

# Driving



An introduction  
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# Driving

**Forestry work generally involves a lot of driving, whether operating machinery on the job or travelling long distances to the site. Many hours behind the wheel, coupled with heavy vehicles on unsealed, narrow roads, creates a toxic mix that can lead to road incidents and injuries.**

## **The road rules still apply**

Even if you're on private roads obey the road rules like it's State Highway 1. Always carry your licence – it's the law – and drive on the left-hand side of the road. Wear your seatbelt, always. Obey the speed limit as marked, and if it's not marked never drive more than 80kmh (most forestry roads are best driven at 50kmh or under). And of course, never drink and drive.

## **Expect the unexpected**

Forestry roads are mainly dirt or gravel and might be only one lane. They're used by large, heavy vehicles that need plenty of room to pass, slow down and stop. Drive like you expect to see over-sized logging trucks and other machinery coming to towards you at any moment. When you do, give them plenty of room and be extra careful around sharp corners, blind spots, soft shoulders, narrow bridges, steep slopes and potholes. Also, beware of visitors who may be unused to driving on forestry roads.

## **Drive to the conditions**

Weather and road conditions make a massive difference to how, and how fast, you should drive. Whatever the weather, travel at a speed that allows you to stop within half the visible distance ahead of you. When it's dusty or slippery, slow down so you have time to react to oncoming traffic, potholes, wildlife, changing road conditions and unexpected hazards.

## **Be cautious and courteous**

There will likely be times you need to pull over to let someone else pass. Let them – showing some patience and courtesy might save your life as well as your relationship with workmates.

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## Read the signs

Take the time to read and understand the road signs at the start of forestry roads and along the way. These signs have important information about the road conditions, what traffic to expect, active work sites, and/or hazardous situations. Remember, some hazards are unexpected so keep your eyes open for any new hazards.

## Communicate

Use the radio telephone (RT) to let crew members know where you're planning to drive and to ask if there's any reason you shouldn't go (maybe a logging truck's about to head down, for example). Speak clearly and make sure the RT is on the right channel with the volume turned up so you can hear responses.

## Be seen, be safe

Keep your headlights on to increase your visibility. If you must stop along the road, find a suitable spot with room for other traffic to pass, and never stop on a corner or over the crest of a hill. Pull over as far as you can on the shoulder of a straight section, with plenty of room for other drivers to spot you and pass safely.

## Be prepared

Plan your trip before you go. Tell someone reliable where you're going, how you're getting there and when you'll be back. Always carry a way of communicating with emergency services or the crew, and have an emergency first aid kit and tools in the vehicle.

## Beware of fatigue

Forestry workers work long hours and often have to drive a good hour or more to the work site. That combination means fatigue is a real risk. Never drive if you are feeling tired or fatigued – have someone take over the driving or pull over and have a rest. Even a 20 minute power nap can make a life-saving difference.

**For more information about driving on forestry roads: ACoP Section 2:11.**