LBTO Vehicle Travel Safety Requirements
M004s00312 Rev. a Owner: David Carroll

GENERAL RULES FOR DRIVING VEHICLES

☐ Safety of People shall come first when making decisions related to vehicle travel, per HSE Policy M004s00112.
☐ Travel planning should start well in advance, and be ongoing as conditions and forecasts change.
☐ Review weather forecast/traffic reports. Adjust travel plans to minimize exposure to hazardous conditions.
☐ Perform a vehicle pre-check of tire pressure, mirrors, headlights, underneath for leaks, and the dash for vehicle service lights, etc. and report issues to admin@lbto.org or your manager. Do not drive vehicle if issue could impact safety.
☐ University of Arizona (UA) Pre-Authorization is required (including training) with the LBTO Business Office (BO) before driving a UA (LBTO) vehicle and is governed by UA Fleet Safety Policy. Reserve vehicles via vehicles@lbto.org.
☐ High Occupancy Vehicles (HOVs; Mercedes Sprinter Van) hold 9-15 passenger & require HOV training to operate.
☐ Drivers shall obey traffic laws and speed limits, wear seat belts, never drive distracted, practice defensive driving.
☐ Transport of items that are fragile, expensive, difficult to replace, or time-sensitive requires manager approval for transport, minimum of 2 personnel/team and uninterrupted attendance of load through to delivery. Management may require an escort vehicle (UAPD or LBTO) and/or prohibit transport during inclement weather.

DRIVING TO THE OBSERVATORY (BETWEEN MGIO BASE CAMP AND OBSERVATORY) RULES

☐ Verbal Pre-Approval is required from the Manager on Duty (MoD) before Driving to OR from the observatory in the dark. You must also notify MoD of your safe arrival to your destination. Do not drive tired, and stay alert.
☐ Pack appropriately. Bring extra medications, food, clothing, and personal medical equipment or supplies. Clothing should be appropriate to the season (e.g. gloves, coat, boots, etc. for winter). Always bring a jacket.
☐ Vehicles must be equipped with: Emergency Kit (either LBTO or Visitor Kit), MGIO Radio (hand-held or base-station), emergency contact sheets (phone #’s, radio call signs), and an MGIO gate key. Review Emergency Kit Contents: M004s00340 (LBTO kit) M004s00341 (Visitor kit). Report missing items to admin@lbto.org.
☐ Check in/out at MGIO Base Camp (brass tag or sign the paper or electronic log).
☐ ½ Tank of Fuel+ is required to pass MGIO Base Camp; Full tank for forecasted or actual inclement weather.
☐ Report Road Hazards (rocks, downed trees, wash outs, dangerous drivers or animals, fog, etc.) to MGIO immediately.
☐ Yield to and DO NOT PASS road maintenance crews (e.g. graders, plows, loggers, etc.) until they signal you to do so.
☐ Radio Call for Clearance up/down the MGIO access road, and during road maintenance, plowing, or lane restrictions.
☐ Close Gate Locks such that opening any lock will allow the gate to open (MGIO, USFS, ADOT locks may be present).
☐ If you become stuck on the roadway remain calm, set up chem. light flares if necessary, call for help, and utilize contents of emergency kits, as appropriate to the situation and conditions. For snow, chains/traction devices and a shovel are available to free the vehicle. If a tow or further assistance is needed, call for help on the MGIO radio or cell phone.

Emergencies. Review M004s00310 LBTO Emergency Action Plan, Section 10 “Road/Vehicle Incidents.” For help, attempt to reach someone in this order:

1. MGIO Radio (via the “MGIO RPT” channel; Note: not monitored 24 hours)
2. Phone: Dial 911 or UAPD: 520-621-8273 (signal strength varies)
3. If no response: Switch channel to GCSCO 1 or 2 (on MGIO Radio) and call for help. Graham Co. Sheriff Office

INCLEMENT WEATHER (ACTUAL AND FORECASTED) RULES (snow/ice, heavy rain, heavy winds)

Pre-Approval. During actual and forecasted inclement weather conditions (snow/ice, heavy rain, heavy winds, etc.), all drivers must obtain verbal approval from the LBTO Manager on Duty (MoD) before departing the MGIO Base Camp, or as soon as inclement weather is encountered on the road. LBTO: 520-626-1466, or via MGIO Radio. MoD to send telescopework@lbto.org email documenting the decision.

Considerations:

- When in doubt or unsure of conditions, drivers should speak with MoD and request approval.
- The MoD has the final say, will err on the side of caution, and shall not be responsible for incidents.
- If the MoD does not approve or cannot be reached, the driver(s) must hold at a safe location (e.g. Base Camp) until approval is granted. Do not ask mountain day crew for approval, as it must be the MoD.

MoD = Manager on Duty at the LBTO. Per M004s00306 Minimum Staffing Policy, there shall always be a Manager on Duty while the Observatory is Occupied.
**LBTO Vehicle Travel Safety Requirements**

- **The MoD should consider/consult the following:** MGIO or UAPD recommendations and/or directives, recent traveler input, current and forecasted weather conditions, road conditions, visibility, time of day, vehicle type, the driver’s experience, transported load (if applicable), scouting missions, the availability of MGIO and LBTO staff to assist in the event of trouble on the road, Safety/OC/LBTO Management input, gut feelings, etc.
- **Staff and visitors coming from Tucson and beyond** should be in touch with the MoD well before their arrival to MGIO Base Camp, and they should plan for contingency in their operations schedule.
- **Although travel may be permitted, hazardous conditions could still be present.** Drivers need to be aware of the risks and changing conditions. Emergency assistance could likely be significantly delayed, and wait times for off-mountain towing or rescue could be long, resulting in stranded travelers.
- **At times, some vehicles and/or drivers may be approved to travel, while others may not,** depending on a number of factors. **Drivers could also be required to travel in groups of 2+ by the MoD for their own safety.**
- **MGIO and LBTO staffing is often limited** Friday-Sunday, holidays or other closures, so plan travel accordingly.

- Driving in the Dark to the observatory **IS NOT ALLOWED during actual or forecasted inclement weather.** Plan ahead.
- **Vehicle Requirements for Winter Weather (actual or forecasted) and AT ALL TIMES DURING Nov. 15-Apr. 15:** 4-wheel drive (4WD) or all-wheel drive (AWD), 6”+ under clearance, all-weather/terrain tires, traction devices (chains) onboard. Review how to install traction devices and engage 4WD before departure. See: [Snow Chain Installation Video](#). **Watch for falling ice at the observatory.** Park away from building, load/unload under balcony or in high bay, whenever possible.
- **During inclement weather, travel may be significantly delayed.** Travelers may need to return home or stay at a hotel.
- **Visitors & Contractors are highly encouraged to seek alternatives to travel during inclement weather.** If approved to drive, and choose to do so, they must rent/bring appropriately equipped vehicle(s) as described above. Visitor emergency kits, including zip tie traction devices, are available for checkout at MGIO Base Camp. **Travel could be significantly delayed.** Travelers may need to return home or spend a night at a local hotel.
- **M004s00311 Inclement Weather Policy has info. on hazards/risks/best practices** for inclement weather driving.

### ALTERNATIVES TO TRAVEL TO THE OBSERVATORY

When travel is **not permitted** or when experience or vehicles are of concern, the following alternatives are available:

1. Work/Obs. remotely from the Tucson Office in Steward, or from home, etc.
2. Wait at a safe location (MGIO Base Camp, Safford, etc.) until travel is permitted.
3. When experience or vehicles are a factor, make arrangements to travel up/down with LBT day crew.

**NOTE:** Be aware that day crew travel may also be restricted. Mon-Fri 6am departure up, 3pm departure down is their typical schedule. Weekends will need special arrangements, so contact MoD well in advance.

### INCIDENTS AND ACCIDENTS (ALSO SEE EMERGENCIES ABOVE)

All Vehicle Incidents/Accidents, including injuries and/or damage to vehicle or property and regardless of severity must be reported immediately to the MoD (Tuc-Obs.) or your supervisor (all else). The MoD/Supervisor must submit a **Safety IssueTrak** and relay the information to the Observatory Manager, the Safety Manager, the Business Office, and the involved employee’s supervisor or LBTO sponsor. See **M004s00301** for more detail on reporting requirements.

- **Involved employee’s time-approver, or visitor’s LBTO sponsor is required to report** all vehicle incidents, property damage, and injuries via the UAccess Manager Self Service page per [UA Fleet Safety Policy](#) Section 3.5.

**Report incidents involving only the general public** to MGIO or UAPD (or direct to 911/GCSO). Do not assist stuck vehicles that are not LBTO-affiliated (not UA, staff, or visitor vehicles). First aid can be provided at the individual’s discretion.

### NON-COMFORMANCE & EXCEPTIONS

- **VIOLATING THESE RULES COULD PUT LIVES IN DANGER** and strain MGIO, telescope, and/or emergency resources. Violations of LBTO or UA policy may be grounds for disciplinary action and/or personal financial liability.
- **Violations shall be reported** to the Observatory Manager, who shall pass along to the appropriate group Director.
- **EXCEPTIONS** to these requirements must be **pre-approved** by the Observatory Manager and Safety Manager.

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