Bat – Risk Management for Driving Transects

**Duty of Care**

HRC has duty of care

Chances of Risk: Possible

Risk assessment without controls: Moderate

Strategy: Designate a leader  
Carry or have reasonable access to a First Aid Kit  
Gather emergency contact information where possible  
Bring along a cell phone for emergencies  
Know the location of the nearest emergency room or hospital

Biggest concern is driving at the slow speed required for the tracking. This risk will be mitigated by selecting the course where roads are minimally occupied and hazards are on while driving.

Never monitor by yourself. Someone needs to run the equipment. The equipment will NEVER be run by the driver.

Risk assessment with controls: Minor

**Weather and Environment**

Clothing, sun exposure, etc., will not be an issue since the participants will be in a car. However, we must be prepared for bad weather driving.

Chances of Risk: Unlikely – if driving conditions are bad, we will not monitor on that day

Risk assessment without controls: Minor

Strategy: Surveys should not be done in rain or fog because this will affect the data

Always carry phone in case of emergencies

Make sure car is properly equipped: tank full of gas, adequate wiper fluid, hazard lights working properly.

Driver must carry proof of insurance/insurance card in vehicle.

Drive the route in the daylight prior to first survey date

Before each outing, check headlights and hazards to ensure they’re in working order

Place "Survey in Progress" sign in back window of vehicle

The test routes should be driven at the proposed start time and speed.

Water isn’t a necessity, but a good idea.

Monitor changing weather conditions, stay vigilant, be ready to cancel if conditions become challenging/potentially dangerous

Risk assessment without controls: Minor

**Contact with the Public:**

Chances of Risk: Unlikely

Risk assessment without controls: Minor

Strategy: n/a – no contact

Risk assessment with controls: Minor

**Contact with plants and wildlife**

Chances of Risk: Unlikely

Risk assessment without controls: Minor

Strategy: n/a – no contact

Risk assessment with controls: Minor

**Field Etiquette, Rules and Laws**

Chance of risk: Unlikely

Risk assessment without controls -- moderate

Strategy: Practice good field etiquette

Allow cars to pass – if they seem unwilling to pass, find a safe place to pull over to allow passing

Follow all traffic laws – stops, yields, etc.

Risk assessment with controls – minor

**Information, protocols, and scientific integrity:**

Chance of risk: Possible

Risk assessment without controls – moderate

Strategy: It’s important to know the protocols to get good data.

Attend training

Make sure you’re traveling at the appropriate speeds to ensure that you’re not recording the same bat multiple times

Check periodically to make sure your data is being recorded correctly

Work in teams of 2-4

The equipment should be tested by rubbing fingers or jangling keys in front of the microphone immediately prior to the beginning of the transect run and just before the detector is shut off. This allows surveyors to determine if the equipment was functional throughout the survey, especially if no bats are recorded at the end of the transect.

Risk assessment with controls – Minor

**Tools and equipment:**

Chance of Risk: Possible

Risk assessment without controls – moderate

Strategy: Important to make sure the microphone is mounted properly and securely

Car adapter for computer is highly recommended

Make sure all equipment is functional and charged before starting

Make sure vehicle is functioning and all lights work

Risk assessment with controls – minor

**Human Factors**

Chance of Risk: Possible

Risk assessment without controls – moderate

Strategy: Let someone know where you are going and when you plan to return

Be prepared for the weather

Work in groups of 2-4

Make sure everyone has your emergency contact information and that you are carrying appropriate emergency contact numbers

Carry a charged cell phone

Do not drive tired

If you become tired when driving, switch off with a passenger or take a break

Know when to stop if you cannot safely continue

Risk of assessment with controls – Minor

**Chapter and volunteer management**

Chance of Risk: Unlikely

Risk assessment without controls – Minor

Strategies: Have approved Volunteer Service Project Proposal form on file

Provide training

Have volunteers know risks

Risk assessment with controls – Minor

**Social Media**

Chance of Risk: Unlikely

Risk assessment without controls – Minor

Strategies: Know if volunteer does not want photo taken and respect wishes

Risk assessment without controls – Minor

**Other hazards/Risks:**

Chance of Risk: Possible

Risk assessment without controls – Moderate

Strategies: As mentioned, driving safety is the biggest risk.

Always drive with hazards on when driving at slow speeds

Always drive with lights on

Be aware of surroundings

If road is too busy, skip that section and move on to a safe spot