.1.3. Contact Information recorded at each interview
  - 9.4.2. Notification of any applicable City staff or other agencies
  - 9.4.3. RCCC volunteers involved in the incident should be isolated from the general public, the other parties involved in the incident, and the media.
  - 9.4.4. Members may be directed to take a leave of absence during the initial investigative process.
- 9.5. The investigating officer should attempt to collect the following:
  - 9.5.1. Photographs/Video of the incident
  - 9.5.2. Police Report
  - 9.5.3. Name and badge of investigating Police Officer
  - 9.5.4. Names and contact information for all parties involved (including witnesses)
  - 9.5.5. Applicable City/Town/Department Accident Reports/Forms

### 10. Vehicle Inspection

- 10.1. Vehicles and apparatus shall only be operated when their mechanical condition makes it safe to do so.
- 10.2. All vehicles shall be regularly inspected and tested and preventive maintenance shall be conducted to ensure that vehicles are in proper operating condition. Safety and operational readiness are the highest priorities in inspecting and maintaining vehicles.

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- 10.3. Any vehicle that is found to be unsafe at any time shall be placed out of service until it has been repaired.
- 10.4. All vehicles shall be inspected at least weekly to identify and correct unsafe conditions. All inspections shall be recorded, indicating the date and time and the individual responsible for conducting the inspection.
- 10.5. Any condition that requires the unit to be taken out of service for more than one hour requires the advanced notice of the RCCC Affiliated Program Director or their designee.

### 11. Utility Vehicle (UTV) and All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) Operations

- 11.1. All operators will be trained and certified by someone who is already qualified to operate the equipment. The operator will be certified to operate equipment in accordance with RCCC policy before riding an ATV.
- 11.2. UTV and ATV units are designed for off road applications. The use of a UTV or ATV on a public street, roadway or sidewalk must have approval of program leadership prior to any actions.
- 11.3. UTV or ATV deployment for incidents must have the approval of program leadership.
- 11.4. ATV Operations
  - 11.4.1. The transport of passengers on ATV are limited to the number of passengers the vehicle is designed to carry.
  - 11.4.2. This is typically two passengers including the driver.
  - 11.4.3. Passengers and Operators MUST wear protective clothing as designated.
  - 11.4.4. Passengers may not ride on gear racks, rails, or hang on the outside of the vehicle.
  - 11.4.5. ATV Drivers and passengers must wear the following personnel protective equipment when operating a RCCC ATV unit:
    - 11.4.5.1. DOT (minimum) approved helmet that provides complete coverage of the ears and head down to the neck.
    - 11.4.5.2. A shield or polycarbonate goggle for helmets not equipped with a face shield
    - 11.4.5.3. Long pants and closed toe shoes (long sleeves are recommended)
    - 11.4.5.4. A CERT, or equivalent, issued high visibility safety vest
    - 11.4.5.5. Gloves
  - 11.4.6. ATV passengers shall be a minimum of 18 years old or have a parental permission and liability waiver form completed.
- 11.5. UTV Operations
  - 11.5.1. The number of passengers that may be transported on a UTV is determined by the number of seatbelts for which the vehicle is equipped.
    - 11.5.1.1. Passenger count may not exceed the number of seatbelts
    - 11.5.1.2. Passengers may not ride on side rails, cargo beds, roll bars, etc.
  - 11.5.2. UTV: It is recommended that drivers and passengers wear the following PPE
    - 11.5.2.1. Helmet (CERT issued hard hat is OK)
    - 11.5.2.2. Long pants and closed toe shoes
    - 11.5.2.3. Goggles, safety glasses, or protective eyewear
    - 11.5.2.4. A CERT, or equivalent, issued high visibility safety vest
- 11.6. Driving of the UTV or ATV by untrained, non-RCCC members is prohibited.
- 11.7. At all times, driver/operators shall remain in control of the unit, observing all safety warnings, due caution and reasonable vehicle speed, and being aware of the safety of their passengers.
- 11.8. Any UTV/ATV driver/operator may be relieved of their driving privileges for failure to follow established safety guidelines or causing an unsafe or reckless condition.

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11.9. UTV/ATV vehicles follow the same maintenance and inspection guidelines as other RCCC vehicles as described elsewhere in related documentation.

### 12. Glossary of Terms

**ATV** – All Terrain Vehicle. A vehicle with four wheels and handlebars generally designed for one or two passengers, in tandem, capable of traversing difficult terrain and hazards.

**Doppler Effect** – The Doppler Effect is the perceptible change in the frequency and wavelength of a sound wave as it moves relative to an observer.

**ED – Emergency Dispatch**

**EVOC– Emergency Vehicle Operator's Course**

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**Guideline** – A statement, indication, guide, or outline of policy by which to determine a current or future course of action.

**OIC – Officer in Charge**

**Policy** – A guiding principle or course of action adopted toward an objective or objectives. Describes the general principle that will guide behavior or a definite course or method of action to guide and determine present and future decisions.

**POV – Privately Owned Vehicle-** a vehicle owned and operated by an emergency responder that is used for personnel transportation and responding to an incident scene.

**PPE** – Personal Protective equipment. Equipment and / or clothing designed to protect personnel from injury and can include: helmets, clothing, vests, masks, eye protection, footwear, chaps, etc.

**Procedure** – Prescribes specific ways of doing specific activities and regulates the formal steps of an action. It provides a series of steps followed in a particular order.

**Regulation** – A rule or order prescribed by an authority to regulate conduct.

**Rule** – A principle set up by authority, prescribing or directing action.

**SOG – Standard Operating Guidelines:** A set of guidelines having the force of a directive, covering those features of operations that lend themselves to a definite or standardized procedure without loss of effectiveness.

**SOP– Standard Operating Procedure:** A set of instructions having the force of a directive, covering those features of operations that lend themselves to a definite or standardized procedure without loss of effectiveness.

**Statutes** – A statute is a formal, written law of a country or state, written and enacted by its legislative authority, perhaps to then be ratified by the highest executive in the government, and finally published. Typically, statutes command, prohibit, or declare policy.

**UTV – Utility Vehicle.** A vehicle with four (or more) wheels and a steering wheel generally designed for two or more passengers (side by side), capable of traversing difficult terrain and hazards while carrying cargo or equipment.