

THE CITADEL  
The Military College of South Carolina  
171 Moultrie Street  
Charleston, SC 29409

MEMORANDUM  
NUMBER 6-4

30 July 2009

**USE AND OPERATION OF 15-PASSENGER VANS**

**1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Memorandum is to announce The Citadel's policy concerning fifteen passenger vans. This policy applies to the use of any fifteen-passenger van for college business, including those vans that are leased or owned by The Citadel or the State of South Carolina, those that are rented or leased from rental companies, and those personally owned or borrowed when being used for college activities.

**2. REFERENCE**

S.C. Code Ann. § 56-5-195 (Law Co-op, 1976)

**3. POLICY**

**A. BACKGROUND**

- 1) On April 9, 2001 the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) issued a "Consumer Advisory" warning to the users of fifteen-passenger vans that, under certain load conditions, these vehicles have an increased risk of rollover. Research indicates that as the number of passengers carried in 15-passenger vans increases, its center of gravity rises, thereby increasing the possibility of rollover in single vehicle accidents.
- 2) Tests have also shown that towing trailers with heavily loaded fifteen-passenger vans significantly changes the handling characteristics of the vehicle and adds to the variables that could contribute to a serious accident.
- 3) In addition to the concerns addressed in the NHTSA advisory, S.C. Code § 56-5-195 prohibits any entity from using 15-passenger vans purchased after July 1, 2000 to transport pre-primary, primary, or secondary school aged children to or from school, school-related activities, or child care.

## B. POLICY

- 1) All drivers of fifteen passenger vans used for any college business must have successfully completed a fifteen-Passenger Van Driver's Safety Course, approved by the State of South Carolina's Office of Fleet Management.
- 2) Fifteen passenger vans shall not be used by Citadel faculty, staff, students, or volunteers for transporting more than eleven people (driver + 10 passengers). This policy applies to all fifteen-passenger vans including but not limited to those owned, borrowed, rented, or leased.
- 3) Fifteen passenger vans shall not be used by Citadel faculty, staff, students, or volunteers to transport school-aged children (pre-primary, primary, or secondary) at anytime. Those college activities that have a need to transport students who fall into this age group must use vehicles that meet federal school bus safety standards. This policy applies to all fifteen passenger vans, including but not limited to those owned, borrowed, rented, or leased.
- 4) Towing with a fifteen-passenger sized van is prohibited.
- 5) Drivers and all passengers traveling in fifteen-passenger vans must wear proper vehicle seat restraints and will refrain from excessive loading of the vehicle. Any items or cargo carried behind the rear seat shall not exceed 100 lbs in total weight. Using the roof or exterior of these vehicles to carry loads of any kind is prohibited.
- 6) Anytime that a fifteen-passenger van is operated with less than ten (10) passengers, all passengers must sit as far forward in the vehicle as possible. Any cargo carried inside of the vehicle must be positioned as far forward as practical.

## 4. COMPLIANCE

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action. In addition, anyone who violates this policy will be deemed to have utilized a vehicle outside of the college's vehicle use policies, such that they may be subject to personal liability, and ineligible indemnification from The Citadel.

**5. NOTES**

**A. Dates of official enactment and amendments:**

Approved by the Director of Citadel Staff on 31 July 2009

**B. Responsible Department:**

Physical Plant

**C. Responsible Official:**

Director of the Physical Plant

**D. Cross References**

None

**6. RESCISSION**

Memorandum No. 8, dated 27 June 2003, is rescinded.

FOR THE PRESIDENT:

OFFICIAL

JOSEPH W. TREZ  
Colonel, USA, Retired  
Director of The Citadel Staff