



## VEHICLE TIPS AND TRICKS

The information contained on this sheet is a guide to help put your car on, and keep it on, the Great Escape Oz track. The tips and ideas are mostly those from entrants and officials that have learnt the hard way over the years. There is a lot of information here, and you are not expected to rush out and ensure all this is done to your car. However, you will no doubt find some very helpful advice to get yourself started for this year's rally, and hopefully have a good view of basic preparations for the future Great Escape Oz rally.

## COMPULSORY VEHICLE EQUIPMENT

To begin with, here is the list from the official rules. The items listed below, are everything that your car **MUST** have:

- A Speedo or tripmeter that reads to at least one tenth of a kilometre
- Fire Extinguisher. Easily accessible and firmly mounted. Must be of adequate size and tagged.
- 10 Litres of drinking water
- A Snatchem strap. (NOT a tow rope or chain)
- Mud Flaps of stout material for each driving wheel. (Mud flaps must be at least 100mm off ground when vehicle is fully loaded)
- 20 Litre legal fuel container. Must be full at the beginning of each day
- UHF radio. Fitted and in good working order
- An orange rotating light on the roof of the vehicle for use in dusty conditions. Must be unobstructed and easily visible from the front & rear
- Sleeping gear for each crew member
- Seat belts must be fitted to the vehicle for each crew member and worn at all times. Full harness seat belts are recommended
- A securely mounted and clearly marked front and rear towing point (for recovery out of bogs etc.)
- A centrally mounted tow ball for the front of the vehicle. The tow ball should be unbolted and stored in the boot. This is for stiff bar towing should you break down.
- Rear facing car number, at least 4 inches high. Black on white or white on black. Must be on the right-hand side and easily visible
- Forward facing car number. White numbers on the passenger side of the windscreen
- A space at least 650mm x 450mm must be kept clear on each front door or an area approved by the organisers, for the official door signs
- A HEMA Australian Road Atlas
- At least a 4-point roll cage is strongly recommended, but not compulsory.
- As per State laws, an engineer's certificate (modification plate for QLD) must be obtained for any major modifications made to the vehicle e.g. seats and seat belts. For more information, contact your nearest Motor Registry office or Department of Transport
- If your vehicle does not comply with all the above equipment, IT WILL BE ENFORCED THAT YOU MUST ONLY FOLLOW MAIN ROADS. (This rule will be strictly adhered to by the organisers without exception).

## SCRUTINEERING AND VEHICLE REQUIREMENTS

It is the total responsibility of the principle entrant and vehicle owner to ensure that the vehicle is presented at the start of the rally in a legally road registered and road worthy state. It is also their responsibility to ensure it remains in a safe and road worthy condition throughout the event.

At Registration and Scrutineering which is before the start of the event, you must:

- Bring either a letter from an authorised mechanic stating that in their opinion the vehicle is in a road safe condition or a current Safety Certificate.
- You need to have the; Current vehicle registration papers
- The vehicle will have all the compulsory equipment as stated in the official rules



## **ROLL CAGES, FUEL TANK, SEATS, SEAT BELTS, MODIFICATIONS**

This is probably the most difficult part of your vehicle preparations. It can be a real hair-teaser if you approach it incorrectly. However, if you take the right steps first up, it won't be too difficult.

- Once you have your car and a basic plan what you would like to modify on it, locate yourself an engineer that is certified to approve these modifications. A list of authorised businesses in your area can be obtained through your local Motor Registry Office or Department of Transport. If you are fortunate enough to have a few of these people in your town, make sure you find one that can relate to you and your needs. Some are very understanding of the vehicles requirements and will be helpful while others couldn't give a hoot and will make your life difficult.
- Once you have found the best person to talk to, you can then proceed through to make your modifications then onto getting them approved and certified
- The Motor Registry Office or Department of Transport, or your chosen approver, can supply you with the steel and mounting specifications and drawings etc.

### **TOW POINTS AND TOWING:**

As The Great Escape Oz is an adventure and travels into some very interesting country, it is not uncommon to come across a dry sandy creek bed or a bog-hole or two. To keep you safe and on the move, we will station a recovery vehicle in these known trouble spots.

Recovering a vehicle with a snatchem strap is quick and easy but can be dangerous if not done safely. To help keep things running smoothly and to ensure everyone's safety, we have stringent procedures that we must have and follow.

#### **Towing Points:**

When it comes to safety, the chain reaction starts here. You are required to have a safe, secure and strong towing point at the front and rear of your car. Hooks are best, but make sure they are proper towing hooks. Anything that breaks when recovering a vehicle from a bog can turn into a very dangerous flying projectile. If your towing points are holes, rather than hooks you will need to have at least a 4.7t rated D shackle. Nothing less will do.

#### **Centrally Mounted Tow ball:**

You will notice in the rules that you require a centrally mounted tow ball on the front of your vehicle. This is in case you break down and need to be towed by our sweep car into town. For comfort and safety, it needs to be in the centre of your car. It is important that you unbolt this ball and keep it stored elsewhere. If it is left on the car, it will be too easy for someone to drop a snatch strap on there to pull you out of a bog. This is not safe.

#### **Towing Equipment:**

Now that we have the right towing points, we just need to use the right equipment to make sure we are safe. Your snatchem strap should also be in new condition and be a heavy duty snatchem strap. If your strap is frayed, has been used a fair bit and is 4 or 5 years old, you have got your money's worth and it is time to buy a new one. Don't throw your old one out, keep it in your car as well.

#### **Towing procedure:**

Having the right setup and equipment doesn't automatically grant safety, it must be used correctly. We are implementing safe vehicle recovery procedures. Here is an indication as to what to expect; each car (backups and officials included) should select which crew member will be their recovery person. That person is then responsible for handling the equipment and communicating with the towing car. Everyone else stays well clear and has nothing to do with the operation.



## **FUEL CAPACITY**

Often people wonder just how much petrol they should be carrying and what kind of distances they should be prepared to cover.

All the refuelling points are clearly marked in the track book each day and are no further than 450 km apart. Bear in mind that a lot of refuel points are in small towns with one bowser. If you have larger carrying capacities, you can often avoid lengthy delays by not having to wait for fuel.

On some occasions we make it compulsory to purchase a minimum amount of fuel. If this is the case, it will be clearly spelt out in the track book. The reason is because remote fuel suppliers need to make special bulk orders just for us. So, we need to guarantee they will be able to sell this amount and not be stuck with it.

It states in the rules that you are required to carry a 20-litre jerry can. This is the case regardless of whether you have an extra tank or a larger capacity one. You never know when you might stone a tank or someone else might need help.

## **TRACK BOOK**

Quite often you will hear us refer to the "Track Book". The track book is a very comprehensive book that will be given to you at registration on the first day. The track book is often referred to as the Bible. It contains EVERYTHING. Where to camp, where the food is, where the bar and entertainment is, where to start each morning, where to turn left, turn right and how far to next fuel. It will be your most treasured item on any Great Escape Oz.

## **NAVIGATION**

One of the hardest things to buy for your chosen car is a trip meter. Not so much that they are hard to get, but for what they cost and what you get for your money. As most of us are not into competitive motor sport, trip meters are a foreign and little-known instrument, however they can make navigating around the set course a breeze.

For what they are, trip meters are quite expensive and there are not many brands on the market.

There are now a large range of GPS units on the market and they are changing regularly. Speak to others about brands before you purchase a unit.

## **RESPONSIBLE DRIVING AND BEHAVIOUR**

Once again, it is the sole responsibility of the vehicle owner, crew and driver to ensure that all road laws are adhered to at all times. Never to the organisers encourage, endorse or condone unsafe driving or breaking the law in any way.

In the track book and at daily briefings you will be reminded about this and we will also reinforce the need to drive in a safe and sensible manner and be aware of the adverse condition that you will encounter.

Just because you are part of an event, it does not exempt you in any way from the law or your responsibilities as a common road user or citizen.

## **INSURANCE**

It is important to note that your vehicle must be covered by at least a Third-Party Property damage insurance cover. It is usually not worth it, or most companies won't cover your car comprehensively.

Should you have difficulty in this area, please contact your preferred insurance broker/company.



The Great Escape Oz  
Track Boss, Terry Stewart  
M: 0413 704 104

## TIPS, TRICKS AND BASIC ESSENTIALS:

The ideas and equipment listed below is NOT compulsory but is recommended preparation and preventative maintenance. No doubt you would have your own ideas and procedures you follow in preparation; however, these are just some basic steps to ensuring you have a trouble-free Great Escape Oz. Most of this equipment and ideas come from our sweep guys who have seen every breakdown over the past years, so they have a fair idea what can go wrong and what to carry to keep you going.

| SPARE PARTS   | VEHICLE CHECK   |
|---|---|
| Tyres gauge, valves, dust caps, emergency plugs and 12v compressor                                    | Check gearbox and diff breathers. They should be mounted up high with inline fuel filters attached  |
| Full set of fan belts & hoses   | Have you replaced your ball joints?   |
| Throttle springs  | Are you starting with healthy tyres? Tyres that are a few rallies old, bruised and chipped won't last   |
| Fuel filters  | Tie rod ends and idler arm bushes   |
| Metho   | Are your front wheel bearings healthy?  |
| Wheel studs and nuts  | Check brake master cylinder & callipers for leaks   |
| Rear cross member bolts (falcon)  | Shock absorbers check for oil stains on them. Check rubbers and mounts  |
| Upper & lower ball joints   | Was your engine getting hot? Check your cooling system  |
| Shock absorbers   | Your cars fuel range will need to be able to cover 450km of steady going unassisted   |
| Bulbs & belts for flashing light  | Crack detect your stub axles and rear axles   |
| Spare hose to bypass Automatic cooler if it gets damaged  | Do you know/understand your car? E.g. Filters, pumps, relays, switches, fuses etc.  |
| Spare Universal Joints  | Is your tripmeter, UHF & flashing light hard wired to your battery?   |
| Engine mount bolts  | Get UHF radio checked and serviced  |
| Duck-tape & cable ties  | Start with new wiper blades   |
| Front suspension bolts that are not common e.g. Commodore Z bar nuts & washers                        | Brake booster diaphragm   |
| Dewatering fluid – CRC, WD40  | Replace brake fluid   |
| Spare Brake Hoses – front & rear & brake line clamp   | Fit new plug and leads  |
| Spare bolts for bash plate  | Check centre bolts in rear leaf springs   |
| Spare points, rotor, cap, condenser and coil  | Shackle bushes  |
| Radiator stop leak (Ground ginger & pepper will also work as a last resort                            | Woven wire dairy mesh (6mm square x 2mm thick) for in front of radiator or on bulbar to stop sticks and stones getting in. Buy it from any hardware store |
| Engine/gearbox/diff oil, brake fluid & auto transmission fluid<br>Funnel and hose to get fluid/oil in | Check engine mounts and bolts. Chain mounts or bolt through the mount   |
| Spare wheel bearing and seals and bearing grease – or pre-pack bearings                               | Can you trust whoever did the work? Remember, cheap & nasty = Breakdowns  |
| Split pins  |   |
| Spare Water pump  |   |
| Spare fuel pump for engine and or extra fuel tank. This can be set up on the vehicle before you leave |   |
| Gasket paper, sealant and scissors  |   |
| Spare bulbs for head lights, tail lights and indicators.  |   |
| U bolts & nuts  |   |
| Spare shock absorber rubbers  |   |
| Spare relay, electrical cable, terminals and toggle switch  |   |
| Dust masks and safety goggles   |   |
| Tools, and any special/unique tools for your car  |   |



## FIRST AID KIT

As it states in the rules every car must have a suitable First Aid Kit. As we travel into remote areas, it is important to have more than just a Band-Aid and a Panadol. Although we prepare ourselves we usually only think of the first aid kit in case of a vehicle accident, the first aid kit rarely gets used for this. It is more common for minor injuries and discomforts that you get when outside the car.

Your first aid kit should contain at least the following and be easily accessible to everyone in the car:

| Item                               | Qty | Description   |
|------------------------------------|-----|---|
| <b>Medical Kit Information</b>     |     |   |
| Contents Booklet/Notebook          | 1   | What your kit contains so you know what you need to replace                         |
| Emergency Action Pad               | 1   | Separate notebook to write down what you did and found on the scene of an accident  |
| First Aid Booklet                  | 1   | Basic First Aid Information Booklet   |
| <b>Personal Protection</b>         |     |   |
| Protective Gloves                  | 2   | 2 pairs of each size for all persons in the car (e.g. large, ex-large, medium etc.) |
| CPR Face Shields                   | 2   | Or better still, a special St Johns Resus mask                                      |
| Antiseptic wipes                   | 5   | Also known as Alco wipes  |
| Bio Hazard Bags                    | 2   | Or any sterile bag for body parts (e.g. zipped bags) (e.g. cut off finger)          |
| <b>Essential Equipment</b>         |     |   |
| Tweezers                           | 1   | Pair  |
| Safety Pins                        | 4   | Various sizes   |
| Scissors                           | 1   | Pair  |
| Pen                                | 1   |   |
| Splinter Probe                     | 1   |   |
| <b>Wound Treatment</b>             |     |   |
| Sterile Gauze swabs                | 1   | Packet of 5   |
| Cotton tips                        | 6   |   |
| Normal Saline                      | 2   | 30 mls  |
| Trauma Dressing                    | 2   | 9 x 20cm  |
| Sterile Wound Closure Strips       | 1   | Packet of 6   |
| Antiseptic Cream                   | 1   | Tube  |
| <b>Wound Cover &amp; Bandaging</b> |     |   |
| Elastic Gauze Bandage              | 1   | 5cm x 4 metres  |
| Elastic Gauze Bandage              | 1   | 7.5 cm x 4 metres   |
| Crepe Bandage                      | 1   | 10cm  |
| Band Aids                          | 1   | Packet of 10  |
| Non-Stick Dressing                 | 1   | Packet of 5, 10 x 8 cm  |
| Eye Pads                           | 2   |   |
| Triangular Bandage                 | 3   |   |
| Adhesive Tape                      | 1   | Roll  |
| <b>Blister &amp; Burn</b>          |     |   |
| Burn Aid Cream                     | 1   | Tube  |
| Moist Burn Pad                     | 1   | 10cm x 10cm   |
| Aloe Vera                          | 1   | Tube (for continuing treatment)   |
| <b>Survival</b>                    |     |   |
| Thermal Blanket                    | 1   | Aluminium Foil  |
| Ice Pack                           | 1   | Packet  |

You may add to above list with whatever you see fit to suit your individual situations and illnesses you or your crew may have. This may include medicine for asthma, high blood pressure, medicine for constipation, headaches etc. Antihistamines, ibuprofen, Herron tablets, cold & flu tablets, Imodium.

Should you have any questions or require further assistance, please contact:

Terry Stewart  
Track Boss  
M: 0413 704 104  
E: [trackboss508@gmail.com](mailto:trackboss508@gmail.com)



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M: 0413 704 104