

2026



Royal Flying Doctor Service

Outback Car Trek Supplementary Regulations



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INTRODUCTION

This document is to be read in conjunction with the website, registration forms, and other relevant materials. Please read this information carefully before entering the event.

VEHICLES THAT DO NOT
COMPLY WITH THESE
REGULATIONS WILL NOT BE
PERMITTED TO
PARTICIPATE.



ENTRIES

Entries will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis and are subject to approval by the Head of Motoring Events, RFDSSE. The event management team reserves the right to refuse entry or participation by any individual or vehicle. This discretion will be exercised reasonably and in accordance with the event's safety, compliance, and operational requirements.

FEES & PAYMENTS

Participation in the Outback Car Trek involves three distinct financial components. These fees support both the charitable mission of the event and the operational logistics required to deliver a safe and enjoyable experience.

ENTRY FEE

Each vehicle must pay an entry fee of \$1075.00 (including GST) to the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS). This fee contributes to the administration and coordination of the event and confirms your vehicle's registration in the event.

DISBURSEMENTS FEE

Each individual attending the event must pay a disbursements fee of \$1050.00 (including GST) Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS).

The disbursements fee covers:

- All meals (unless otherwise stated) from breakfast on Day 1 through to the Gala Awards Dinner on the final night.
- Entertainment and social events throughout the event.
- Public liability insurance for the event.
- Professional photography and videography documenting the journey.
- National Park Fees, where applicable
- Coach transfers, where applicable.
- Venue hire fees, where applicable
- Other essential logistical and operational costs.

DONATION

Each participating vehicle is required to raise a minimum donation of \$7,500 for the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

This donation directly supports the RFDS's critical work in delivering emergency and primary healthcare services to remote and rural communities across Australia. At the conclusion of the event, your donations will be distributed to your local RFDS section

This ensures that the funds you raise benefit the communities you care most about.

Note: Participants are strongly encouraged to exceed the minimum donation target. Many participants raise significantly more through sponsorships, fundraising events, and community support.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

To secure your place in the event, the following payment deadlines apply:

- Entry fee and disbursements fee must be submitted with your completed entry form.
- A minimum of 50% of the required donation must be paid by 15 January 2026.
- The remaining balance of the donation must be paid by 15 April 2026.

Important: Any vehicle that has not fulfilled its payment obligations by 1 May 2026 may forfeit its right to participate.

REFUNDS

Entry fees are non-refundable and non-transferable to other vehicles or future events, unless the event is postponed or cancelled by the organisers.

If a participant withdraws with more than 45 days' notice, the disbursements fee may be transferred to a future event at the discretion of the event organiser.

Donations made to the RFDS are considered charitable contributions and are non-refundable under any circumstances.

CREW NUMBERS

Each vehicle must carry a minimum of two (2) participants and must not exceed its legal seating capacity as defined by its registration and manufacturer specifications.

For safety and insurance reasons, no individuals under the age of 18 are permitted to participate in the event, either as drivers or passengers.

LICENCES

As the event is a non-competitive, road-based event, no special or motorsport licences are required.

However, all participants must:

- Be at least 18 years of age at the commencement of the event.
- Ensure that any person operating a vehicle during the event holds a current drivers license that is legally recognised in all States & Territories of Australia.
- Comply at all times with all applicable road laws, as well as any other rules and directions set down by the Event Organisers

Note: International participants must hold a valid international driving permit or a licence that is recognised under Australian road regulations

INSURANCE & VEHICLE REGISTRATION

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

All vehicles participating in the event must hold Compulsory Third Party (CTP) insurance, which is a legal requirement for registration and operation on public roads in Australia. CTP insurance covers liability for personal injuries caused to other road users in the event of an accident.

In addition to CTP:

- Third Party Property Damage insurance is strongly recommended. It covers damage caused to other vehicles or property and helps protect against significant out-of-pocket expenses
- Comprehensive insurance is preferred, as it provides the highest level of protection, including cover for your own vehicle, theft, fire, and weather-related damage.

Participants are responsible for ensuring their insurance policies are current, valid for the duration of the event, and appropriate for the vehicle's use in remote and off-road conditions.

VEHICLE REGISTRATION

All vehicles must be fully registered for use on public roads for the entire duration of the event.

This includes:

- Valid registration in the state or territory of residence of the vehicle owner.
- Compliance with roadworthiness and safety inspection requirements, which vary by state.
- Proof of registration and insurance must be presented upon request.

Driving an unregistered vehicle or one without valid CTP insurance is illegal and may result in fines, disqualification from the event, or invalidation of other insurance policies.



VEHICLE ELIGIBILITY – TREK VEHICLES

All two-wheel drive vehicles of any make that are more than 30 years old as of 1 January in the year of the event, or identical model run-ons, are eligible to participate.

Please note that performance-modified or high-performance vehicles are not permitted in the Outback Car Trek. Pre-1959 vehicles may be modified with the approval of the event management.

The event is conducted entirely on public roads, and all participants must comply with applicable road safety regulations. Accordingly, all vehicles must be road-registered and insured for the duration of the event.

All vehicles, regardless of category, must also meet the requirements outlined in the “Vehicle Specifications” section and any additional guidance issued by the event organisers.

If you are uncertain about the eligibility of a vehicle, please contact the Head of Motoring Events before purchasing, building, or modifying a car. Participants seeking minor exemptions from these regulations may submit a formal request via the Head of Motoring Events which will be considered amongst a panel comprising volunteer officials, experienced participants, and the Head of Motoring Events. Major deviations from the regulations will not be considered.

Each year, all vehicles must pass the requirements set out in the annually published “Safety Check Form”. This form must be completed and signed by a registered motor mechanic who is not the builder or regular service provider of the vehicle and submitted no later than 30 days prior to the event start date. The form is available on the Outback Car Trek website.



VEHICLE ELIGIBILITY – SUPPORT VEHICLES

- In addition to standard entries, a limited number of support vehicles will be permitted to accompany Trek vehicles during the event. Support vehicles are accepted on the basis that they provide assistance to participants as needed. This may include towing vehicles over long distances, recovering vehicles, and other operational support.
- Due to the nature of these responsibilities, support vehicles must meet minimum requirements for weight, towing capacity, and drivetrain capability. Specifically:
 - A kerb weight exceeding 2,400 kg.
 - A towing capacity of at least 2,500 kg (with trailer brakes).
 - A high and low range transmission.
- Support vehicles must be modern 4WDs in good mechanical condition, and must be equipped with:
 - Effective mudflaps.
 - A UHF radio.
 - A rearward-facing bright white light (LED only).
 - A dust light (LED only).
 - First Aid kit
- Support vehicles are subject to the following operational conditions:
 - Must depart control points only as directed by an official or according to the published schedule.
 - Must never pass a stricken or apparently stricken vehicle without offering assistance.
 - Must assist with official duties when requested (e.g. manning controls, towing, transporting equipment).
 - May be required to follow alternate routes if directed by officials or specified in the Road Book.



VEHICLE SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE

- **Modifications:** Performance modifications beyond the permitted scope are not allowed. The engine must remain broadly consistent with the manufacturer's original specifications. Only the original engine, or an identical replacement, is permitted unless prior written approval is obtained from the event Head of Motoring Events.
- **Fuel Systems:** Fuel injection systems may only be installed if they were standard equipment on the original model. Retrofitting fuel injection to carburetted engines is not permitted without explicit authorisation from the event management.
- **Capacity Increase:** Engine displacement may be increased by up to 15% over the original specification. All modifications must be executed to a professional standard and maintain compatibility with the vehicle's drivetrain and cooling systems.
- **Mountings & Securing:** All engine mountings must be replaced prior to initial event, regardless of their apparent condition. Periodical replacement is recommended approximately every 3 events.
- A dedicated engine securing device must be installed to prevent movement or detachment under extreme operating conditions.

TRANSMISSION & DRIVE TRAIN

- **Modifications:** Transmission and drivetrain components may be modified or replaced at the participants discretion. However, retaining standard components is recommended to improve the availability of replacement parts during the event.
- **Safety Requirements:** A tail shaft safety strap must be installed beneath the forward end of the tail shaft to mitigate the risk of damage or injury in the event of a mechanical failure.

EXHAUST SYSTEM

- **Configuration:** The original engine pipe may be replaced with extractors to improve efficiency and performance.
- **Clearance:** The exhaust system must be designed to minimise protrusion below the chassis rails, reducing the risk of impact damage from uneven terrain or debris.

BRAKES

- **Upgrades:** Brake systems may be freely upgraded. Participants are strongly encouraged to convert drum brakes to disc brakes where feasible to enhance braking performance and safety.
- **Brake Lines:**
 - Must be constructed from steel unless certified by the installer as high-grade copper suitable for brake line applications.
 - Brake lines encased in rubber or other protective materials must be inspected for corrosion and wear prior to the event.



SUSPENSION

- **Lift & Reinforcement:** Suspension systems may be modified to increase ground clearance. Fitment of stronger springs and high-performance shock absorbers is recommended. Reinforce shock absorber mounting brackets to withstand prolonged exposure to corrugated surfaces.
- **Shock Absorbers:**
 - Replace all aged or worn units with superior-specification models.
 - Vehicles with floor-mounted shock absorbers (e.g., EH-HR Holdens) must reinforce the mounting area to prevent fatigue-related failures.
 - It is strongly advised that the top (tower) end of shock absorbers be reinforced to withstand prolonged exposure to corrugated surfaces
- **Shock Absorber Protection:** Install protective covers (e.g., heavy-duty rubber sleeves) on the front-facing surfaces of shock absorbers to reduce stone damage.
- **Control Arms:**
 - Reinforce upper and lower control arms (wishbones) by strengthening between the inner and outer pivots. This reinforcement should be positioned as close to the outer edges as possible.
 - Replace ball joints every three Treks, or more regularly for heavier vehicles.

AXLES

- **Rear Axle Reinforcement:** Differential housings are prone to bending under load, which can lead to axle failure. To mitigate this risk, reinforce along the underside of the rear axle casing, extending from the differential centre to the brake backing plates.
- **Stub Axle Integrity:** Fatigue-related stub axle failures have historically caused serious incidents. To address this:
 - All vehicles must undergo crack testing of front stub axles at least once every three years.
 - Documented evidence of the most recent crack test must be submitted with the vehicle's entry form.
 - Vehicles with high usage or heavier configurations are encouraged to test more frequently.

Wheel Bearings:

- Replace wheel bearings annually using only high-quality, reputable products.
- Carry a full set of replacement wheel bearings as part of your onboard spares kit.



WHEELS & TYRES

- **Configuration:** Wheels and tyres are unrestricted. However, selection should be based on terrain suitability and vehicle load.
- **Recommendations:**
 - Narrow wheels are preferred for muddy or dusty conditions, as they are less prone to floating or losing traction.
 - Larger diameter wheels improve ground clearance, particularly under the differential, and offer access to a wider range of tyre options.
 - Tyres must be robust, in excellent condition, and suited to off-road use.
- **Spare Equipment:**
 - Carry at least two spare tyres.
 - Include a jack and a solid base board to ensure stability when changing tyres on soft or uneven surfaces.

FUEL TANK

- **Capacity & Range:**
 - Fuel tank specifications are unrestricted, but it is the participants responsibility to ensure sufficient fuel capacity. Vehicles should be equipped to achieve a minimum range of 600 km on dirt roads without jerry cans before refuelling is needed.
- **Tank Options:**
 - Consider auxiliary tanks which may be mounted behind the rear seat or between the wheel wells.
 - Do not plumb auxiliary tanks directly into the main tank. In the event of a breach in the lower tank, this could result in complete fuel loss.
- **Jerry Can Safety:**
 - Jerry cans must be securely mounted externally or strapped down in the boot.
 - Jerry cans must never be carried inside the cabin under any circumstances.
 - Always carry a funnel for safe and efficient refuelling.



UNDERBODY PROTECTION

- **Essential Guards:**
 - Fit sump guards, transmission guards, and fuel tank protection plates to shield critical components from impact and debris.
 - Sump guards should be perforated to prevent mud accumulation, which can lead to overheating. Ensure access to the sump plug is maintained.
- **Rear Axle Protection:**
 - Install a stone guard in front of the rear axle using industrial-grade rubber belting. This helps protect the fuel tank and shock absorbers from stone damage.
 - The guard must not hang lower than 50 mm above ground level when the vehicle is fully laden.
- **Mud Flaps:**
 - Effective mud flaps are mandatory on all vehicles.
 - Mud flaps must be securely supported and sized appropriately to prevent excessive spray and debris projection.

SEAT BELTS

- All 2WD Trek vehicles must be fitted with ADR-compliant full-harness seat belts for both driver and front passenger—no exceptions.
- Harnesses must be securely mounted to reinforced anchor points and installed in accordance with Australian Design Rules (ADR 4/05) and VSB 14 Section LK.
- Seat belt webbing, buckles, and anchorages must be inspected prior to the event and replaced if worn or damaged.

WINDSCREENS

- All vehicles must be fitted with laminated safety glass windscreens, compliant with ADR 8/01.
- Windscreens must be free of cracks, chips, or delamination that could impair visibility or structural integrity.

TOWING POINTS

- Each vehicle must be equipped with robust towing points at both the front and rear.
- Acceptable configurations include:
 - Welded or bolted tow hooks
 - Reinforced tow eyes with D-shackles
 - Tow bars rated for recovery loads

Important: Under no circumstances should tow balls be used for towing or snatch recovery operations. Tow balls are not designed for dynamic loads and pose a serious safety risk when used with ropes or snatch straps.

SAFETY TRIANGLES

- All vehicles must carry at least one red reflective warning triangle, compliant with AS 3790.
- The triangle must be deployed whenever the vehicle is stopped on or near a roadway to alert approaching traffic.

COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT

- Every vehicle, including support vehicles, must be fitted with a UHF radio capable of accessing at least 80 channels.
- A secondary radio (e.g. handheld UHF) is recommended for private crew communication without interrupting official event channel traffic.
- Radios must be tested prior to departure and remain operational throughout the event.

DUST LIGHTS

- All dust lights are recommended to be LED.
- All vehicles must be fitted with:
 - A roof-mounted amber strobe or revolving light, clearly visible from both front and rear, wired to a separate switch
 - A fixed white rear-facing light, mounted at or above rear window height (approximately head height of a following driver), wired to a separate switch.
- Dust lights must be illuminated at all times when travelling on dirt roads.
- Carry spare fuses for both amber and white lights circuits.

VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION NUMBERS

- All vehicles must display the official event door panels provided by the event management:
 - Panels are self-adhesive vinyl, approximately 500mm high × 400mm wide
 - Panels must be affixed to both front doors. Other locations will be at the approval of the event management.
- Participants must apply BLACK numbers (150mm high) to the door panels to identify their car number.
- For visibility in dusty conditions:
 - Apply WHITE 150mm high numbers to the upper right-hand corner of the rear window
 - Apply WHITE 150mm high numbers to the front left-hand corner of the windscreen for checkpoint visibility.

Ensure sufficient contrast between the number and background. If visibility is poor, use a contrasting panel to improve legibility.

ROOF RACKS

The use of roof racks is strongly discouraged for RFDS Trek vehicles.

Roof racks can create a false sense of available space, often leading to overpacking and the inclusion of unnecessary gear. More critically, they raise the vehicle's centre of gravity, which can significantly

compromise handling, stability, and rollover resistance, especially on uneven or off-road terrain.

If a roof rack must be used:

- Restrict its use to lightweight items only.
- Heavy or dense items must be stored inside the vehicle, as low as possible.
- Spare fuel and spare tyres must not be carried on the roof rack under any circumstances due to safety and structural risks.

Participants are encouraged to plan their packing carefully and prioritise weight distribution and vehicle balance over convenience.



ROLLOVER PROTECTION

Participation in the Outback Car Trek requires vehicles to be fitted with a minimum four-point roll bar for rollover protection. This requirement is in place to enhance occupant safety during the event.

Rollover protection for modified light vehicles including the installation of roll bars and roll cages is governed by the National Code of Practice for Light Vehicle Construction and Modification (VSB 14).

The relevant section is Section LK – Seating and Occupant Protection, which outlines the minimum design, fabrication, and installation standards for rollover protection systems

Roll Cage Types:

- Four-Point Roll Bars (main hoop at B-pillar with rearward braces) are generally acceptable if compliant with VSB 14.
- Six-Point Roll Cages (with A-pillar and windscreen supports) are typically not permitted for road use due to safety concerns unless the front section is removable and approved by the relevant authority.

State Variations:

Some jurisdictions may have specific requirements or exemptions. Always consult your local registration authority before modifying your vehicle.

Disclaimer:

The Outback Car Trek and the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) do not provide engineering advice or vehicle compliance certification. It is the sole responsibility of each participant to ensure their vehicle complies with the relevant registration, modification, and certification requirements of the state or territory in which the vehicle is registered.

SPARE PARTS & EXTRA EQUIPMENT

All vehicles must carry a comprehensive range of spare parts and essential equipment to ensure self-sufficiency and minimise delays during the event. Spares may be distributed between vehicles of similar make and model, provided those vehicles intend to travel together consistently.

All loose items that cannot be stowed securely in the boot must be secured to the vehicle floor. This is essential to prevent injury or damage in the event of sudden stops, rough terrain, or rollover.

RECOMMENDED SPARE PARTS CHECKLIST

Each vehicle or support should carry or share access to the following items:

Category	Item
Steering & Suspension	Tie rods Control arms Shock absorbers – 1 front, 1 rear
Wheel & Brake	Wheel bearings
Engine & Ignition	Fan belts Spark plugs, leads, distributor cap Condenser, coil, points
Cooling System	Radiator hoses Spare radiator
Electrical & Wipers	Windscreen wiper motor Washer bottle pump
Fuel System	Fuel pump
General Supplies	Roll of fencing wire Gaffer tape Basic and specialty tools
Safety & Recovery	Snatch Strap (rated for vehicle weight) Fire extinguisher (min. 1kg, dry chemical, ADR-approved)
Fluids	4L engine oil Transmission or clutch fluid Brake fluid 20L water

FIRST AID KIT

All vehicles, 2WD and Support, must carry a comprehensive first aid kit suitable for remote and outback conditions. The kit should be tailored to manage both minor injuries and serious medical emergencies, especially when professional help may be hours away.

Category	Item
Core First Aid Supplies	• First Aid Booklet – Basic emergency procedures • Triangular Bandages (x2) – For slings and immobilisation • Crepe Bandages – Various widths for compression and support • Non-Adherent Dressings – For burns and abrasions • Combine Dressing Pads – Medium and large • Sterile Gauze Swabs & Rolls • Adhesive Dressing Strips (Band-aids) • Adhesive Tape – Hypoallergenic, 2.5–5 cm wide • Disposable Gloves – Non-latex, medium and large • Thermal Blanket – For shock or exposure • Resuscitation Mask or Face Shield • Scissors & Tweezers • Plastic Bags – Various sizes • Sterile Saline Solution – Min. 4 tubes (10 ml each) • Notepad & Pencil
Optional Medications & Personal Items	• Paracetamol or Ibuprofen • Antiseptic or Iodine-Based First Aid Cream • Cold & Flu Capsules • Sunscreen and Lipscreen • Cold Sore Cream • Dencorub or Muscle Rub • Multivitamins • Any required prescription medications



FIRST AID KIT

Based on current recommendations from the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) and remote travel safety experts here is an optional a recommended contents for a vehicle first aid kit suitable for remote outback motoring events.

Category	Item
Outback-Specific Modules	Snake & Spider Bite Module • Pressure Immobilisation Bandages (x3) – With tension indicators • Triangular Bandages – For immobilisation • Permanent Marker – To mark bite site Burn Module • Burn Gel Sachets or Hydrogel Dressings • Non-Adherent Burn Dressings • Crepe Bandages – To secure dressings Eye Injury Module • Sterile Saline Wash • Eye Pads Heat & Dehydration • Oral Rehydration Salts • Electrolyte Tablets or Sachets





CONCLUSION

The Outback Car Trek is a unique and rewarding challenge that takes participants through some of Australia's most remote and rugged terrain. To ensure the safety, reliability, and success of every vehicle and crew, strict adherence to these Supplementary Regulations is essential.

These guidelines have been developed in consultation with experienced mechanics, event organisers, and the Royal Flying Doctor Service to reflect best practices for remote travel. They are designed not only to protect participants and their vehicles but also to uphold the spirit of the event - resilience, preparedness, and camaraderie.

All participants are responsible for ensuring their vehicles meet the technical, safety, and compliance standards outlined in this document. Thorough preparation, regular maintenance, and a commitment to safety will help ensure a smooth and enjoyable experience for all.

We thank you for your participation and support of the RFDS, and we look forward to seeing you on the road.



Royal Flying Doctor Service



For more information or assistance, please contact:



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