Fleet Vehicle Emergency Roadside Breakdown Protocol

1.0 Objective & Scope

The objective of this procedure is to provide a standardized, safe, and compliant response for field personnel when a fleet vehicle experiences a mechanical breakdown or roadside emergency. This protocol applies to all company-owned or leased vehicles operated by field staff, installers, and logistics drivers. The Lead Driver or highest-ranking field team member on site is responsible for executing this procedure and ensuring all team members remain safe until the vehicle is recovered or repaired.

This SOP covers initial hazard assessment, communication with dispatch, securing the vehicle, coordinating with roadside assistance providers, and completing all required documentation for insurance and fleet management records. Adherence to Transport Canada regulations and provincial traffic laws is mandatory.

2.0 Required Equipment & Tools

- Company-issued mobile phone with SiteQueue application installed and charged
- Emergency roadside kit (reflective triangles, flares, first aid kit, fire extinguisher)
- High-visibility safety vest and hard hat (mandatory for all roadside activity)
- Vehicle owner's manual and insurance/registration documents (stored in glove box)
- Tire pressure gauge, jumper cables, and basic tool kit (wrenches, screwdrivers, pliers)
- Fleet vehicle emergency contact card (with roadside assistance phone number and fleet manager contact)
- Digital camera or smartphone for incident documentation (photos of vehicle, location, damage)
- Paper incident report form and pen (backup for digital reporting)
- Warning signs or cones (if available, for additional traffic control)

3.0 Site Safety & Hazard Assessment

- Before exiting the vehicle, assess the immediate surroundings for traffic hazards, poor visibility, or dangerous road conditions. Do not exit if it is unsafe to do so.
- Activate vehicle hazard lights immediately upon noticing a breakdown or emergency.
- If possible, steer the vehicle to a safe location away from traffic lanes, such as a shoulder, parking lot, or wide curb. Never stop in a live lane unless unavoidable.
- Wear high-visibility safety vest and hard hat before exiting the vehicle. Ensure all passengers do the same.
- Place reflective triangles or flares at least 50 metres behind the vehicle on highways, or 30 metres on regular roads, to warn approaching traffic.
- Keep all team members away from moving traffic. Stay behind guardrails or at least 10 metres from the vehicle if on a high-speed road.
- Do not attempt any mechanical repairs on the roadside unless it is a simple, safe fix (e.g., changing a tire in a safe, level area). For all other issues, wait for professional roadside assistance.
- If the vehicle is on fire or leaking hazardous fluids, evacuate immediately to a safe distance (at least 100 metres) and call 911.

4.0 Step-by-Step Execution Procedure

1. Remain calm and assess the situation. Determine if the vehicle can be moved to a safer location. If yes, carefully drive or coast to the nearest safe area. If not, stop in place and proceed with hazard activation.
2. Activate the vehicle's hazard lights immediately. If the vehicle is disabled and cannot move, ensure all passengers exit the vehicle on the side away from traffic and move to a safe location.
3. Put on high-visibility safety vest and hard hat. Retrieve the emergency roadside kit and place reflective triangles or flares at the required distances behind the vehicle (50 metres on highways, 30 metres on regular roads).
4. Call the fleet manager or designated dispatch number from the emergency contact card. Provide your exact location (use GPS coordinates from your phone if possible), vehicle identification (license plate, unit number), and a brief description of the issue (e.g., engine failure, flat tire, overheating).
5. If the breakdown involves a collision, injury, or fire, call 911 immediately before contacting dispatch. Do not move the vehicle or any debris until emergency services arrive and give clearance.
6. Dispatch will coordinate with the company's roadside assistance provider. Stay on the line with dispatch to receive a case number and estimated time of arrival (ETA) for the tow truck or service vehicle. Relay this information to all team members.
7. While waiting, document the scene. Take clear photos of the vehicle from multiple angles, the surrounding road conditions, any visible damage, and the placement of warning triangles. Note the time, date, weather conditions, and road type.
8. If the vehicle is blocking traffic or poses a hazard, contact local law enforcement (non-emergency line) to inform them of the situation and request traffic control if needed.
9. When roadside assistance arrives, verify the technician's credentials (company ID, vehicle markings) before allowing any work. Provide the case number and a brief description of the issue. Do not leave the vehicle unattended until it is either repaired or towed.
10. If the vehicle is towed, ensure all personal belongings and company equipment are removed from the vehicle. Obtain a tow receipt and note the tow truck company name, driver name, and destination yard.
11. If the vehicle is repaired on-site, test the repair by starting the engine and checking for warning lights. If safe, proceed with a slow test drive of at least 1 kilometre before returning to the road. If any issues persist, request a tow.
12. Complete the incident report in SiteQueue or on the paper form. Include all details: date, time, location, vehicle unit number, odometer reading, description of the breakdown, actions taken, and any costs incurred (tow, repair, etc.). Attach all photos.

5.0 Verification, Sign-off & Reporting

1. Within 24 hours of the incident, the Lead Driver must submit the completed incident report through SiteQueue. If SiteQueue is unavailable, email the paper form and photos to the fleet manager.
2. The fleet manager will review the report and verify that all required documentation (photos, receipts, case numbers) is attached. Any missing information must be provided within 48 hours.
3. If the breakdown resulted in a collision, the fleet manager will initiate the insurance claim process and provide the driver with a claim number and instructions.
4. The driver must sign the incident report digitally in SiteQueue, confirming that all steps were followed and that the vehicle was left in a safe condition (either repaired or at an approved tow yard).
5. The fleet manager will close the incident ticket in SiteQueue and update the vehicle's maintenance log with the breakdown details and any repairs performed.

6. A copy of the completed incident report will be filed in the company's fleet management system for compliance and auditing purposes. All records must be retained for a minimum of 3 years per Transport Canada guidelines.

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