SURVIVE BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES

Version 1.09

SURVIVE

‘Best Practice’ guidelines for dealing with breakdowns/removals on motorways and high speed dual carriageways

Survive
Safe Use of Roadside Verges In Vehicular Emergencies

www.survivegroup.org

The advice contained in these guidelines is of a general nature only and is not tailored to any particular factual situation. The attending technician should assess the individual circumstances on each occasion and decide on the most appropriate course of action. The road recovery organisation and, if applicable, the technician are responsible for taking appropriate advice and for ensuring that they fulfil any legal obligation they may have in relation to working on the roadside. The Survive Group and the publishers accept no responsibility for any loss occasioned by any person acting or refraining from acting as a result of anything contained in, or absent from, these guidelines.

Information contained in these guidelines is believed correct at the date of going to print but the Survive Group, and the individual members of the Group (from time to time), can give no guarantee in this regard.

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The SURVIVE Group was founded 10 years ago and is comprised of Motoring Organisations, the Highways Agency, the Association of Chief Police Officers, the Trade Organisation and Associations and many other groups and individuals.

Since its foundation, the Group has worked unceasingly within the industry to help promote best practise when working on motorways and high speed roads.
It has done this by working in collaboration with the British Standards Institute to develop the first British publically available specification (PAS: 43) on “Safe working of vehicle breakdown, recovery and removal operations – Management system specification”. More recently it has established a website www.survivegroup.org for those organisations and technicians involved in assisting drivers on Britain’s roads. Survive also continues to campaign for high standard conspicuous materials to be applied to vehicle and clothing used by those involved in such potentially hazardous operations.

Now I am delighted to introduce our Best Practice Guidelines, written by practitioners for practitioners, which again focuses on dealing with breakdowns, recoveries and removals on motorways and high-speed dual carriageways.

We believe that these guidelines, together with PAS 43 and the National Highways Sector Scheme for Vehicle Recovery 17B, will make a major contribution to road safety.

The SURVIVE Group wishes to acknowledge the efforts of Steve Ives and Andrew Reeve in the production of these Guidelines. Please take the trouble to read and learn from them and help to keep our industry working to ever safer standards.

Allan Mowatt OBE

Chairman - The SURVIVE Group
August 2009

1. INTRODUCTION

Breakdown, Recovery and Removal Technicians have to deal with breakdowns, recoveries and removals on all types of road, including high-speed dual carriageways and motorways. The primary objective of these "Best Practice Guidelines" is to help try to ensure the safety of all concerned whilst Technicians are working on these two types of road.

Motorways and high speed dual carriageways are amongst the safest roads to travel on per vehicle mile in the UK. However this statistic should not be allowed to disguise the very real hazards of working on these roads and the severity of accidents that can occur there. Technicians should therefore be very aware of their own safety, as well as that of motorists and other road users, whilst dealing with breakdowns, recoveries or removals on this type of road.

It must be understood that even when best practice guidelines are followed, there can be no guarantee of safety.

However, if Technicians are made aware of and, where appropriate, follow these guidelines then it is hoped that the risks to both themselves and other road users will be reduced.

Working Group 1 of SURVIVE, which is chaired by Steve Ives and has representation from the motoring organisations, Highways Agency and Association of Chief Police Officers, has produced these best practice guidelines in consultation with members of the Breakdown and Recovery Industry and other members of the SURVIVE Group.

The guidelines are intended to be read, and used, in conjunction with the current version of PAS 43 (which relates to "Safe working of vehicle breakdown, recovery and removal operations – Management system specification") and, for those working under the Highway's Agency removal scheme, the National Highways Sector Scheme for Vehicle Recovery, Sector Scheme 17B.

These guidelines are not intended to replace PAS 43 or, where applicable, Sector Scheme 17B but should be seen as complementary to them. Funding for the production of these guidelines has been provided by the AA, RAC, Green Flag, Mondial and Britania Rescue.

2. SCOPE

These best practice guidelines have been produced to help assist Road Recovery Operators and Technicians when dealing with: -

a. **Vehicle breakdowns on a motorway or high speed dual carriageway.**

b. **The recovery and/or removal of vehicles from a motorway or high speed dual carriageway.**

When or where a vehicle breaks down is largely a matter of chance, but once it has done so it immediately becomes a potential hazard; and the risk of it being involved in an accident increases the longer it remains a potential hazard.

It should be noted that whilst these best practice guidelines have been produced for Technicians working on motorways or high speed dual carriageways, they might also be of help when working on other types of roads.

It should also be noted that the Highways Agency ("HA") is currently responsible for managing and maintaining all of the motorways and some of the key 'A' class high-speed dual carriageways in England. The HA Traffic Officers patrol all these motorways but only some of the 'A' class dual carriageways within the HA's responsibility. In some circumstances a Technician may require assistance from an HA Traffic Officer in dealing with a breakdown or recovery on a HA road- **see guidelines for further advice on this.**

Contact information for the Regional Control Centres (RCC) is set out in a separate booklet. The RCC will advise whether the particular road is patrolled by Traffic Officers. If it is, then the RCC will consider the request for assistance. If it is not patrolled, or the request relates to a road for which the HA is not responsible, then the appropriate Police Control Room (PCR) should be contacted – contact information for PCRs is also set out in the separate booklet.

Should a Technician require assistance on motorways or high-speed dual carriageways in Scotland and Wales, then the appropriate PCR should be contacted - again see separate booklet.

"NEITHER A MOTORIST, A TECHNICIAN OR A ROAD RECOVERY OPERATOR HAS ANY CONTROL OVER WHEN OR WHERE A VEHICLE BREAKS DOWN, BUT ONCE IT HAS DONE SO THEN IT IMMEDIATELY BECOMES A POTENTIAL HAZARD"

3. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of these 'Best Practice' Guidelines the following definitions will apply:

BREAKDOWN

A situation where a vehicle is immobilised through a failure that is not the result of an accident.

CASUALTY VEHICLE

A vehicle that is to be repaired, recovered or removed.

HIGH SPEED DUAL CARRIAGEWAY

Dual carriageways with a maximum speed limit of 50mph or more.

LARGE GOODS VEHICLE (LGV)

A vehicle that is over 3,500 kgs Gross Vehicle Mass ('GVM').

LIGHT COMMERCIAL VEHICLE (LCV)

A vehicle that is up to 3,500 kgs GVM.

LIVE RUNNING LANE

The lane of a road that is either in use or available for use by the general public.

NEARSIDE OF VEHICLE

The left side of a vehicle (when facing forwards), normally the side nearest the kerb when driving.

OFFSIDE OF VEHICLE

The right side of a vehicle (when facing forwards).

POLICE CONTROL ROOM (PCR)

A control room set up and operated by the Police to respond to requests for assistance via emergency 999 calls, deploying Police Officers and liaising with the other Emergency Services and incident responder organisations, for example fire, ambulance, Traffic Officers, Incident Support Units, Environment Agency.

RECOVERY

Any operation or activity required to facilitate vehicle removal.

REMOVAL

Any operation or activity which deals with removing a broken down, abandoned or accident damaged vehicle which cannot be repaired in situ and driven away unaided.

REGIONAL CONTROL CENTRE (RCC)

A control centre set up and operated by the Highways Agency to respond to incidents on its road network in England by answering emergency roadside telephones, setting signals and variable message signs, deploying on-road Traffic Officers and liaising with the Emergency Services and other incident responder organisations.

RISK ASSESSMENT

A careful examination of what, in any work being undertaken, could cause harm to people, so that the person undertaking that work can weigh up whether they have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm.

ROAD RECOVERY OPERATOR

Any organisation, company or Technician who undertakes the provision of vehicle assistance, repair, removal or recovery at or from the roadside.

ROAD RECOVERY VEHICLE

Any vehicle that is capable of carrying out either breakdown, recovery or removal activities.

SAFE SIDE

The side of the vehicle, which is exposed to the least amount of passing traffic, allowing for any other hazards that exist in the vicinity.

TECHNICIAN

A person who has received training in the repair and/or recovery or removal of motor vehicles and who can demonstrate the competence to work alone and unsupervised in accordance with a suitable training scheme (whether externally or internally provided).

4. GENERAL GUIDELINES WHEN ATTENDING CARS AND LIGHT COMMERCIAL VEHICLES

A. VEHICLE/EQUIPMENT/PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT CHECKS

Before starting duty Technicians should carry out the following checks: -

- Road Recovery Vehicle - “Flower” check (fuel, lights, oil, water, electrics and rubber (tyres));
- Equipment - All equipment, either contained within or fitted to the Road Recovery Vehicle, should be checked to ensure it is in a serviceable condition and fit for purpose;
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) - All PPE issued should be kept in a clean and serviceable condition and should meet any relevant standards/ requirements which apply to it.

Any defects found should be reported immediately to the Road Recovery Operator who, along with the Technician, is responsible for the condition of the road recovery vehicle, equipment and any PPE issued. Defects in any critical and/or legally required items should be rectified, or the item replaced, before the Road Recovery Vehicle is used.

Ensure vehicle livery/lights and markings are clean, to help make sure that, where relevant, these are clearly visible/reflective.

B. BREAKDOWN/REMOVAL DETAILS

When a call for assistance is received, information that can help to establish the location of the casualty vehicle and to get information about those who are with the vehicle is:

- Motorway or Dual Carriageway name or number;
- Nearest Emergency Roadside Telephone Number or Marker Post Number (if available): **See however Note 1 below;**
- Direction of travel;
- The junction numbers that the casualty vehicle is between or, if at a junction, the number of that junction, or, if applicable, the name of the service area where the casualty vehicle is located;
- Whether the casualty vehicle is on the hard shoulder, verge, in a live running lane or any other location on the motorway or dual carriageway (e.g. in cross hatching, on entry or exit slip road) **See Note 2 below;**
- Description of casualty vehicle, including registration number; Contact mobile phone number where available;
- Number of passengers and if anyone travelling has any special requirements or concerns for example any person present with a disability who may require special arrangements, **lone person, small children, etc – see Section 6.A**

In most cases the caller will be able to supply sufficient information for the casualty vehicle's location to be established. However, if the caller has been unable to provide sufficient of the above information to locate the casualty vehicle, then a different approach may be required to help establish location. For example the caller could also be asked for a description of any distinctive features that can be seen and are near to the casualty vehicle, such as nearby signs, buildings, structures or geographical features. Alternatively the caller could be asked where they are travelling to, or from, and for how long they were travelling prior to the breakdown.

Note 1: The motorist should not be advised to walk to the nearest Emergency Roadside Telephone or Marker Post unless all other methods of establishing their location have failed.

Note 2: Should the casualty vehicle be located in the running lane of a motorway or outside lane of a dual carriageway, then the motorist should be advised to call 999 and request assistance. The Technician should not attend the scene or attempt to work on the casualty vehicle until it has either been moved to a place of safety or the Police or Traffic Officers are present and have protected the scene.

C. SAFETY ADVICE TO MOTORISTS

When a call for assistance is received, then safety advice along the following lines should be offered, as appropriate, to the caller:

i. Vehicle on the hard shoulder

Please make your vehicle as conspicuous as possible by putting on the sidelights and hazard warning lights, if working. Whilst you are best placed to identify any particular hazards where you are located, and you and your party will need to make your own decisions about safety, our advice is that normally the safest place to wait for help is away from moving traffic and your vehicle, if possible a safe distance behind a crash barrier, if one is present and can be reached safely. Take great care when exiting the vehicle, using the doors facing away from the passing traffic, wherever possible. If, for any reason, you cannot or you believe it would be unsafe to exit the vehicle, you should remain in the vehicle with your seat belt on.

ii. Vehicle on inside lane of a motorway or of a high speed dual carriageway

Please make your vehicle as conspicuous as possible by putting on the sidelights and hazard warning lights, if working.

Whilst you are best placed to identify any particular hazards where you are located, and you and your party will need to make your own decisions about safety, our advice is that normally the safest place to wait for help is away from moving traffic and your vehicle, if possible a safe distance behind a crash barrier, if one is present and can be reached safely.

"NORMALLY THE SAFEST PLACE TO WAIT FOR HELP IS AWAY FROM MOVING TRAFFIC AND YOUR VEHICLE, IF POSSIBLE A SAFE DISTANCE BEHIND A CRASH BARRIER, IF ONE IS PRESENT AND CAN BE REACHED SAFELY"

Take great care when exiting the vehicle, using the doors facing away from the passing traffic, wherever possible. If, for any reason, you cannot or you believe it would be unsafe to exit the vehicle, you should remain in the vehicle with your seat belt on.

iii. Vehicle in middle/centre lane of a motorway or of a high speed dual carriageway

Please make your vehicle as conspicuous as possible by putting on the sidelights and hazard warning lights, if working.

Whilst you are best placed to identify any particular hazards where you are located, and you and your party will need to make your own decisions about safety, due to your vehicle's location we would generally advise against attempting to leave the vehicle and suggest that you and any other occupants remain in the vehicle with your seat belts on.

iv. Vehicles on outside lane of a motorway or of a high speed dual carriageway

Please make your vehicle as conspicuous as possible by putting on the sidelights and hazard warning lights, if working.

Whilst you are best placed to identify any particular hazards where you are located, and you and your party will need to make your own decisions about safety, our advice is that normally the safest place to wait for help is away from moving traffic and your vehicle, if possible behind the crash barrier on the central reservation, if one is present and can be reached safely.

Take great care when exiting the vehicle, using the doors facing away from the passing traffic, wherever possible.

If, for any reason, you cannot or you believe it would be unsafe to exit the vehicle, or there is no other place of relative safety to wait, you should remain in the vehicle with your seat belts on.

v: If the motorist has already exited the vehicle

If the caller advises that they are already out of vehicle it is generally not recommended that they return to vehicle and they should only do so if they believe it is absolutely necessary, for example to turn on hazards/sidelights or to collect/advise other passengers, and this can be done safely. The caller should be advised to take great care when entering and exiting the vehicle, using the doors facing away from the passing traffic, wherever possible

Additional Advice: All scenarios: If asked, the following could also be advised: Leave any animal in the vehicle or, if not possible to do so, keep the animal with you under proper control.

Note: See also '6. SPECIFIC GUIDELINES', in particular paragraph 'B Removal To A Place Of Safety/Awaiting A Second Resource' paragraph 'E. Breakdowns/Removals In A Live Running Lane Of A Motorway Or Middle/Outside Lane(S) Of A High Speed Dual Carriageway' re. contacting emergency services. D. Priority/Allocation of resources

D. PRIORITY/ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES

All casualty vehicles that are located on a motorway or high speed dual carriageway should be treated as a priority. The allocated Technician and the road recovery vehicle should, as a minimum, be capable of recovering/ removing the casualty vehicle from the scene (even if a repair is to be attempted).

E. RISK ASSESSMENTS

Having received the breakdown/removal details, the Technician should first of all carry out a risk assessment in order to anticipate how they will deal with the breakdown, recovery or removal of the casualty vehicle. If appropriate, thought should be given to the prior assembly of any recovery/removal equipment that is to be used, to help minimise the time spent at the scene.

On approaching the location of the casualty vehicle, the Technician should carry out a further risk assessment, considering the hazards that may be present so that any necessary actions can be taken to try to minimize the risk and to help ensure a safe working area.

The Technician should carry out a separate risk assessment for each breakdown, recovery or removal in order to help ensure the safety of all involved. The risks should continue to be assessed until the job is complete.

F. ARRIVING AT THE SCENE OF THE BREAKDOWN OR REMOVAL

Technicians should be aware that time spent working at the roadside represents risk for themselves, those they are assisting and other road users.
All activities at the roadside should, therefore, be conducted with an appropriate sense of urgency, whilst at all times maintaining safe working practices. As a general rule, then the Technician should remove it. **See also '6. SPECIFIC GUIDELINES: B. Removal To A Place Of Safety/Awaiting A Second Resource'**

i. If intending to repair the casualty vehicle

Well in advance of arrival at the casualty vehicle, the Technician should indicate to turn, as appropriate, and start to reduce speed. If attending a casualty vehicle on the hard shoulder of a motorway, the Technician should, if possible, move onto the hard shoulder and use it as a deceleration lane. The beacons on the road recovery vehicle should be switched on before stopping to the rear of the casualty vehicle. The road recovery vehicle should be parked behind the casualty vehicle in the 'fend' position unless the surrounding circumstances of the breakdown dictate otherwise. **See also 'G. Protecting The Scene Of The Breakdown: The Fend Position' below for further details of the fend position.**

Once stationary the road recovery vehicle's hazard warning lights should also be switched on, together with any other warning lights considered necessary (and permitted under the relevant current Road Vehicle Lighting Regulations). For example amber strobes may also be activated, but only if they will not inconvenience other road users. **See also '6. SPECIFIC GUIDELINES' 'H. Working With Highways Agency's Traffic Officers'**

ii. If intending to immediately recover/remove the casualty vehicle

On approaching the casualty vehicle, the Technician should turn on the road recovery vehicle's beacons, start to reduce speed and indicate, as appropriate. As the Technician passes the casualty vehicle, pull up in front of it, slowing down to a stop.

Once stationary the hazard warning lights of the road recovery vehicle should also be switched on and, if considered necessary, other warning lights (as permitted by the relevant current Road Vehicle Lighting Regulations). If the roadside recovery vehicle's warning beacons or lights are obstructed by the casualty vehicle, the use of external warning or traffic protection devices, if available, should be considered. When parked, the road recovery vehicle's front wheels should be turned to, and remain on, full left lock (away from traffic flow).

iii. Going past the location of the casualty vehicle

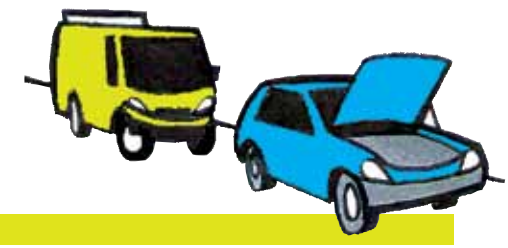
If, for any reason, the Technician drives past the casualty vehicle, they should continue on until they can safely go back and once more approach the casualty vehicle from behind. Unless carried out under the specific direction of a Police Officer or a Traffic Officer, a Technician should never attempt to reverse back along the dual carriageway or hard shoulder in order to reach the casualty vehicle.

G. PROTECTING THE SCENE OF THE BREAKDOWN: THE 'FEND' POSITION

The 'fend' position, as detailed below, has been used by the Breakdown/Recovery Industry for a number of years and has been found to be effective in helping make the road recovery vehicle more noticeable, in protecting the scene and also in helping to absorb the impact should the road recovery vehicle be struck by another vehicle from the rear.

This is the basic advised position for a road recovery vehicle. However, following a risk assessment, the Technician may decide that the location and/or other hazards or factors make its use unsuitable.

The main elements of the 'fend' position are:-



- Park the road recovery vehicle forward facing, at least 18 metres behind the casualty vehicle;
- Park parallel or in line with the carriageway or live running lane, so that the lights and rear livery of the road recovery vehicle are facing the approaching traffic. (The road recovery vehicle's livery and other markings are more clearly seen if the vehicle is kept clean);
- Park so that the offside of the road recovery vehicle is, wherever possible, closer to the flow of traffic than the offside of the casualty vehicle. This increases the safety margin when working on the offside of the casualty vehicle; and
- Once stopped, ensure that the road recovery vehicle's front wheels are turned to full left lock (away from traffic flow).

Note 1: The road recovery vehicle should not be parked in a live running lane of a motorway unless under specific direction of a Police Officer or a Traffic Officer.

Note 2: It is also important to note that the Emergency Services and Traffic Officers may adopt a different vehicle positioning for their vehicles to the one described above.

Note 3: Prior to, or upon arrival at the scene, the Technician can also consider if additional scene protection devices, such as cones, if available to the Technician, could aid in protecting the casualty vehicle. Any additional scene protection devices used must meet any relevant regulatory requirements in force at the time of use. If working on the casualty vehicle, or its recovery/removal, is likely to obstruct traffic flow or to present a significant danger, then the Technician should request the assistance of the Police or, if appropriate, Traffic Officers. See booklet entitled 'Regional Control Centre (RCC) and Police Control Room (PCR) Areas Of Responsibility' for details of RCCs and PCRs. The Technician should not attempt to start working on the casualty vehicle until any appropriate additional protection required is in place. The Incident Support Unit should be contacted on the M6 Toll Road (**see section '6. I. Working on the M6 Toll Road'**)

H. WORKING AT THE ROADSIDE

i. At all times when working outside of their vehicle, Technicians must wear a high visibility reflective safety garment [EN 471 compliant], which must be maintained in a clean condition so as not to adversely affect its reflective qualities. No other clothing or item should be worn over the safety garment unless it has been suitably marked with approved reflective bands of the same type and size as the standard reflective garment.

ii. Upon arrival at the scene of the breakdown/removal, wherever possible, the Technician should exit the road recovery vehicle from the door on the **safe side** of their vehicle.

iii. The Technician should reassure the motorist of the casualty vehicle of his/her identity by addressing them by name (if known). The Technician must also show their ID card, if requested.

iv. If they are not already waiting in a place of safety, the Technician should carry out a **risk assessment** and give advice to the occupants of the casualty vehicle on how best to exit the vehicle and on where to stand to help ensure their own safety.

v. Normally the occupants of the casualty vehicle should be advised to keep away from the casualty vehicle, well back on the verge or behind a crash barrier, if available. If the occupants are unwilling or unable to exit the casualty vehicle they should be advised to wear seatbelts at all times. **See also 'Section 4. i. Where The Motorist's Assistance Is Required To Help With The Repair/ Removal Of The Casualty Vehicle'.**

vi. Technicians should be aware that while their road recovery vehicle and the casualty vehicle are stationary on a motorway or a high speed dual carriageway, they constitute a hazard, no matter what steps have been taken to reduce risk.

vii. Technicians should be aware that time spent working at the roadside represents risk for themselves, those they are assisting and other road users. All activities at the roadside should, therefore, be conducted with an appropriate sense of urgency, whilst at all times maintaining safe working practices. As a general rule, if it seems likely that it will be significantly quicker to repair the casualty vehicle than to remove it, then the Technician should repair it. Alternatively, if it appears likely to be significantly quicker to remove the casualty vehicle than to repair it, then the Technician should remove it.

viii. In certain circumstances it may be necessary for the occupants of the casualty vehicle to transfer to the road recovery vehicle. However, it is generally recommended that the time spent in the road recovery vehicle, prior to departure from the scene, be kept to a minimum. The occupants should be advised that seatbelts, if available, should be worn at all times and children should not be left unattended in the road recovery vehicle.

Note: Technicians should recognise that there is generally an increased level of risk to safety when working on elevated sections of motorways, dual carriageways and any areas where there is no hard shoulder or verge available.

ix. It is normally preferable for the casualty vehicle to be parked as close to the nearside as possible. If necessary, and safe to do so, the casualty vehicle should be moved further to the left before the Technician commences work on it.

x. It is recognised that the most dangerous zones at the scene of a breakdown, recovery or removal are generally:

a. alongside the sides of the vehicles which are nearest to the flow of traffic and

b. the area between any two vehicles involved, which is nicknamed the 'sandwich position'

Wherever possible, the Technician should avoid or minimize the time spent working in these areas (for example when replacing an offside wheel; winching or attaching recovery/removal equipment).

xi. Before moving away from the fend position, where a Technician has to recover or remove a casualty vehicle, the Technician should consider whether or not it is appropriate to fit any other available equipment/device to the casualty vehicle (for example a lighting board, if required). Only then, having waited for a safe gap in traffic, should the road recovery vehicle be driven from the fend position, into a position to allow the recovery or removal of the casualty vehicle. Any scene protection device(s) used should be left in place behind the casualty vehicle until immediately before the recovery or removal is about to take place.

xii. If the Technician, the motorist and any passengers have to wait at the location for further assistance to arrive, then, wherever possible, they should avoid waiting inside the vehicles. In particular they should avoid waiting in the road recovery vehicle where this is providing protection to the scene. All persons present should, where possible, wait at a safe location away from the hard shoulder or verge behind a crash barrier, if available. If the casualty vehicle's occupants are unwilling or unable to exit the casualty vehicle they should be advised to wear seatbelts at all times.

I. WHERE THE MOTORIST IS REQUIRED TO ASSIST IN THE REPAIR/REMOVAL OF THE CASUALTY VEHICLE

There will be some occasions when the motorist may be required to assist the Technician in the repair or removal of the casualty vehicle. For example, the motorist's assistance may be required to help with fault analysis e.g. by turning on the ignition, operating the clutch or brake pedals, lights etc.

If it appears that the motorist's assistance will be required, the Technician should carry out a risk assessment on the type of assistance that is required and decide if that assistance can be provided in reasonable safety. If not, an alternative method of dealing with the incident should be chosen. The Technician can provide a high visibility reflective safety garment, if available, to be worn by the motorist whilst providing assistance to the Technician.

If the motorist has to re-enter the casualty vehicle to provide assistance then, wherever possible, this should be via the door on the safe side of the vehicle.

If, however, the door nearest to the traffic flow has to be used, the Technician should wait with the motorist at the rear of the vehicle. Then, after checking that the passing traffic appears to allow safe access, the Technician should keep a look out for, and advise the motorist of, traffic whilst the motorist moves down the side of and re-enters the casualty vehicle.

Note: Motorists and/or their passengers may wish to observe the Technician at work. This should be politely discouraged and the motorist and/or passengers advised to return to or remain in the place of safety that has already been identified.

J. "INCIDENT" MANAGEMENT

Recovery Incident Manager ("Bronze Commander")
If a relevant Authority has decided that an incident is to be treated as a serious incident, the Authority may request the attendance of a Recovery Incident Manager. The Recovery Incident Manager will act in the role of Bronze Commander for the vehicle recovery aspects of the incident. This individual should be a suitably experienced/qualified person who is responsible for working in conjunction with their equivalent Bronze Commanders from the Emergency Services, to help deliver a safe, effective and rapid conclusion to the incident.

K. RECOVERY BACK ONTO THE HARD SHOULDER OR VERGE

Where the casualty vehicle is located beyond the hard shoulder or verge e.g. it has ended up down an embankment in a field, the Technician must first of all ensure that permission to access the vehicle is obtained from the occupier of the land.

The assistance of the Police or the Highways Agency may be required to help with this. If either the Police or Traffic Officers are present, the Technician should discuss and liaise with them, as to how best to recover the casualty vehicle to a place where it can be safely and efficiently removed from the scene.

The Technician, together with the Police or the Traffic Officers present, should consider whether to carry out the recovery of the casualty vehicle when the volume of traffic on the motorway or dual carriageway is reduced i.e. outside peak travelling times. This will help ensure that other road users are inconvenienced as little as possible should the closure of a live running lane be required to facilitate the recovery/removal of the casualty vehicle.

The Technician should also consider using local access roads/tracks, if these are available and suitable for the road recovery vehicle to use, to recover the casualty vehicle rather than gaining access from the hard shoulder or verge. The views and permission of any landowner must be obtained if such alternative means of recovering the casualty vehicles are considered suitable.

Before carrying out the recovery process the Technician must carry out a risk assessment to determine the most appropriate method of recovering the casualty vehicle. Consideration should be given to the location of the casualty vehicle and the nature of the environment, how best to gain access to it, the type of recovery equipment to be used and any additional assistance that may be required etc.

At all times during the recovery process the Technician should be aware of the risks involved and take appropriate steps to help protect the safety of all those present. Where applicable the assistance of the Police or the Highways Agency should be requested to help with managing the traffic in order to facilitate the recovery and subsequent removal of the casualty vehicle.

L. REMOVAL FROM THE HARD SHOULDER OR VERGE

Before removing a casualty vehicle from the hard shoulder or verge, the Technician must, where appropriate, ensure that the casualty vehicle is displaying any required lights in order to provide other road users with an indication of the intended movement of the vehicle i.e. visible indicators, stop and side lights. This can be achieved by using a suitably fitted trailer lighting board on the rear of the casualty vehicle.

M. LEAVING THE SCENE OF THE BREAKDOWN OR REMOVAL

i. If the casualty vehicle has been repaired, the motorist should be advised of the following recommended procedures for rejoining the main carriageway:-

a. From the Hard Shoulder of a Motorway - Use the hard shoulder as an acceleration lane to build up speed, indicate and, when there a safe gap in traffic, rejoin the main carriageway. The motorist should also be advised to keep their eyes open for possible debris and/or stationary vehicles on the hard shoulder;

b. From the Verge or layby of a Dual Carriageway - Indicate their intention to rejoin the main carriageway and, once there is a safe gap in the traffic, move away from the verge or layby, increasing to an appropriate speed once they have rejoined the carriageway.

ii. If the casualty vehicle is to be removed using either a tow strap or rigid tow pole

a. Where possible the motorist and any passengers should be advised to remain in a safe location until all removal equipment has been fitted;

b. The Technician should give the motorist information on what is involved in towing and what action the motorist may be required to take or not to take. The Technician should not insist in towing the motorist if the motorist has indicated that they are not happy to be towed.

c. Only when the casualty vehicle is ready to be towed should the Technician advise the motorist to re- enter the casualty vehicle.

iii. If the casualty vehicle is to be recovered on the road recovery vehicle

Where possible the motorist and any passengers should be advised to remain in a safe location until the casualty vehicle is ready to go and then **they should transfer to the road recovery vehicle.**

iv. Removal of equipment etc

Before leaving the scene, the Technician should check to see that all tools, equipment, scene protection devices, etc. used have been retrieved and are stored appropriately in the road recovery vehicle.

v. When removing the casualty vehicle from the scene the Technician should adopt the following procedures for rejoining the main carriageway:-

a. From the Hard Shoulder of a Motorway:

The Technician should use the hard shoulder as an acceleration lane to build up speed, with the beacons on their road recovery vehicle illuminated. The Technician should check the road recovery vehicle's mirrors and blind spot before indicating and, when there is a safe gap in traffic, rejoining the main carriageway. The Technician should keep their eyes open for possible debris and/or stationary vehicles on the hard shoulder.

b. From the Verge or layby of a Dual Carriageway:

The Technician should have the beacons on their road recovery vehicle illuminated and indicate their intention to rejoin the main carriageway. Once an adequate gap in the traffic allows the Technician to do so safely, the Technician should move away from the verge or layby, increasing to an appropriate speed once they have rejoined the carriageway.

c. In any situation where the Technician considers that the speed and/or density of passing traffic means there is insufficient time or space to safely rejoin the carriageway, the Technician should contact the appropriate RCC or PCR and request assistance in the provision of either a rolling road block or a temporary lane one closure.

d. Upon rejoining the carriageway once or, as appropriate, if the speed of the road recovery vehicle is consistent with that of the rest of the traffic on the relevant carriageway, the vehicle's beacons should normally be switched off.

N. ROAD TRAFFIC COLLISIONS

i. Clearance of debris

a. At nearly every accident scene debris of some description will be present. The Technician should liaise with those in charge at the scene to help ensure that any debris is adequately dealt with in accordance with any relevant legal and safety requirements.

b. When dealing with major incidents, where large amounts of debris may be present, the Technician should liaise with any relevant incident manager(s) in relation to the clearance of debris (including the identification, or recovery, of anything which is to be treated as load). The Technician may be responsible for removing some or all of the load as part of the vehicle recovery process.

c. In serious accidents, debris may be important evidence and the Police may require that it not be disturbed. Therefore the Technician should clarify with the Police what actions they can take regarding any debris and obtain prior authorisation from the Police before acting.

ii. Retention of vehicles for forensic examination

a. As with point 1.c above, where the scene of a road traffic accident is being controlled by the Police, the Road Recovery Operator should clarify with the Police which vehicles are required to be retained by the Police for forensic examination. The Road Recovery Operator should ensure that any such vehicles are only handled by a suitably experienced Technician, namely one who has an understanding of, or a qualification in, the preservation of evidence (such as module VR19).

b. Any vehicles which are required to be retained by the Police should be handled in accordance with any instructions issued by the Police at the scene. For example, when deciding on the method of recovery or removal of any vehicle, the Technician should consult with the appropriate authorities at the scene (such as Collision Investigation Officer or Scene Manager) and try to agree on the most appropriate method of recovery/ removal so as to avoid or minimise the destruction or disturbance of any evidence. With LGV's this may involve a 'full lift' onto a commercial low loader, however the likely time implications of carrying out this complex operation should be explained to the relevant authorities at the scene.

iii. Spillages

a. Where fire or hazardous spillages occur, the Technician should normally contact the emergency services immediately and await their arrival before taking further action. **See also '6. Specific Guidelines J. Hazardous substances or dangerous goods.'**

b. If a Technician attends a road traffic accident where there has been spillage, the Technician should, in the interests of health and safety, try to ensure that any spillages are dealt with without delay.

c. Particular attention should be paid to any spillages that may affect local watercourses through drains or ditches etc. The Technician should not assume that liquids are harmless when spilled simply because they are harmless in their normal use e.g. milk is a serious contaminant to watercourses.

d. Spillages should be dealt with promptly using spill kits and other equipment on the Road Recovery vehicle, where these are available and appropriate for the spillage concerned. If the Technician is in any doubt as to their ability to deal with any spillages or as to the nature of the substances involved, then they should contact the Road Recovery Operator for the further instruction. The Road Recovery Operator should, if necessary, seek assistance from the Environment Agency, the Highways Agency or the appropriate Highway Authority as additional or specialised spillage containment equipment may be required.

5. GENERAL GUIDELINES WHEN ATTENDING LARGE GOODS VEHICLES

In addition to considering the general guidelines detailed at Section 4 above, when Technicians are attending Large Goods Vehicles (LGV's), they should also consider the following guidelines.

A. REPLACEMENT OF WHEELS/TYRES

Where a Technician needs to work on an LGV's offside wheel or tyre, it is very likely that a lane closure would be required in order to provide the Technician with a safe working area.

If the Technician believes that a lane closure is necessary, the Technician should contact the relevant RCC or PCR, as appropriate, and request that they attend to provide protection, or arrange that protection be provided. The Technician should not then attempt to start working on the casualty vehicle until the lane closure is in place.

Please note that such a closure may result in severe traffic congestion, particularly during peak hour traffic flows, and therefore the lane closure may be delayed until such time as traffic flows are lower.

The Technician may consider, if this is practicable and can be achieved safely, that the casualty vehicle should be moved or removed off the motorway or dual carriageway to a place of safety in order to carry out the wheel or tyre change.

B. OVERTURNED LGVS ON BRIDGES

Some large bridges, such as the Thelwall Viaduct, Barton High Level Bridge, Avonmouth Bridge and the Rakewood Viaduct, are, due to their height, prone to high winds. Therefore LGV's travelling on such bridges are more at risk of being blown over during high winds/severe gales.

If an overturned LGV requires righting on such a bridge, careful consideration needs to be given to the positioning of the heavy recovery vehicles/cranes. The outriggers from the recovery vehicles could, dependent on positioning, put a point load onto the bridge deck, which it may not necessarily be designed or able to carry. Ensuring that, wherever possible, the recovery vehicle is placed above the main structural support elements of the bridge can help mitigate the risk of damage to the bridge.

It may not, however, be readily apparent when on the bridge where the main structural support elements are as, for example, the vertical support columns are unlikely to be visible. If necessary, the Technician may need to communicate with the RCC or PCR and ask them to advise, possibly by contact with the bridge engineer, where the heavy recovery vehicles/cranes should be positioned in order to carry out the recovery process.

C. LOAD CONTINUATION

Load continuation is dependent upon a number of issues, for example the type of load, its condition and its location. The Technician needs to establish, early on, whether load continuation needs to be arranged. This should, where practical, be established in conjunction with the haulier or the owner of the vehicle/load, or other interested body.

Some of the issues regarding the load that need to be considered include:-

- is it time sensitive?
- is it perishable?
- is it livestock?
- is it dangerous to health? (for example is a HazChem sign displayed or are other dangerous substances or items being transported etc)
- is it valuable?

If the answer to any of these questions is yes, then it is likely that the haulier or owner of the vehicle/load will want load continuation measures to be arranged. The haulier or the owner of the vehicle/load may be able to provide a 'like for like' vehicle. Where load continuation is required, arrangements should, where practicable, be made with the haulier or owner, or other relevant interested party, for the Technician to be met at or near the scene or at an appropriate point of safety for the transfer of the load to the load continuation vehicle. Payment for, and other terms of, any load continuation is a matter of agreement between those involved.

6. SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

A. DISABLED AND VULNERABLE CUSTOMERS

Disabled Customers

Disability Discrimination Act 1995: As suppliers of services, Road Recovery Operators are under a duty not to discriminate against customers who have a disability. Road Recovery Operators may also need to adjust their services to help such customers to access assistance.

Whilst it is not possible to summarise the law in this area in these Guidelines, it is important to recognise these duties here.

Further guidance can be obtained from the Equal Opportunities and Human Rights Commission website at www.equalityhumanrights.com – see in particular the two Codes of Practice (1) "Code of Practice on Rights of Access: services to the public, public authority functions, private clubs and premises" (known as the Part 3 Code), which covers duties relating to transport infrastructure services (for example selling and accessing breakdown services), and (2) "Code of Practice on Provision and Use of Transport Vehicles" (supplementary to the Part 3 Code), which covers duties in relation to the provision and use of transport vehicles.

Useful additional guidance has been produced for Breakdown Recovery Operators. This can also be found on the Equal Opportunities and Human Rights Commission website and is titled 'Avoiding Disability Discrimination in Transport: A Practical Guide for Breakdown Recovery Operators'.

The law sets out what is meant by 'disabled' in this context. The term is much wider than simply those with mobility problems and includes, for example, those who are deaf or hard of hearing, blind or partially sighted, or who have diabetes, mental health problems, HIV or cancer. Information on 'Who has rights under the Act' is given in Chapter 2 of the Code of Practice referred to at (1) above.

In order to help recognise, and if necessary, forewarn the Technician of any additional assistance that may be required prior to or upon attendance at the scene, the minimum information requested when a call for assistance is received should include asking the motorist if there is anyone in their party who is disabled and who may require special arrangements. This should also enable the operator to get any additional arrangements required underway at an early stage. For example it may be clear that onward transport will be needed and that, for example, wheelchair accessible transport is required.

If there is insufficient space at the roadside to safely transfer the disabled person to the road recovery vehicle, or to any alternative transport provided, the assistance of the Traffic Officers or the Police could be requested to cordon off part of the road while the transfer is being made. Safety is the most important consideration. If it is considered too dangerous to try to transfer a disabled motorist or passenger at the roadside then, if it appears be safer and with the consent of the disabled person, the road recovery vehicle (provided properly equipped) could flat tow or transport the casualty vehicle with the disabled person inside to the nearest place where it is safe to do the transfer.

If during the course of the breakdown, recovery or removal, the disabled person requires medical attention, then the Ambulance Service should be summoned to assist.

See also 'Avoiding Disability Discrimination in Transport: A Practical Guide for Breakdown Recovery Operators' for further guidance including, for example, dealing with assistance dogs, carrying mobility aids, providing alternative transport and what to consider when deciding whether to treat assistance requests from customers with a disability as a priority.

Vulnerable Customers

A 'vulnerable' person is a person subject to enhanced or additional risks to the norm. Personal characteristics such as age and gender do not necessarily make a person vulnerable, every case must be judged on the circumstances at hand. For example, a person may be vulnerable as their location on the hard shoulder is particularly isolated/dangerous or they are at particular risk of exposure/ill health due to extreme weather conditions.

Upon receiving a call for assistance, where the Road Recovery Operator considers, from the information provided, that the motorist or anyone in their party is 'vulnerable', it should be ascertained if it is appropriate for them to move to a safer location to await assistance. If this is possible, then details of this new location should be noted on the breakdown record. If any person remains vulnerable, the Road Recovery Operator should consider if the breakdown needs to be given a 'priority' status and, if so, dispatch a Technician to the scene without avoidable delay.

The Road Recovery Operator should then inform the relevant RCC or, if applicable, PCR that it is attending a vulnerable person. Where considered necessary, the Road Recovery Operator should also find out if the RCC/PCR are able to provide a presence in the meantime. For example, a Traffic or Police Officer may be dispatched to the scene if one is readily available – see the booklet entitled 'Regional Control Centre (RCC) and Police Control (PCR) Areas Of Responsibility' for details of the RCC and PCR areas of responsibility.

The information provided by the Road Recovery Operator to the RCC or PCR should include, as a minimum, the information held regarding:-

- vehicle type and description
- location of vehicle
- location and numbers of driver and passengers
- contact name and, if available, telephone number for the driver and/or the breakdown/recovery call centre
- estimated time of arrival of the breakdown/recovery Technician

Should an RCC or PCR receive a telephone call from a Road Recovery Operator advising that a vulnerable person has requested assistance, they should agree with the Road Recovery Operator how best to help provide protection for them. If a Traffic Officer or Police Officer vehicle is to be dispatched to the scene, then the RCC or PCR should inform the Road Recovery Operator of its estimated time of arrival.

B. REMOVAL TO A PLACE OF SAFETY/AWAITING A SECOND RESOURCE

The Technician

If, upon arrival at the casualty vehicle, the Technician decides that the location is too dangerous to carry out a repair and the Technician is not able to safely remove the vehicle themselves, the Technician should immediately contact the Road Recovery Operator and ask for a suitable second resource to attend, as soon as possible, to move the casualty vehicle.

The Technician should then conduct a risk assessment to decide if it is safe for them, and the motorist plus any passengers, to remain at the scene until the second resource arrives.

If it is considered safe for the casualty vehicle's occupants to stay at the scene, or the Technician is unable to safely move them, the Technician should inform the Road Recovery Operator of this. The Technician should advise all those present to, where possible, wait a safe distance away from the casualty vehicle, behind a crash barrier, if one is present and can be reached safely.. The Technician should have a means of obtaining advice on the progress of the second resource, so this can be checked if necessary.

If the Technician considers it too dangerous to remain at the scene, and it is possible to safely move the occupant(s) of the casualty vehicle, then the Technician should seek to move the vehicle's occupants to a place of safety without delay.

If the Technician considers that the location is unsafe but can't safely move all the occupants of the casualty vehicle, the Technician should let the Road Recovery Operator know this and, if it is believed that further assistance is required to protect the scene, the relevant RCC or, if appropriate, PCR should be contacted and asked to provide assistance.

The Technician should contact the Road Recovery Operator, informing them that the casualty vehicle's occupant(s) are being removed to a place of safety and requesting that the relevant RCC or, if appropriate, PCR be informed that the casualty vehicle is being left unattended at the scene until the second resource arrives.

Prior to leaving the casualty vehicle unattended, the Technician should ensure that, where possible, it is made secure and a notice is placed prominently inside the vehicle advising that the vehicle's occupant(s) have been moved to a place of safety and that a second resource is on its way to remove the vehicle.

As soon as the Technician reaches the chosen place of safety, they should inform the Road Recovery Operator of the new location of the casualty vehicle's occupant(s).

Road Recovery Operator

Upon notification from the Technician that this is required, the Road Recovery Operator should arrange for a suitable second resource to attend as soon as possible, taking into account the type of casualty vehicle to be removed, the nature and location of the breakdown and the number of people involved.

If the Technician advises that the casualty vehicle's occupant(s) are being taken to a place of safety and that the casualty vehicle will be left unattended, the Road Recovery Operator should inform the appropriate RCC or PCR of the situation. Details to be provided should include the location and description of the unattended casualty vehicle plus the estimated time of arrival of the second resource.

Once the Technician has advised any new location of the casualty vehicle occupant(s), the Road Recovery Operator should pass this information to the second resource that is attending.

C. BREAKDOWNS/REMOVALS IN ROADWORKS

A casualty vehicle may be located within roadworks on a motorway or high-speed dual carriageway, behind traffic management devices (normally cones), where there is no free recovery service available. The breakdown/removal should be treated as a priority. At all times the Technician must firstly ensure their own safety and then the safety of the occupants of the casualty vehicle. Under no circumstances should the Technician stop in a live running lane.

Prior to Entering an Area of Roadworks

Based upon the information provided, the Technician should carry out a risk assessment to ascertain how the incident should be approached.

If the Technician considers that the location and/or the nature of the incident to be too dangerous to attempt either a repair or removal without assistance, then they should inform the Road Recovery Operator accordingly. The Road Recovery Operator should then request assistance in protecting the scene from the RCC or PCR, as appropriate.

The Technician should make sure they have identified, prior to entry into the roadworks, the location of any site access and exit points that can be used to deal with the relevant casualty vehicle. If in doubt as to the exact location of the casualty vehicle or any site access or exit point, the Technician should drive past the roadworks in order to establish the appropriate place to enter the coned off area.

Access to an area of roadworks should only be made using designated signed access points, if these are present. At no time should an opening be created by moving any traffic cones or other traffic management devices. When navigating roadworks, particular care should be taken in areas where the traffic cones have been roped together to create a safety zone.

Entry into an Area of Roadworks

The Technician should manoeuvre the road recovery vehicle into the correct lane and, approximately 200 metres prior to the relevant access point, turn on the vehicle's flashing beacons and start indicating their intention to turn.

The Technician should check that any vehicles behind are at a safe distance and, approximately 100 metres prior to the access point, check that it is clear for entry and gradually slow down to a speed of 10mph.

If the entry to the access point is blocked, the Technician should not attempt to enter the roadworks and must continue on the main carriageway. Under no circumstances should the Technician stop in a live running lane.

Technicians should be aware that there may be overhead cables or other items creating hazards within an area of roadworks and, when entering an area of roadworks, should look out for and comply with any relevant overhead or other safety signage instructions.

Driving within an Area of Roadworks

The maximum speed limit within an area of roadworks is 10mph and seatbelts must be worn at all times. The Technician should exercise extreme caution at all times when driving within an area of roadworks, as there may be maintenance vehicles, plant and site operatives moving around as well as excavations or obstructions and vehicles present.

The Technician should make reasonable efforts to notify their intended activities to a representative of any plant or site operatives who are present within the immediate area of the casualty vehicle, or who are on the access or exit route to the casualty vehicle. The representative's guidance and/or assistance should, if considered necessary, be requested in accessing the casualty vehicle and/or leaving the area.

Working on Casualty Vehicles within an Area of Roadworks

Wherever possible Technicians should only access and work on casualty vehicles from the safe side. Walking or working in between the casualty vehicle and live running lanes should be avoided wherever possible.

Where the casualty vehicle cannot be fixed and the Technician can remove it, the Technician may need to move the road recovery vehicle in order to position it in front of the casualty vehicle. If the Technician cannot safely pass the casualty vehicle within the roadworks area, the Technician will need to reverse within the coned off area until just beyond the nearest access point through which the Technician can then, when safe to do so, drive out forward onto the carriageway. The Technician will then have to re-enter the coned off area at an access point in front of the casualty vehicle and again reverse very carefully in order to park in front of it. Such a manoeuvre must be carried with extreme caution, taking into account the speed and density of the any traffic in the relevant live running lanes.

Again if plant or site operatives are present within the immediate area of the casualty vehicle, or on the access or exit route to the casualty vehicle, the Technician should make reasonable efforts to inform a representative of such operative(s) of their intentions. Their guidance and/or assistance should, if considered necessary, be requested in accessing the casualty vehicle and/or leaving the area.

Under no circumstances should the Technician move any traffic cones or any other traffic management devices in order to access the area, work on a casualty vehicle, help protect the scene or exit the area.

Technicians should look out for any overhead cables that may be present within an area of roadworks and comply with any overhead safety signage instructions.

Exiting from an Area of Roadworks

Technicians should exit an area of roadworks using any designated signed exit points, if present. At no time should a Technician create an exit by moving any traffic cones or other traffic management devices.

When leaving an area of roadworks, the Technician must first indicate their intention to rejoin the carriageway, waiting for a safe opportunity to do so. If the area of roadworks is on a motorway and a hard shoulder is available, the Technician should use the hard shoulder as an acceleration lane to build up speed, indicate and, when there a safe gap in traffic, rejoin the main carriageway.

Upon rejoining the carriageway once or, if appropriate, if the speed of the road recovery vehicle is consistent with that of the rest of the traffic on the relevant carriageway, the vehicle's beacons should normally be switched off.

In those cases where the casualty vehicle has been repaired, the Technician should advise the driver of the casualty vehicle of the correct procedure for rejoining the carriageway (**see Section 4. M. Leaving The Scene Of The Breakdown Or Removal**)

D. BREAKDOWNS/REMOVALS IN 'FREE RECOVERY' AREAS

Some areas of roadworks, and other special sites, make a 'Free Recovery' service available. This service is provided by an appointed Recovery Contractor working on behalf of the maintenance contractor. Any vehicle that breaks down in these areas will be removed by the Recovery Contractor to a designated place of safety. In the unlikely event that a Technician arrives at a casualty vehicle in a 'free recovery area' before the Recovery Contractor has attended and removed it, the Technician must not attempt to stop and provide assistance. The Technician should continue their journey and only attend the casualty vehicle when the relevant Recovery Contractor has moved it to a place of safety.

E. BREAKDOWNS/REMOVALS IN A LIVE RUNNING LANE OF A MOTORWAY OR MIDDLE/OUTSIDE LANE(S) OF A HIGH SPEED DUAL CARRIAGEWAY

Once made aware that a casualty vehicle is in such a lane, the Road Recovery Operator must treat these breakdowns or removals as an Emergency.

Given the dangerous location of these breakdowns, the Road Recovery Operator, should, without undue delay, try to ascertain an accurate description and location of the casualty vehicle, taking note of which live running lane the vehicle is in.

Where three-way calling is available, the Road Recovery Operator should, during the relevant call, contact the police and request that the police deal directly with the call for assistance. In such circumstances the Road Recovery Operator should monitor the call, and, if possible, capture any relevant location details provided to the police.

If three-way calling is not available, or not used for any reason, the Road Recovery Operator should ascertain the location of the occupant(s) of the casualty vehicle. For example, are they still inside the vehicle or, if out of the vehicle, exactly where are they? The motorist should then be advised to ring off and to call 999 immediately, requesting assistance from the Police. The Road Recovery Operator should also then immediately contact the appropriate RCC or PCR and advise that assistance is required to help protect the scene and, if appropriate, to recover the vehicle to a place of safety.

The RCC or the PCR should be given a description of the casualty vehicle and its location, including details of the live running lane it is on and any other relevant information known regarding its position. The RCC or PCR should also be given information held as to the location of the casualty vehicle's occupant(s). The RCC or the PCR may wish to activate matrix signs and/or variable message signs accordingly.

The Road Recovery Operator should not dispatch a Technician to the casualty vehicle, and a Technician should not attend, until it has been confirmed that the Traffic Officers or Police are attending and either a safe working area has been created or, if applicable, the casualty vehicle has been moved to a place of safety.

Should a Technician come across a casualty vehicle in a live running lane of a motorway or the outside lane(s) of a high speed dual carriageway, they should not attempt to stop and provide assistance. The Technician should instead call 999 at the earliest opportunity and provide the details of the casualty vehicle and its location.

In those cases where the Road Recovery Operator has been requested by the Highways Agency, Police or Local Authority to attend the scene and remove a casualty vehicle that is blocking a live running lane, then the Technician should only attend the scene and commence the recovery/removal process once the necessary measures have been put in place to protect the casualty vehicle and to provide a safe working area.

Once the scene has been protected, the Technician should move the road recovery vehicle into position to recover/remove the casualty vehicle and should do so without delay.

The Technician must liaise with those in charge at the scene and advise them of the Technician's proposed method of recovery/removal.

F. WORKING ON BRIDGES, VIADUCTS AND IN TUNNELS

Bridges

Technicians should take particular care when attending breakdowns or removals on bridges or viaducts, as these locations may be exposed and subject to particularly high winds/adverse weather conditions. If necessary the casualty vehicle should be removed from the bridge to a place of safety before working on it.

On some bridges e.g. the Avonmouth Bridge on the M4, the hard shoulder is narrower than usual. When a Technician carries out a risk assessment in relation to attendance on a casualty vehicle located on a narrow hard shoulder, they should consider the impact of the width of the hard shoulder on the working area and consider if the attendance of the Traffic Officers or, if applicable, the police is required to help protect the scene. If contacted, the RCC or PCR may consider activating available variable message signs to show a suitable speed restriction or lane closure on the motorway in that area.

Tunnels

Where allowed to attend a breakdown or removal in a tunnel (some tunnels, e.g. Dartford Tunnel, are subject to access restrictions), Technicians should take particular care. The working environment within a tunnel (for example due to noise, air pollution, temperature and lighting conditions) can potentially present an increased hazard to health.

It is recommended that the time spent working within a tunnel be kept to a minimum. Therefore, where possible the casualty vehicle should be removed from the tunnel to a place of safety before working on the vehicle.

G. WORKING WITHIN AREAS OF ACTIVE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

The Highways Agency has now introduced the use of the hard shoulder as a running lane, initially as part of the M42 Active Traffic Management project, as and when required to help relieve traffic congestion. Under these arrangements Emergency Refuge Areas ('ERA' s) have been set up to provide places of relative safety for broken down vehicles.

In order to help ensure the safety of the public and Technicians when exiting from an ERA back onto the motorway, the following working procedure has been agreed:-

i. Exiting an Emergency Refuge Area

a. If the hard shoulder is not being used as a live running lane then the Technician can exit the ERA as normal, using the hard shoulder to accelerate to an appropriate speed consistent with the traffic on the carriageway before rejoining the motorway.

b. If the hard shoulder is being used as a live running lane and the Technician is reasonably satisfied that they can exit the ERA safely without assistance, then the Technician should contact the RCC, using the Emergency Telephone located within the ERA, and notify the RCC of the Technician's intention to leave the ERA without assistance. The RCC will be aware of the presence of the Technician and the casualty vehicle in the ERA via the CCTV cameras that are located on the motorway. In those cases where the casualty vehicle has been repaired, the Technician should advise the driver of the casualty vehicle of the correct procedure for rejoining the carriageway (**See also 'Section 4. M. Leaving The Scene Of The Breakdown Or Removal**'

c. If, however, the hard shoulder is being used as a live running lane and the Technician considers that they require assistance to exit the ERA, for example this will normally be required when towing a casualty vehicle or if speed and/or density of passing traffic is high, then the Technician should contact the RCC, using the Emergency Telephone located within the ERA, and request assistance

ii. RCC and Traffic Officer Assistance

The RCC and the Traffic Officers will provide one or more of the following types of assistance:-

a. If use of the hard shoulder as a running lane is due to finish soon, the Technician will be asked to wait within the ERA until the relevant part of the hard shoulder is closed to traffic. The RCC will advise the Technician how long this wait is likely to be. The Technician should confirm with the RCC that the relevant part of the hard shoulder has been closed. Once the RCC has confirmed closure, the Technician should make sure that traffic has cleared from the hard shoulder (and, if the gantry beyond the ERA is visible, that a red X has appeared on the gantry over the hard shoulder) before attempting to leave the ERA.

   Note: This is considered to be the safest option should the Technician have anyconcerns over their ability (or that of the customer) to safely exit the ERA.

b. If the Technician cannot wait until the hard shoulder is closed or if the road recovery vehicle may have difficulty in accelerating quickly out of the ERA (for example due to towing or load), the Technician should advise the RCC of this and can request that the RCC send a Traffic Officer to assist. The Traffic Officer, if they attend, will use their vehicle to provide a short rolling road block on the hard shoulder in order to facilitate the Technician's safe exit from the ERA. The RCC will also set the signs and signals on the gantries approaching the ERA to advise other drivers that a vehicle is leaving the ERA. The Technician should position their vehicle in readiness to leave the ERA and should only exit the ERA when they can see both that the Traffic Officer's vehicle is approaching and that the hard shoulder is clear in front of that vehicle.

c. If the RCC cannot arrange for a Traffic Officer to provide a short rolling road block when requested, they may, instead, set a mandatory 30mph speed limit on all lanes on the motorway (including the hard shoulder). They can also set the signs on the gantries approaching the ERA to advise other drivers that a vehicle is leaving the ERA.

d. Where the hard shoulder is not scheduled to close as a running lane but the Technician requires more time or space to safely exit the ERA, the RCC may, if requested, be prepared to introduce a local closure of the hard shoulder approaching the ERA. Once the Technician has been told by the RCC that the hard shoulder will be closed, the Technician should position their vehicle in readiness to leave the ERA. The Technician should make sure that traffic has cleared from the hard shoulder (and, if the gantry beyond the ERA is visible, ensure that a red X has appeared on the gantry over the hard shoulder) before attempting to leave the ERA.

e. If the above options are not thought by the RCC to be adequate to assist the Technician in safely exiting from the ERA onto the hard shoulder when it is being used as a running lane, the RCC may choose to close the hard shoulder for the whole of the area in which the ERA is located. Once the Technician has been told by the RCC that the hard shoulder will be closed, the Technician should position their vehicle in readiness to leave the ERA. The Technician should make sure that traffic has cleared from the hard shoulder and, if the gantry beyond the ERA is visible, ensure that a red X has appeared on the gantry over the hard shoulder before attempting to leave the ERA.

   Note: Due to its possible effect on other road users, this option is only likely to be used by the RCC when all the other options are considered unsuitable.

H. WORKING WITH HIGHWAYS AGENCY'S TRAFFIC OFFICERS

Following the introduction of the RCC's/Traffic Officers, a protocol was agreed between the Highways Agency and the breakdown and recovery industry on the positioning of operational vehicles when dealing with incidents on the Highway's Agency network where Traffic Officers are in attendance.

The Traffic Officers will follow their own established procedures and position their vehicle behind the broken down vehicle with the appropriate warning lights activated and signs deployed to help protect the scene. This means that if a Technician arrives at the scene of an incident which is also being attended by Traffic Officers the Technician should position the road recovery vehicle in front of the casualty vehicle.

The Traffic Officer(s) and the Technician should liaise to establish whether the casualty vehicle is to be recovered from the motorway or repaired in situ.

As a general rule, if it is quicker to repair the casualty vehicle than to remove it, the Technician should repair it. However, if it is considered quicker to remove the casualty vehicle than to repair it, then the Technician should remove it.

Once the Technician has begun the repair or recovery process, the Traffic Officer(s) should remain, thereby offering protection until the Technician and the casualty vehicle leave the scene.

If, during the course of a vehicle repair or recovery, the Traffic Officer receives an instruction to deploy to another incident, the Traffic Officer should advise the Technician and request that the casualty vehicle be recovered, or the repair completed, as soon as possible.

Only in exceptional circumstances, where the other incident is considered by the RCC to take priority and the Traffic Officer(s) are satisfied that the Technician, the driver of the casualty vehicle and other road users will not be exposed to an unacceptable level of risk, should the Traffic Officer(s) leave the scene before completion of the relevant repair or, as applicable, recovery. Otherwise only when the Technician and the casualty vehicle have left the scene should the Traffic Officer(s) retrieve any signs/cones and leave to attend the next deployment.

I. WORKING ON THE M6 TOLL ROAD

A protocol has been agreed between Midland Expressway Limited (the M6 Toll Road operator) and the breakdown and recovery industry regarding the attendance by Technicians at the scene of breakdowns, recoveries or removals on the M6 Toll Road, including those located near or within the Toll Plazas. If a Road Recovery Operator provides, or may provide, assistance on the M6 Toll Road, the Road Recovery Operator should maintain up to date contact details for the M6 Toll Control Room.

i. Calls received for assistance on the M6 toll road

Where the Road Recovery Operator receives a call for assistance from a motorist who has broken down either on the M6 Toll Road or within a Toll Plaza area, the Road Recovery Operator should contact the M6 Toll Control Room and pass on the information held as the location of the casualty vehicle.

The M6 Toll Control Room will then locate the casualty vehicle using their CCTV cameras and confirm its location to the Road Recovery Operator. The M6 Toll Control Room will also, where it is thought necessary, either deploy their own Incident Support Unit vehicle (ISU) or arrange for HA Traffic Officers or the Police to attend to help protect the scene or to remove the vehicle to a place of safety. The Road Recovery Operator or the Technician should always contact the M6 Toll Control Room to help establish the exact location of the casualty vehicle and to obtain relevant information for use in deciding on how best to deal with the casualty vehicle.

ii. Breakdowns or removals located on the hard shoulder

These breakdowns or removals should be attended and dealt with in the same manner as those occurring on the hard shoulder of any motorway, see Sections 4 and 5 of these Guidelines.

If, on arrival, the Technician considers that repairing the casualty vehicle or its recovery/removal is likely to obstruct traffic flow or is particularly hazardous, then the Technician should request, via the M6 Control Room, the assistance of an ISU, Traffic Officer(s) or the Police.

iii. Breakdowns or removals in a live running lane

These breakdowns or removals should be attended and generally dealt with in the same manner as those occurring in the live running lane of a motorway or middle/ outside lane of a dual carriage way, see Section 6.E of these Guidelines.

The Technician should not attend the scene until it has been confirmed by the M6 Toll Control Room that the casualty vehicle has been removed to a place of safety or a safe working area has been established around the casualty vehicle.

iv. Breakdowns or removals located near or within a toll plaza

Under no circumstances must a Technician attempt to attend, repair or remove a casualty vehicle that is located in a traffic lane, either prior to, within or after a Toll Plaza, unless a safe working area has been provided by an ISU, Traffic Officers or the Police. Otherwise the Technician must wait until the casualty vehicle has been removed to a place of safety. Any breakdowns or removals occurring in the traffic lanes approaching or leaving the main Toll Plazas are to be treated in the same manner as those occurring in a live running lane of a motorway - see above.

Should the Technician be required to pass through a Toll Plaza in order to attend the casualty vehicle, under no circumstances should they use the ‘wide load lane’ and then attempt to either reverse back or drive across the traffic lanes in order to reach the casualty vehicle.

Where the casualty vehicle has been removed to a place of safety by either an ISU, Traffic Officers or the Police, the Technician should pass through the Toll Plaza as normal.

If a Technician has a Tag but needs to pass through a Toll Plaza without using a Tag lane, they should use an appropriate traffic lane to access the casualty vehicle (preferably a manned lane) and upon reaching the Toll Booth press the assistance button. By quoting the ID number on their Tag the Technician will be allowed through.

If the casualty vehicle is located within an actual Toll Lane (between the kerbed islands on the immediate approach to the Toll Booth) then the M6 Toll Control Room may instruct the Technician to approach through an adjacent lane and then reverse back to the casualty vehicle. This should only be done upon instruction from the M6 Toll Control Room.

J. HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES OR DANGEROUS GOODS

Technicians should be alert to casualty vehicles bearing HazChem signage.

Technicians should not attempt to handle any hazardous substances or dangerous goods unless they have received the necessary training and have access to, and use, the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE – see Paragraph 4 A) If attending a breakdown or recovery of a casualty vehicle bearing a HazChem sign, the Technician should ensure that the casualty vehicle's driver (or other person trained, and if necessary licensed, to deal with the relevant potential hazard) remains present throughout. If attending an accident involving a casualty vehicle bearing a HazChem sign, or if it appears that there may have been any escape of (or other risk from) any hazardous substance or dangerous goods, the Technician or the Road Recovery Operator should contact the casualty vehicle's owner/operator or the Fire Service and request assistance.

Note: Hazardous substances may be present in:-

a. vehicles designated for their carriage under the European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR)
b. smaller, but potentially dangerous, quantities may be carried in other commercial or private vehicles
c. situations arising as a result of accidents to, or fires in, casualty vehicles
d. vehicle batteries
e. vehicle fuel tanks
f. airbags

7. ACCIDENT AND "NEAR MISS" REPORTING

In addition to any duties under Health & Safety or Social Security law to report accidents, Technicians should report, to the Road Recovery Operator, all near misses that are encountered whilst working. This is to enable the Road Recovery Operator to carry out any necessary investigation and to help them identify any common features for further evaluation and investigation.

Upon identifying any trends, the Road Recovery Operator should consider implementing any necessary improvements indicated to working practices.

Note: For these purposes a near miss is defined as an incident which, whilst not actually causing any injury or damage, came very close to doing so.

8. ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF GUIDANCE

A. PAS 43:2008

PAS 43:2008 was produced by the SURVIVE Group in collaboration with the British Standards Institution (BSi). PAS 43:2008 contains requirements for the management of, and a management system for, Road Recovery Operators with the aim of improving safety and promoting best practice.

PAS 43:2008 promotes agreed best practice procedures for:

- attending vehicle breakdowns at the roadside
- the recovery and removal of casualty vehicles from the roadside
- the type, maintenance and safety marking of road recovery vehicles and thei equipment
- the training and behaviour of Technicians
- the use of personal protective equipment by Technicians
- the maintenance and organisation of Road Recovery Operators' premises
- the effective implementation and maintenance of standard operating procedures

Note: PAS 43 is reviewed every 2 years and updated as required by BSi and Working Group 2 of SURVIVE. Therefore reference should always be made to the latest edition of PAS 43, which is obtainable from:-

BSi – Customer Services. Tel 020 8996 9001 or visit www.bsigroup.com/PAS43

B. NATIONAL HIGHWAYS SECTOR SCHEME FOR VEHICLE RECOVERY 17B

This Sector Scheme document sets out the inspection and system requirements for those organisations providing contracted vehicle recovery / removal operations and services for the Highway's Agency in relation to the Strategic Road Network (in England). It can also be used as a national benchmark for the training and assessment of Technicians, trainers and assessors in the vehicle recovery industry.

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Design by

FM Design Holdings Ltd
www.fm4design.co.uk

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Safe Use of Roadside Verges
In Vehicular Emergencies

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