



2600SEG136

SAFETY STANDARD FOR THE OPERATION OF OFFICIAL VEHICLES

1.0 PURPOSE

To establish responsibilities and safety requirements for the operation of motor vehicles and other official means of transportation.

2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Panama Canal Authority (ACP) Safety and Occupational Health Manual, Section 3.1, issued and revised by the Safety Division (ESS) in January 2000. Existing information is updated with this standard.

3.0 SCOPE

This regulation applies to all Panama Canal Authority (ACP) employees, contractors, and third parties who at any given time may drive or are transported in official vehicles inside or outside ACP installations.

4.0 LEGAL FOUNDATION

This Standard is established pursuant to Agreement No. 12 of the Board of Directors of the Panama Canal Authority (ACP), Safety and Health Regulations, Chapter 1, Article 3; and the Traffic Regulations of the Republic of Panama, Law No. 9 of April 16, 1993.

5.0 DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this Standard, the following definitions apply:

5.1 Vehicle: A means on or inside which people and cargo may be transported.

5.2 Automobile: A three or four-wheeled vehicle with independent propulsion.

5.3 Truck: Any vehicle used to transport cargo, things, merchandise, animals, etc.

5.4 Van: A transportation vehicle with capacity of up to ten (10) passengers.

5.5 Bus: A collective transportation vehicle with capacity of up to ten (10) passengers.

5.6 Bicycle: A two-wheeled vehicle, pedaled by the rider, with or without a box or platform to carry merchandise.

5.7 Tricycle: A three-wheeled vehicle pedaled by the rider, with or without a box of platform to carry merchandise.

6.0 GENERAL

6.1 The driver of official vehicles must:

6.1.1 Possess a valid driver's license from the Republic of Panama that matches the type of vehicle to be driven. In case of operating specialized equipment such as cranes, bobcats, freight elevators, etc., the driver must be certified by the ACP Industrial and Safety Training Unit (RHSI).



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- 6.1.2** Know and observe the traffic regulations of the Republic of Panama.
- 6.1.3** Show up for work fully rested and alert. Advise supervisors if he or she does not feel capable of driving safely.
- 6.1.4** Make sure that he/she and all his/her passengers wear their seat belts and that the passengers are not seated on fenders, bumpers, or other parts of the vehicle that were not designed for that purpose. He/she will not start the vehicle if the passengers refuse to wear their seat belts. Contact the dispatcher or the transportation section supervisor for instructions on how to proceed.
- 6.1.5** Use vehicles under ACP responsibility only for official trips.
- 6.1.6** Be familiarized with the vehicle and must know his correct use and limitations prior to driving it.
- 6.1.7** Check some of the basic components of the vehicle prior to driving it, such as body, mirrors, lights, breaks, tires, etc., to detect any conditions that may adversely affect its safe operation. Immediately inform the dispatcher or the transportation section supervisor about any unsafe condition detected.
- 6.1.8** Get off the road if unsafe conditions that may adversely affect the safe operation of the vehicle are detected (fuel, oil, or water leaks, noises, smoke emissions, warning lights or other conditions). Call the dispatcher or transportation section supervisor over the radio or other means to report the damage and the location of the vehicle.
- 6.1.9** Observe established speed limits.
- 6.1.10** Supervise the placing of cargo in his/her vehicle to make sure that the weight is correctly distributed and that the cargo is duly fastened.
- 6.1.11** Receive the required training to drive vehicles used to transport dangerous cargo such as explosives, flammable or corrosive substances, compressed gases, etc. Refer to standards on hazardous materials.
- In case of an accident, follow the guidelines contained in the ACP Standard on Accident Investigations 2600SEG126.
- 6.1.12** Prior to backing up a vehicle he/she and/or the person accompanying him/her must check to see if the surrounding area is danger free. If he/she cannot see what is behind, make sure that person accompanying him/her or another person is positioned in a safe spot to provide precise instructions for him/her to back up safely, whenever possible.
- 6.1.13** Make certain that the engine is turned off prior to filling up the vehicle with fuel. Make sure that the right fuel (gasoline or diesel fuel) is being poured. Prior to moving the vehicle, he/she must make sure that the hose has been withdrawn from the fuel tank. Keep in mind the ban on smoking at least 15 meters (50 feet) away from any fuel supply operation.
- 6.1.14** Ask the dispatcher, if necessary, to check the oil level and tire pressure whenever the vehicle is filled up with fuel. It is the dispatcher's responsibility to perform such tasks.

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6.2 Transportation of personnel in the back of vans, dump trucks, heavy trucks, and general vehicles.

6.2.1 The transportation of personnel in the back of a general-use truck with railings on the side is allowed for certain types of work. Each division's guidelines will determine if employees will be transported in such fashion. Generally, this is done for trips within the area of operations or yard of the division or for short trips, but it must not be the standard mode of transportation to travel along highways where the speed limit exceeds 60 km/h (Transisthmian Highway, Tocumen Highway, the corridors, main highways, etc.). When personnel is carried in the back of trucks, the following precautions must be taken:

6.2.1.1 Vans and other general vehicles will be equipped with duly secured seats, doors with handles or railings, and shield grids along the sides measuring at least 18" above the seats. The railings may be fixed or removable, but in the latter case, they must always be in place while passengers are being transported. The vehicles must also be equipped with waterproof tarpaulins or covers suspended from a frame fastened to the vehicle to protect the passengers from the sun and rain.

6.2.1.2 The number of passengers cannot exceed the number of seats in a vehicle and the passengers will not be allowed to sit on the floor or stand up while the vehicle is moving.

6.2.1.3 Passengers will not be transported in towing equipment that does not have independent and reliable breaks.

6.2.1.4 Equipment, tools, or cargo will not be transported in the same area with personnel, even if they have been secured.

6.2.1.5 The driver of the vehicle will be responsible for the safe operation of the vehicle and will inspect wagon doors, seats, protective railings, and protective cover to make sure they are in good condition.

6.2.1.6 The supervisor of the employees being transported is responsible for guaranteeing that these requirements are met.

6.3 Light Vehicles.

6.3.1 Light vehicles such as electric or gas small motor vehicles and bobcats must bear clearly visible labels indicating the vehicle's maximum allowable weight and cargo.

6.3.2 Passengers in these vehicles can only travel in passenger assigned seats.

6.3.3 Operators of these vehicles must comply with Section 6.1.1 of this standard.

6.4 Bicycles and Tricycles.

6.4.1 Employees riding bicycles and tricycles wear adequate protective helmets (used by bicycle riders).

6.4.2 These vehicles must also be equipped with lights for night visibility and intermittent lights.

7.0 RESPONSIBILITIES



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The responsibilities to guarantee compliance with this standard are prescribed in the ACP Safety and Occupational Health Management Standard 2600SEG101.

8.0 INQUIRIES

Any information or clarification of the content or application of this standard may be requested in writing to the Safety and Industrial Hygiene Unit.

9.0 EXCEPTIONS

Any requests for changes or temporary exceptions to this Standard must be made in writing to the Safety and Industrial Hygiene Unit (RHSH).

10.0 DURATION

This Standard shall remain in force until amended or revised.

11.0 REFERENCES

11.1 ACP Safety and Occupational Health Manual. Panama Canal Authority. Revision January 2000.

11.2 Law No. 9 of April 16, 1993 – Safety belts. Traffic Regulations of the Republic of Panama.

11.3 2600SEG201 HAZARDOUS MATERIAL INFORMATION STANDARD.