

Eye Spy A Kangaroo



Navigating the Challenges of Country Driving



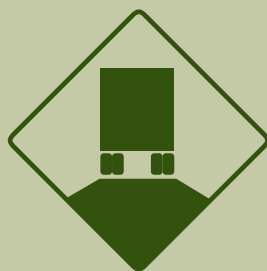
Beautiful landscapes, unique wildlife, and unfamiliar situations.

Knowing what to expect, and how to prepare for driving on country roads, can keep you safe.

Driving through regional and remote Australia is a high-risk activity due to specific road conditions, such as:



Soft shoulders



Large vehicles with oversized loads and escorts



Unpredictable wildlife activity



Extreme weather

Drivers also often experience **sun glare**, which is associated with an **increased crash risk**, especially during sunrise and sunset when sunlight is at a critical angle^{2, 3}.

Additionally, collisions involving wildlife and livestock are common, especially at dusk and dawn when these animals are most active⁴. Despite ongoing safety efforts, the number of fatal crashes in remote and very remote areas is highly variable and has not shown a significant decrease in the last decade⁵.

Driving through rural and remote areas in Australia often involves navigating unsealed or damaged road surfaces, which can reduce traction and impair vehicle⁶.

It is estimated that:



60% of roads in Australia are unsealed.



Almost 20% of roads in Australia are in poor condition⁷.

27% Mobile phone coverage



Only 27% of Australian landmass has mobile phone coverage, and although it is estimated to reach 99% of the population, service coverage and quality varies between providers^{9, 10, 11}.

This, in combination with extreme weather conditions and long distances between population centres, increases the risks associated with driving on country roads.









Additionally, states and local authorities often use unique traffic signs to represent road conditions in their area⁸, potentially causing confusion for drivers unfamiliar with the area.



Recommendations



As a driver

-  **Drive to the conditions.** Weather, road surface, wildlife activity or heavy vehicles may need you to slow down and be patient.
-  Take breaks to let your mind and body rest, and if it is safe to do so, get out of the vehicle and go for a short walk. Follow a journey management plan.
-  When you see a wildlife sign focus on the road and be ready to brake. If an animal jumps to the road, brake to slow down and keep the vehicle in a straight line. Do not swerve.
-  Prepare for extreme weather before departing. Consider the impact it can have on your body as well as your vehicle. Always carry water with you to stay hydrated.
-  If you are planning a long-distance trip, inform a colleague or a family member your estimated times of departure and arrival. Carry with you the contact details of emergency services in the area.
-  Avoid traveling in the night, or during sunrise and sunset.
-  Do some extra planning, allow some extra time. Driving through regional and remote areas requires extra planning¹⁴. If possible, chat with someone who knows or lives in the area to get additional information.
-  Know all national traffic signs and get familiar with additional ones used in the areas you are driving through^{15, 16}.



Prepare for extreme weather



Drink Water



Prepare to Break



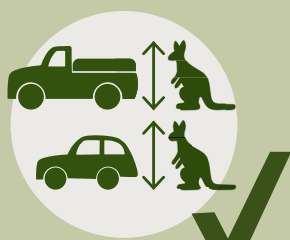
Schedule your journey



Avoid driving at night

As a Manager

- Develop a journey management plan^{17, 18} with specific tasks for the driver before, during and after the journey.
- Select the adequate vehicle for the trip. Consider the purpose of the trip and the road conditions drivers will face on the journey when planning the trip.
- Regular communication.** Establish an internal communications plan to ensure drivers going on long-distance journeys give regular updates about how the journey is going.



Select an adequate vehicle



Communicate with colleagues