



WUJAL WUJAL ABORIGINAL SHIRE COUNCIL

Use of the Council Bus Policy

Document Control

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1. Origin / Authority

Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council
Local Government Regulations 2012

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to create a structured and transparent framework that governs the use of the 'Council Bus' (the Bus), ensuring it is operated safely and efficiently for the benefit of the community. This includes providing clear guidelines for booking, fees, maintenance, and user responsibilities. The outcome of this will be a positive experience for all stakeholders involved. This policy aims to:

2.1 Ensure Safety:

Promote the safety of all passengers and drivers by mandating the presence of a qualified council driver and adherence to all driving regulations.

2.2 Facilitate Efficient Use:

Provide a structured booking process that ensures the Bus is utilised effectively, is available for community needs while minimising scheduling conflicts.

2.3 Promote Accountability:

Outline user responsibilities regarding the cleaning and maintenance requirements for those using the Bus, fostering a culture of care and respect for council resources.

2.4 Encourage Community Engagement:

Supporting local initiatives and activities that enhance community spirit and cohesion by allowing community events access to the Bus.

2.5 Financial Transparency:

Clearly outline the costs associated with hiring the Bus, including fees for maintenance, fuel, and Council driver services, ensuring users are informed of their financial responsibilities.

By adhering to this policy, all users can contribute to the effective management of the Bus, ensuring it remains a valuable resource for the community while upholding safety and accountability.

3. Policy Statements

Section 224 of the Local Government Regulation 2012 outlines the responsibilities of local governments in managing and providing community transport services. This section emphasises the importance of ensuring public resources are used efficiently and effectively to meet community needs, reinforcing the need for clear guidelines and accountability in the operation of Council vehicles.

Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council is committed to providing safe, accessible, and efficient transportation for community use through the provision of the Bus. This policy establishes the principles and procedures necessary to ensure the Bus is utilised in a manner that supports community needs while maintaining high standards of safety, cleanliness, and accountability. All users are expected to adhere to this policy, doing so will foster a culture of responsibility and respect.

4. Objectives

The objectives of this policy are as follows:

- **Safety Assurance:** Ensure any use of the Bus is conducted under the supervision of a qualified and fully licenced 'Council Driver to minimise risks and promote safe travel for all passengers.
- **Operational Efficiency:** Streamline the booking process to ensure the Bus is readily available for community use through effective planning and resource allocation.
- **Responsibility and Accountability:** Clarify the responsibilities of all users to reduce damage and wear and tear of the Bus to ensure it remains in good operational condition.
- **Community Support:** Support community-based activities with the aim to enhance local participation and engagement through the provision of accessible transport solutions for community events.
- **Cost Management:** Outline clear financial obligations for users through the provision of information on all costs related to the hiring the Bus, including any associated fees and charges.
- **Regulatory Compliance:** Ensure the Bus operates within relevant legislation including compliance with Council's Vehicle Use Policy, the Local Government Regulation 2012, and other applicable laws.

5. Definitions

5.1 Booking System:

The designated process or platform through which users can request and secure the use of the Bus and Council Driver.

5.2 Cleaning Requirements:

The requirements regarding the condition of the Bus on its return, including responsibilities for trash disposal and general cleanliness.

5.3 Community Transport Service:

As defined by the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) a community transport service is defined in the Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994 (TOPTA) as "...a service for the carriage of passengers funded or subsidised out of public money or by a charity and provided for the benefit of a particular group."

5.4 Council Bus/the Bus:

A vehicle owned and operated by the Council, designated for use in community transport services and events. Referred to in this document as the Bus.

5.5 Council Driver:

A qualified individual employed by Council including Councillors, to operate the Bus, who will comply with all relevant driving regulations and safety protocols. All costs or fees associated with the maintenance of the relevant licences are the responsibility of the Council Driver, not of Council. Referred to in this document as the Council Driver.

5.6 Hirer:

An individual or group that books the Bus, whether for council-related activities or community events.

5.7 **Late Return:**

The return will be considered 'late' if the bus is not returned on the day of hire for use in Cooktown or Hope Vale.

When the Bus is used for Sorry Business in either Cairns or Yarrabah, the bus must be returned by 12pm the following day, return after 12pm is considered late return.

5.8 **Malicious Damage:**

Any intentional harm or vandalism inflicted on the Bus, resulting in costs for repair or maintenance not covered by the hire agreement.

5.9 **Pick up time:**

The time the bus may be collected, typically no earlier than 8.00am on the day of hire.

5.10 **Drop off time:**

The time the bus must be returned, typically no earlier than 5.00pm on the day of hire.

6. Policy Principles

6.1 **Council Ownership**

The Council Bus is the property of Council and as such, Council will pay all registration, insurances, maintenance, and servicing costs.

6.2 **Mandatory Council Driver**

The Council Bus must only be driven by an authorised Council Driver, as set out in the definitions of 'Council Driver'.

The Council Driver must/is at all times:

- Hold a current Queensland Drivers Class C Licence.
- Be an 'Authorised Passenger Transport Driver' according to the Queensland Transport and Main Road (TMR) requirements. Refer to the links in section 9 of this Policy for more information about TMR requirements.
- Be registered on TMR's Driver Authorisation Public Register.
- Display their 'Booked Hire' display card while driving the Council Bus.
- Is responsible for all costs or fees associated with the maintenance of the relevant licences.
- Comply with all relevant laws and regulations.
- Use the vehicle in a responsible manner that does not adversely impact on vehicle occupants, other road users or Council.
- Use the vehicle in a responsible manner that does not adversely impact on the vehicle.
- Exercise care and judgement.
- Show consideration for others on the road; and set a good example to other road users.
- Have signed an acknowledgement form prior to the use of the Council Bus in which they acknowledge amongst other things they will comply with this policy, that their licences are current and that will pay any infringements they may occur while driving the Council Bus.
- Prior arrangements must be made with Council for hire of the Council Bus in excess on day hire.

- For approved overnight hires, the hirer must provide the Council Driver with accommodation and three meals per day at the hirer's cost.

Where the Council's insurance is rendered void by the actions of an authorised user for example, drink or drug driving, dangerous driving, the user may be personally liable for damage and costs, including any costs or damage to third party vehicles, personal injury, and property damage.

6.3 Usage Restrictions

Council vehicles are only to be used as authorised and are **not** to be used:

- For a competition or rally.
- For farming practices.
- On the beach (Council Bus is only permitted on bitumen sealed road).
- To travel any further south than Yarrabah.
- To travel further north than Hope Vale.
- For any other purposes excluded by Council's motor vehicle insurance policy.
- Smoking or Vaping are **not** permitted in any Council vehicle.
- Drugs or alcohol, or intoxicated persons are not permitted on the Bus and Council Drivers must comply with requirements of Council's Alcohol and Drug Policy.

6.4 Infringements s, Penalty Notices and Convictions

Council will not be liable to pay any fines, penalties or costs incurred by the Council Driver of the Council Bus, except in the event of Council not fulfilling its obligations in section 6.1 of these Policy Principles.

The obligation for payment, in a timely manner, of any fines, penalties or costs, is the responsibility of the person in charge of the vehicle at the time of the infringement.

6.5 Booking Requirements

- 6.5.1 All requests to use the Bus must be submitted through the designated booking system at least one week in advance.
- 6.5.2 Bookings are subject to availability and must be confirmed by the Council.
- 6.5.3 Council retains the right to refuse any booking request.
- 6.5.4 Bookings cannot be guaranteed.
- 6.5.5 The Council Driver must be booked at the same time as the Bus.
- 6.5.6 The Council Bus will not be re-hired or used until such time as it has been cleaned, washed, and refuelled by the previous hirer and inspection undertaken and approved.
- 6.5.7 If the Council Bus is returned in a damaged condition the Council Bus will be removed from hire and any existing bookings cancelled until any required repair works are completed.
- 6.5.8 It is the responsibility of parents with young children to supply and install their own approved car seats appropriate to the age of the child/children.
- 6.5.9 Community trips are from point to point e.g. Wujal Wujal to Cooktown (no stops between points).
- 6.5.10 All passengers must sign in when boarding the bus and sign out when disembarking the bus. Council is not responsible for passengers who have signed out when disembarking the bus. Council is not responsible for passengers who miss their designated time to travel on the bus.

- 6.5.11 An late fee of \$600 will be charged if the vehicle is returned late. Refer to the Definitions in section 5.7 of this policy document for the definition of [Late Return](#).
- 6.5.12 Phone 0407 553 628 for inspection and securing of the Bus on return to community.
- 6.5.13 The Council Bus Hire Policy must be read and signed by the Hirer, prior to using the Bus.

6.6 Fees, Charges and Fuel

- The rate of for hire of the Council Bus is **\$600 per day**. This fee includes windscreen cover, tyre damage, mechanical maintenance, and the hourly charge for the Council designated driver.
- The daily hire fee includes up to **150 kilometres** of travel.
- An additional fee of **\$0.88 per kilometre** will be incurred if you travel more than this limit. Odometer readings will be logged prior to each use and upon return.
- An additional fee of **\$200** will be charged if the bus is not returned in a clean and tidy state. Refer to section 6.8 for more details on cleaning of the Bus on return.
- The fuel tank will be full when the Bus is collected for hire.
- The fuel tank must be full when the Bus is returned. This is the responsibility of the person booking the bus.
- An additional \$600 will be charged per day if the Bus is not returned on the day of hire. Refer to section 5. Definitions for the definition of 'Drop Off Time' and 'Late Return'.
- The hire fee does **not** cover malicious damage of any sort, including graffiti or any form of vandalism.
- The reservation of the Bus must be completed by the person, group, organisation, or company who will be using it. It cannot be hired on behalf of another person, group, organisation, or company, unless formal permission is granted by the Chief Executive Officer.
- The cost of the Council Driver is included in the \$600 standard rate of hire of the bus per day.
- Where the standard rate for hire of the bus is waived, as for Sorry Business, the cost of the Council Driver will still apply, including 40% on cost charges, and penalty rates for weekends, public holidays.

6.7 Sorry Business

When the Bus is reserved specifically for 'Sorry Business' the hire charges will be waived (i.e. no cost for hire).

The following costs and requirements will still apply:

- 6.7.1 Where a suitably qualified Councillor is available to drive the Bus the fees for the costs of a Council Driver will be waived. The Councillor will not be paid by Council for this service, Councillors do so on the understanding they will not be recompensed by Council. This is a Councillor's service to community.
- 6.7.2 Where a suitably qualified WWASC Councillor is not available to drive the Bus, the hirer will still be responsible for the costs for the Council Driver, [section 6.6 Fees Charges and Fuel](#).
- 6.7.3 The hirer is responsible to return the bus with a full fuel tank. The cost of fuel is not included in the hire but is the responsibility of the hirer.
- 6.7.4 The hirer is responsible for the internal and external cleaning of the bus prior to its return. Council facilities are not available for this process.
- 6.7.5 The hirer is responsible for any cleaning related charges as applicable, refer to [Section 6.9](#).

6.8 Logbook Completion

A logbook is included in the Council Bus and must be completed and submitted to the Council office within 24 hours of the trip for each use of the Bus. The following details must be included:

- Date and time of use.
- Destination.
- Names of all passengers.
- Odometer readings at the start and end of the journey.
- Any incidents or issues during the trip and the details of any such incident.

6.9 Cleaning Requirements

The Council Bus must be returned in a clean condition and with a full tank of fuel on the day of hire.

Failure to return the Council Bus in good condition will result in a cleaning fee of **\$200**.

An inspection will be conducted after each period of use. Users are responsible for ensuring:

- All trash is disposed of properly.
- Seats and floors are free of debris.
- Any spills are cleaned up promptly.
- Removal and rectification of any vandalism (including graffiti) must be addressed immediately upon discovery.

Damage to the Council Bus will result in the hirer being responsible for the costs to repair that damage and may result in the hirer being refused hire in the future.

6.10 Late Return

All charges associated with the late return of the Council Bus as the responsibility of the hirer.

- 6.10.1 If the Bus is hired to be taken to Cooktown or Hope Vale it must be returned (cleaned and with a full fuel tank) on the day of hire (on time) failure to do so will be considered late return and incur the late return fee.
- 6.10.2 If the Bus is hired to be taken to Cairns or Yarrabah it must be returned (cleaned and with a full fuel tank) by 12pm on the day following the initial day of hire (on time) failure to do so will be considered late return and incur the late return fee.
- 6.10.3 The penalty/fee for late return is \$600.
- 6.10.4 An additional \$600 will be charged for every additional full day (full or par day) the bus is 'late'. Refer to section 5.7 which explains the definition of 'late return'.
- 6.10.5 All other requirements of the Use of the Council Bus Policy apply.

6.11 Compliance

All users must comply with this policy.

Non-compliance may result in revocation of usage privileges and/or additional penalties as deemed appropriate by Council.

Where it is proven that a Council Driver has acted in a manner contrary to the Use of the Council Bus Policy, that person may be subject to the following:

- Formal disciplinary proceedings
- Other proceedings, as documented in Council's Code of Conduct

6.12 Summary

This policy confirms Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council's commitment to the responsible use of the Bus, and to ensuring it remains a valuable resource for the community. For any questions or if you require clarification, please contact the Council Community Services Manager.

7. Application

This policy applies to all users of the Council Bus.

8. Associated Policies, Procedures and Forms

- Code of Conduct
- Vehicle Use Policy
- Process: Managing the Use of the Council Bus
- Form: Use of Council Bus – Hirer to Complete
- Form: Use of Council Bus – Council Driver to Complete

9. Relevant Legislation

- Local Government Regulations 2012
- [Passenger transport driver authorisation \(TMR\)](#)
- [Operator accreditations \(TMR\)](#)
- [Driver authorisation and operator accreditation fees \(TMR\)](#)
- [Community and Courtesy Transport Services \(TMR\)](#)
- [Information Bulletin for operators of a Community and Courtesy Transport Service](#)
- [Licence types of classes and conditions](#)

10. Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually.

The Executive Management Team are responsible for the monitoring of and reporting on the implementation of this policy.



Kiley Hanslow
Chief Executive Officer

