COVID-19 – Vehicle breakdown and recovery

Background
This guidance note provides advice on vehicle breakdown and recovery during the COVID-19 outbreak. While essential workers are travelling in vehicles, there is a risk of them breaking down or being involved in an incident and needing to be recovered if the vehicle cannot be repaired.

Any staff who are experiencing symptoms of coronavirus, or live with someone who has symptoms, should not be at work but follow government guidance and remain at home and self-isolate. Symptoms of Covid-19 include a fever and/or a new persistent cough.

Key Issues and Actions
- if you are driving a FLS vehicle on a public road the RAC will provide breakdown cover. They have stated “If we can’t fix your vehicle, we may not be able to transport you in our vehicles due to the physical distancing advice. If so, we’ll try to make alternative arrangements, as your safety is always our priority”
- MES will provide support to staff on the forest road. Where a vehicle cannot be repaired, the MES mechanics will bring a relief vehicle on the recovery trailer brought to recover the broken down vehicle.
- if all the above options have been exhausted, and alternative arrangements cannot be made, the immediate health, safety and wellbeing of staff must be prioritised. In this situation it may be necessary for FLS staff to share a vehicle

In the event it is absolutely necessary to share a vehicle the following precautions should be taken:
- where available use a vehicle with back seats and sit the passenger as far away from the driver as possible.
- the driver should wipe down all surfaces that could be touched by the passenger with antiseptic wipes (external and internal door handles, seat belt clips etc) before they get into the vehicle
- both the driver and passenger should wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water if available or use antiseptic gel prior to entering the vehicle
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- the air conditioning should be turned off and the windows opened sufficiently to provide ventilation
- both passenger and driver should avoid touching surfaces in the car as far as possible
- both the driver and passenger should avoid facing each other at all times. It will be easier for the passenger to face away from the driver whenever possible. Both should avoid touching their face, mouth and eyes
- the journey should be kept as short as possible to deliver the driver to a safe place (for example, to meet with a family member who can transport them for the rest of the journey)
- at the end of the journey both driver and passenger should either wash or sanitize their hands thoroughly as soon as they exit the vehicle
- both members of staff should follow government advice if they start to experience any symptoms following the recovery journey