



Travelling in remote locations

Identify the hazard

Extreme weather conditions, remoteness and vast distances in Western Australia, together with rarely travelled roads, mean that if you break down or get lost, you may not be found for some time.

Remember, the first rule of survival is **don't panic.**

Extremes of climate can bring on dangerous medical conditions. If you are not prepared, the consequences of being stranded in remote areas can be serious.

Assess the risk

Breakdowns can leave you stranded while working in remote areas. Even if your approximate whereabouts are known and you were expected to check in regularly, rescue can take several days.

People can survive for long periods without food, but the human body is ill-equipped to cope with dehydration, which affects decision making and reduces coordination — essential skills for survival in an emergency situation.

Information on assessing the risk is given in sections 2 and 4 of the Guidance note on [Working Alone](#)

Some safe work practices

- Plan all trips and ensure that someone in a supervisory position knows your plan.
- Arrange a schedule of times when you will contact a nominated person, and keep to the schedule.
- Your contact person should be briefed to arrange a search as soon as a scheduled contact is missed. There should be a procedure in place concerning the time lapse before contacting emergency services (usually 24 hours).

- The four vital requirements to support life are **water, shelter, warmth** and **food**. Always ensure you set out with adequate supplies of, and provision for, these to sustain you in the event that you are stranded. This is important even if you are planning to go to a remote area for only a short period.
- Ensure that you take appropriate communications and location equipment for the area you are going to and that you know how to use them. These may include a long-range radio or mobile satellite phone, global positioning system, emergency position indicating radio beacon and maps.
- Ensure that your vehicle is suitable for the terrain you plan to travel through, and that it has been adequately maintained to minimise the risk of breakdown.
- Ensure that your vehicle has a dual battery system and both batteries are in excellent working condition.
- Carry essential spare parts, tools and recovery equipment, and ensure you know how to use them. Carry at least two spare wheels with tyres.
- Carry a suitable first aid kit and ensure that at least one of your team knows how to administer first aid.
- Never leave your vehicle if it breaks down. It is easier for rescue parties to find a vehicle than a person.
- Check weather forecasts before you depart and while you are away, and change your plans or delay the trip if necessary.
- Avoid working or travelling alone in remote locations wherever possible.
- Contact regional police stations for advice on road conditions.
- Ask to attend a survival course if you regularly work in remote areas.

There is useful information available on remote area travel available through the [Royal Flying Doctor Service](http://www.flyingdoctor.org.au) on www.flyingdoctor.org.au

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This information has been adapted from Travelling in remote locations published by Resources Safety, Department of Mines and Petroleum.