The Role of Victoria Police when ‘Specialist Filming Vehicles’ are used on public roads in a ‘Non-Contained Location’

Role of Victoria Police

Multi-lane or single-lane film escorts where Specialist Filming Vehicles are used, such as tracking and low loaders, are considered a high risk activity. Such activity will significantly interfere with the normal use of a road by other road users and as such is classified as a ‘non-road’ activity under the Road Safety Act, Section 99B. The role of Victoria Police in providing an escort for these vehicles is to ensure the safety of every person involved, including other road users and to avoid any potential risks.

Legislative Requirement

Specialist Filming Vehicles comprising of tracking and/or low loader vehicles have conditions imposed on their operation by VicRoads. These conditions form part of the registration by which these vehicles operate. One such condition requires that any road closure or traffic containment be authorised and controlled by Victoria Police. Therefore a police escort will always be required where a Specialist Filming Vehicle is to be used in a ‘non-contained’ site on a public road.

Non-Contained Location

There are many types of scenarios which fall into this category, and applicants are requested to make direct contact with the Victoria Police Film and Television Office to determine the category.

Example: A ‘non-contained’ site would include the escort of a tracking vehicle or low loader, (or other specialist filming vehicle) as it travels along a defined route where filming will take place.

Non Road Activity Permits

A ‘Non Road Activity’ in accordance with the Road Management Act 2004, Section 99B means any activity to be conducted on a road which will significantly interfere with the normal use of a road by road users.

Example: A ‘non road activity’ would include the use of a road for the shooting of a film, a bicycle event, a street festival or a street market.

As per the Act and regulations, a road authority ie: VicRoads, Councils, may issue a permit to a person to conduct a non road activity on a highway or road. A non road activity must be authorised by way of a ‘permit’ subject to any terms, conditions and limitations which the road authority considers appropriate.

Victoria Police Operation Orders (Traffic Management Plans)

For Police Escorts, the Film and Television Office prepares a Victoria Police Operation Order (Traffic Management Plan). The Victoria Police Operation Order is forwarded to the production company who then submits it to the relevant road authority for a “Non Road Activity Permit” to be issued.

When do Victoria Police prepare Operation Orders (Traffic Management Plans):

- When filming activities involve ‘specialist filming vehicles’;
- When production companies request Victoria Police services, outside ‘specialist filming vehicle’ activities; and
- If requested by the permitting road authority as part of their terms and conditions.

Victoria Police Risk Assessment

When a request is received for police to provide an escort, prior to the preparation of the Victoria Police Operation Order staff from the Film and Television Office will perform a site risk assessment of the filming location. The purpose of this assessment is to identify any obvious risks or threats that need to be addressed before the completion of the Victoria Police Operation Order.
Minimum Victoria Police Resources Non-Contained Location

The minimum resources required for any ‘non-road’ activity involving Specialist Filming Vehicles will be an escort comprising of:

- 2 x police members
- 2 x police cars

However, it will be the responsibility of the Film and Television Office to assess each individual application to determine the appropriateness of the resources required. In some circumstances the minimum resources may need to be increased.

Additional Resources

At some locations, additional traffic management resources may be required. These can be supplied by Victoria Police or by private traffic management companies to provide traffic controllers, signage (speed reduction signs) barricades etc. If required these additional resources will be the subject of consultation between the applicant, Victoria Police and the assigned private traffic management company.

How do I apply?

Application for Victoria Police resources for a ‘non-contained location’ is via the Application Form located at the top right hand side of this page.

Application Form is to be submitted via e-mail to the Film and Television Office.
E-mail: film.tv@police.vic.gov.au

Applications need to include:

- All proposed filming location(s) including proposed routes
- The type of Specialist Filming Vehicles to be used
- Location of Unit Base set up
- Meeting place and times (for police attendance)
- Filming times
- Details of any weather hold
- Details of any additional traffic management requirements, such as:
  - Traffic controllers
  - Signage (speed reduction or advisory)
  - Barricades and witches hats
  - Other safety equipment
  - Road closures

For advice on traffic management and location requirements contact the Film and Television Office on 9247 3259 or 9247 5599.

Time Frame

Traffic management involving Specialist Filming Vehicles within a ‘non-contained’ film site requires a minimum notice of seven working days. Applications received seven days prior to the activity will ensure Victoria Police resource allocation. Any applications received after this period will be considered. However, Victoria Police resources cannot be guaranteed and the activity may not be able to proceed.

Fees and Charges

The use of police resources for non core policing activities such as filming, unless exceptional circumstances exist, attract fees and charges under the ‘User Pays’ system. See the attached schedule of resource fees located at the top right hand side of this page.
Applications for Victoria Police resources incur an Administration Fee of $100.00 per application.

Applications which require a Victoria Police Operation Order (Traffic Management Plan) incur an additional fee of $100.00, per Operation Order.

A minimum four-hour Call-Out Fee for each assigned Police member, as per the current Fees & Charges Schedule applies.

Cancellation Fees

Once Victoria Police resources are confirmed in writing, should the Applicant need to cancel these resources the following cancellation fees will apply:

- Cancellation Fee = $100.00
- Operation Order = $100.00 (if applicable)
- A minimum four-hour Call-Out Fee for each assigned police member, as per the current Fees & Charges Schedule.

Failing to comply with Victoria Police direction during filming, can result in the withdrawal of police services, and the prescribed Cancellation Fees or relevant fees which have incurred in excess of the minimum four-hour Call-Out will also apply.

Late Application Penalty Fee

Applications for police resources received with 24 hours notice or less will incur a 'Late Penalty Fee' of $1,000.00.

Please note - the Victoria Police Film & Television Office is closed on weekends. Therefore, applications received on a Friday for the filming of events on the following Saturday, Sunday or Monday, will incur the $1,000 Late Penalty Fee.