

VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE
Lexington, Virginia

GENERAL ORDER)
NUMBER 23)

17 August 2020

Driver Qualification and Vehicle Use Policy

1. **PURPOSE:** This document establishes the policies and procedures for faculty, staff, and cadets operating vehicles owned by VMI (including the Gem Electric vehicles), leased from the Commonwealth of Virginia, and rented from a commercial source (hereafter referred to as “VMI vehicles”). It also provides guidelines for driver training and testing and for the use of VMI vehicles, and establishes the proper procedures for reserving state vehicles through the VMI Physical Plant.
2. **BACKGROUND:** Vehicle operation and transportation are critical parts of life. Failure to follow standard operating procedures by a driver can result in injury, and possible monetary loss. Each vehicle in the VMI vehicle pool has unique driving characteristics and requires adjustment by drivers. Some types of vehicles typically used (particularly large vans) can be a radical change from what the driver is ordinarily accustomed to driving. Anyone using VMI vehicles must follow applicable laws, regulations, guidelines from insurance carriers, and VMI policies designed to facilitate safe operation.
3. **AUTHORITY:**
 - A. The VMI Police have the authority to determine who will be placed on the list of persons authorized to operate a VMI vehicle.
 - B. The Director of the Physical Plant has the responsibility to ensure the proper dispatch of state vehicles to authorized VMI drivers.
4. **CADET USE OF VEHICLES:**
 - A. **Cadets may not operate a VMI vehicle without a faculty or staff representative present unless specifically authorized by permit and a properly approved travel voucher.** Permits must have endorsement of the department responsible for the group requesting use of a VMI vehicle. Requests for permits must be submitted to the Director of the Physical Plant at least three (3) days prior to the travel. Cadets driving VMI vehicles outside a 75-mile radius of the local Lexington area must be accompanied by a faculty or staff member, in addition to obtaining a permit and properly approved travel voucher.
Travel in multiple vehicles must be in a convoy with at least one faculty or staff member in the last vehicle. **Exceptions to this policy must be submitted to the Director of Physical Plant for recommendation to the Deputy Superintendent Finance, Administration, & Support, who will be the final approving authority.**
 - B. The duties of faculty or staff representatives accompanying cadet groups are:
 - (1) Complete and furnish all documentation for approval to utilize Motor Pool or rental vehicles.

- (2) Ascertain that all cadet drivers and alternates are on the approved drivers list, and that eligible drivers possess a valid operator's license.
- (3) Accompany cadets en route to and from destination, in accordance with Section 4(A), above.
- (4) Ensure that when traveling in more than one vehicle, cadets driving other vehicles travel in convoy fashion. If one vehicle stops, all vehicles stop as soon as conditions are safe to do so.
- (5) Determine that the vehicle load will not exceed the load prescribed by law.
- (6) Designate points along the route as re-assembly areas in the event that vehicles are separated by traffic.
- (7) Ensure that drivers stop and rest after driving eight hours and have a ten-hour rest period between driving duty when trip length is more than eight hours.

5. DRIVER TRAINING AND AUTHORIZATION TO OPERATE POLICY:

All operators of VMI vehicles must have a valid state driver's license.

- A. To be placed on the list of authorized VMI drivers, an individual (faculty, staff, or cadet) must apply to be a VMI Driver (see Attachment A). For cadets, the application must be signed by the sponsoring VMI agency or department. VMI Police will review the application and make it available to the Physical Plant.
- B. The VMI Police will maintain and publish the approved drivers list.
- C. All drivers on official Institute travel who operate rental vehicles from commercial vendors are required to comply with the qualification provisions of this General Order. Cadet drivers of rental vehicles must be at least 18 years old and an upper classman. The age requirements for some rental companies may be older.
- D. To remain on the drivers list, a cadet must complete a new application annually indicating changes to his or her driving record. VMI employees will be required to complete a new application only if there is a change in status to the employee's driving record. Cadets and employees with driving record changes may be required to take additional training as provided by VMI Police.

6. VEHICLE OPERATION POLICIES:

- A. Only drivers on the authorized drivers list will be allowed to drive VMI vehicles. VMI faculty and staff will ensure that they only approve requests to use VMI vehicles from authorized cadet drivers.
- B. At the time a VMI vehicle is checked out from the Motor Pool or a commercial vendor by an authorized driver, the Pre-Trip Vehicle Inspection Checklist (PT Form 32, see Attachment B) will be completed. The driver will document any deficiencies on the form. The attendant signing out the vehicle will familiarize the driver with the location of the controls and switches. The attendant will also demonstrate how to adjust the seat and mirrors and observe the driver making the necessary adjustments. The driver will complete the form and record the ending mileage.
- C. Only vehicles with a passenger capacity of 12 or less will be used for VMI travel. All passengers must wear a seat belt at all times. The driver will not drive the

vehicle until all passengers are properly belted. At no time will a driver operate a vehicle with more passengers than properly functioning seat belts.

D. Vehicle Use Limitations and Restrictions:

- (1) The number of VMI vehicles available for group transports is limited. In order to ensure their availability for other uses, the amount of time a vehicle can be checked out will be limited to seven (7) days.
- (2) Under no circumstances will VMI vehicles be left at airport parking lots. This renders them unavailable for other use, presents security issues, and is costly. Arrangements must be made for an authorized user from the department sponsoring the activity requiring travel to drive the group to the airport and to pick them up.
- (3) The Director of Physical Plant has the authority to approve exceptions to this section based upon extraordinary circumstances and a compelling need.

E. Legal Responsibilities: Drivers of VMI vehicles are responsible for the following:

- (1) Operate the vehicle in compliance with applicable Motor Vehicle Laws and in a manner that will not bring discredit upon the Institute.
- (2) Use the vehicle only for the time requested. Notify the dispatcher of any changes.
- (3) Do not use electronic devices, including cell phones, to text, email, browse the Internet, or any other use other than telephone calls while driving. Drivers may only use a cell phone for calls if it is enabled for hands-free use while driving.
- (4) Operate and secure the vehicle in a safe manner. Secure the vehicle until it is returned to the Motor Pool.. Cleanliness of the interior of the vehicle is the responsibility of the operator. Damage to the vehicle from negligence or abuse (interior or exterior) is the responsibility of the operator, and costs for the repairs will be assigned to the operator. Such costs are considered financial obligations due the Virginia Military Institute, collectible through all means available as an agency of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Unless otherwise directed, payment should be either mailed or made via telephone [Bursar's Office: (540) 464-7217] per the following:

Comptroller's Office
ATTN: VMI Bursar
Virginia Military Institute
Lexington, Virginia 24450

Note: All checks must be made payable to the VMI Treasurer. Cadet repair fees may be included in the VMI billing to the respective Cadet. Requests for transcripts and other certifications of attendance will not be honored until all financial obligations are satisfied. In addition, Cadets with unpaid obligations will not be permitted to register for the next semester of any academic year. VMI employees may be subject to payroll deduction for failure to reimburse.

- (5) VMI vehicles may not be used to transport alcoholic beverages.
- (6) Limit passengers to those authorized to be transported in VMI vehicles.

In general, authorized passengers are those affiliated with the Institute or are involved with the official business of the Institute for which the vehicle has been requested. VMI vehicles may not be used for personal business or activities.

- (7) Do not allow passengers to ride in the bed of a truck.
- (8) Do not pick up hitchhikers.
- (9) Do not permit anyone other than authorized drivers to operate the vehicles.
- (10) Report any difficulties or vehicle defects to the Motor Pool on the trip ticket.
- (11) Return the vehicle to the Motor Pool as soon as possible upon completion of the trip.

F. Accident Procedures and Reports: In the event of an accident with a VMI vehicle, regardless of the extent of the damages, appropriate law enforcement offices must be contacted. If the accident occurs (a) on-Post, contact the VMI Police; (b) off-Post and in the Commonwealth of Virginia; contact the Virginia State Police; and (c) out-of-state, call the nearest law enforcement agency to report the accident.

If there are injuries or the vehicle is disabled, a call must be made to notify the Institute as soon as safely possible. In addition, the following measures should be taken to the extent it is safe to do so:

- (1) Call emergency aid in the event of an injury.
- (2) Render all possible aid to those injured.
- (3) Do not move the vehicle unless it is in a hazardous position or to release an injured person as instructed by competent authority (a police officer or 911 police dispatcher).
- (4) Direct traffic to prevent other accidents only if it is safe to do so.
- (5) Obtain the license number, name, and operator's license number of any other drivers involved in the accident; and the names and addresses of any eyewitnesses.
- (6) Do not give any statement other than name and license number, or data required for the police report. VMI insurance information is located in the vehicle's glove box. Render all possible assistance to law enforcement. Leave the scene of the accident **only** after permission has been given by law enforcement.

- A. Ascertain from law enforcement the location of the VMI vehicle if it is towed away. Determine the extent of damage and include this information in your report of the accident to the VMI Police.
- B. Report immediately to the VMI Police upon your return to VMI for assistance in completing applicable forms. A report of the accident must be submitted in writing by the driver and any faculty or staff members involved in the travel within 24 hours of return to Post. The accident forms and statements must be submitted to the Office of the Treasurer for State insurance purposes. The Treasurer's Office will submit the proper paperwork to the Commonwealth's Division of Risk Management for claim consideration.

G. Injuries to Cadets: In the event that cadets are involved in an accident and have been evacuated to a hospital; the driver, if uninjured, and any faculty or staff members involved in the travel will proceed to the hospital, after being notified by law enforcement that it is permissible to leave the scene of the accident, and ascertain the extent of the cadet(s) injuries. The faculty or staff member involved in the travel, or a cadet participant in the travel if no faculty or staff member is available, should call the VMI Guard Room (540-464-7294) and ask to speak with the Officer-In-Charge or the Commandant's Office. Give all available details of the accident, including but not limited to, names of persons involved, extent of known injuries, name and location of the hospital, and telephone numbers where the faculty, staff, and cadets involved in the accident can be reached. Remain at the hospital until it has been determined that all possible assistance has been rendered to the injured cadets, the hospital staff, and law enforcement authorities, and notify the Officer-In-Charge or the Commandant's Office regarding the status of each cadet prior to leaving the hospital.

H. Procedures for Reserving and Picking Up Vehicles:

(1) Process for Reserving a Vehicle:

- A. To access the online system, log in to Post View, click on "Employees" and follow the links under "Vehicle Reservations."
- B. Please use this system to make reservations for passenger vans, sedans, or minivans.
- C. Requests for the "bus" should be made by emailing the Physical Plant helpdesk at PhysicalPlantHelp@vmi.edu.
- D. Requests for the "VIP bus" should be made by emailing the Physical Plant helpdesk at PhysicalPlantHelp@vmi.edu, after obtaining authorization from the Chief of Staff.
- E. Travel authorization forms are required and should be submitted to p2vehiclereservation@vmi.edu or faxed to 464-7682.
- F. For questions regarding reservation requests, please contact the motor pool at 464-7125.

The official request for vehicle use shall be part of the Authorization for Institute Travel.

(2) Picking Up Vehicle Keys and Trip Form.

The Trip Form and keys may be picked up at the VMI Physical Plant Motor Pool on the date requested. The VMI Physical Plant hours of operation are 0730 hrs to 1600 hrs Monday - Friday.

- A. Personal vehicles that are left at the VMI Physical Plant should be secured in one of the Drop Off/Pick-up parking spaces at the south end of the parking lot in front of Hinty Hall.
- B. The driver of the vehicle, along with the motor pool staff are responsible for recording the odometer reading and performing a vehicle walk around and annotating the condition of the vehicle prior to departure.
- C. If leaving before normal work hours, please coordinate with the VMI Physical

Plant Motor Pool x7125 to pick up keys based on availability of the reserved vehicle.

- I. Procedures for Returning a Vehicle: All VMI vehicles must be returned to the VMI Physical Plant facility (Hinty Hall). (Do not refuel the vehicle before dropping off. The motor pool staff will refuel at Physical Plant with fuel purchased at the state discounted rate.)
 - (1) Drop Off During Work Hours
 - a. When the VMI travel is complete, return the vehicle to one of the parking spaces in front of Hinty Hall.
 - b. Complete the Trip Form to include ending odometer reading.
 - c. Remove all personal items from the vehicle and remove trash (a trash receptacle is located by the key drop box in the parking lot).
 - d. Take the trip form and keys to the VMI Physical Plant Administration office inside the main entrance.
 - e. The Motor Pool staff will pick up the keys and trip form, then inspect and clean the vehicle.
 - (2) Drop Off After Hours
 - a. When the VMI travel is complete, return the vehicle to one of the parking spaces in front of Hinty Hall.
 - b. Complete the Trip Form to include ending odometer reading.
 - c. Remove all personal items from the vehicle and remove trash (a trash receptacle is located by the key drop box in the parking lot).
 - d. Place the keys and trip form in the drop box located adjacent to the parking spaces in front of Hinty Hall.
 - e. The Motor Pool staff will pick up the keys and trip form the next day and inspect and clean the vehicle.
- J. After Hours Use, Emergency and Weekend: If the need to use a vehicle occurs on a weekend or is an emergency situation, please follow these procedures:
 - (1) Contact VMI Police at 463-9177 to meet you at the VMI Physical Plant Facility (Hinty Hall).
 - (2) VMI Police will determine if vehicle(s) are available and sign out accordingly. If a vehicle is available, the appropriate trip form will be filled out at that time.
 - (3) VMI Police will also have the ability to access the fuel pumps located in the VMI Physical Plant compound so that vehicles can be fueled before departure.
 - (4) When the trip is complete, please follow the drop off procedures described in Section I.
- K. Vehicle Condition at Turn-in: Vehicles must be received in the condition received. If a vehicle is returned with evidence of neglect or abuse, a fee of \$50 will be charged to the applicable vehicle operator to restore the vehicle to the original condition.
- L. Cancelling a Reserved Vehicle: Reservations may be cancelled by logging into Post

View and selecting the “cancel reservation” option. If you are not able to log into Post View, call the motor pool at 464-7125. If a reservation is not properly cancelled, the Director of Physical Plant will notify the Deputy Superintendent for Finance, Administration, and Support.

- M. **Vehicle Maintenance:** The operator is provided with a courtesy card (**for emergency use only**) to purchase gasoline, oil, tires, and parts at Virginia Department of Transportation shops as well as a commercial credit card. Gasoline, oil, tires, and batteries may be purchased from commercial stations with the commercial credit card if the vehicle cannot be serviced at VMI or at the Department of Transportation shops and if an emergency exists. If serious mechanical problems exist with the vehicle, contact the Department of Fleet Management (DFM) Vehicle Management Control Center (VMCC) 24-7/365 at 1-866-857-6866.
- N. **Traffic and Parking Violations:** The operator of a VMI vehicle is personally responsible for all traffic and parking violations imposed while operating the VMI vehicle. The Institute will not assume the responsibility or make reimbursements for violations, fines, or penalties.
- O. **Use of Gem Electric Vehicles:**
 - (1) Gem Electric vehicles are work vehicles for use by the VMI Staff in the performance of daily tasks of the Institute such as mail pick-up and delivery, inventory transport, computer pick-up and delivery, and inter office coordination.
 - (2) Drivers of Gem Electric vehicles will wear seat belts at all times. At no time will the vehicles be driven at speeds greater than 25 MPH. Drivers will obey posted speed limits. Vehicle headlights will be used during any time of reduced visibility. The Gem Electric vehicles are extremely quiet; drivers must be aware pedestrians may not hear their approach and must anticipate pedestrian actions and react with caution.
 - (3) The Gem vehicles may be operated on state roads in the City of Lexington and on the grass areas of Post while on VMI business. Gem vehicles may be parked in service vehicle parking areas and may stop in accordance with mission requirements to make deliveries next to yellow curbs as required. Gem vehicle drivers must not obstruct either foot or vehicle traffic.

FOR THE SUPERINTENDENT:

James P. Inman
Colonel, US Army (Ret.)
Chief of Staff

DIST: E, Cadets
Attachments

OPR: VMI Police, Physical Plant

Please Print

ATTACHMENT A
AUTHORIZATION FORM FOR FACULTY / STAFF AND CADETS TO OPERATE STATE
(VA) VEHICLES

PLEASE FILL IN THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

Name _____
(Please print clearly) _____ Date _____

Date of Birth _____

Driver's License Number _____ State _____

Sponsor/Dept. (Cadet/Commandant, Protocol, P.E., etc.,) _____

I request qualification / approval to drive vans with 12 passenger capacity.

Yes _____ No _____

Are you presently scheduled to go to court for violations of the traffic code?

Yes _____ No _____

Have you ever been convicted of a traffic offense? Yes _____ No _____ If yes, please give details for each conviction below. Include time, date, location, and type of violation.

The above information is current and correct. If information changes – another form must be submitted before driving again.

Signature _____

Please mail or fax this form to the VMI Police. Fax #: 540-464-7756

For Official Use Only

___ Approve Approval Period _____ Disapprove
(Not to exceed the current academic year.)

_____ VMI Police _____ Date



A photocopy of the individual state driver's license must be attached to this

VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE
Pre-Trip Vehicle Inspection Checklist – Attachment B

This form must be completed by the responsible driver prior to each trip and submitted to Physical Plant Dispatch Office with the beginning and ending mileage.

Team/Department: _____

Destination: _____

Departing: _____

Returning: _____

Driver / Person in Charge: _____

Vehicle Number: _____

Odometer: Departure: _____

Return: _____

Please check any item below that you consider to be a problem.

Item:		Item:	
Headlights		Mirrors	
Turn signals		Heater/Defroster	
Taillights		Seat Belts	
Stoplights		Spare Tire/Jack	
Horn		Wipers/washers	
Brakes		Steering Play	
Tires		Other	

You must refuel vehicles at Physical Plant whenever possible! Credit cards provided for EMERGENCY USE ONLY!

In case of accident, see rules and regulations in glove box or door pocket.

Call State Police or local police; in any state, get an accident report

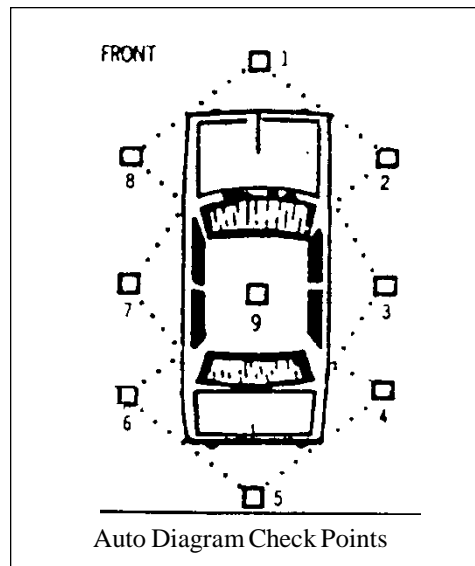
Cadets – Notify VMI Guard Room or Commandant’s Office and VMI Post Police.

Faculty & Staff -- notify VMI Post Police: 540-463-7199

In case of mechanical failure, call nearest VDOT shop or use credit card to make repairs, if possible.

State regulations require purchase of regular unleaded gasoline only.

Negligence or abuse is the responsibility of the operator.



Signed: _____ **Date:** _____