

Standard Operating Procedure



Cable Retrieve

Purpose: To tow out cables from winch to launch point.

Who: Only members possessing a full driving licence to drive vehicles towing out cables.

General: Cables should be towed out in as straight a line as possible (see underlined notes below) to enhance safety of launches. The tow-out vehicle should ideally be ready located at the winch ready to tow a new pair of cables as soon as the last pair has been reeled in to enable launch rate to be maintained.

Cable Retrieve

- The cable tow-out driver should follow the directions of the winch driver.
- The winch engine will be off and the cables will be pulled to either side of the track, ready for the tow-out vehicle.
- The tow-out vehicle should be positioned in front of the winch only after both cables have been pre-positioned.
- The tow-out arms shall be lowered and the 'weak link' paracords looped over the 'balls'.
- The tow-out driver shall wait until the winch driver is back in the winch and gives a thumbs-up before he is to proceed.
- The tow-out vehicle should be put in low range, four wheel drive and driven off, gently, in first gear. As soon as possible, the vehicle should be moved up to second or third gear. (If being driven over a bumpy route, the driver may find that use of the hand throttle stops speed varying over bumps).
- The vehicle should be driven in as straight a line as possible to the launch point. (There is a laminated set of pictures in the winch which show the standard tow-outs. However, there are different ones for dry and 'very wet' conditions. Basically in the wet we use the tracks a bit more. All of the winch drivers should be familiar with these arrangements, and should be able to guide retrieve drivers appropriately.)
- On approaching the launch point, the speed should be reduced gradually (so as not to cause a loop on the winch drum) and, in the final few metres, the clutch should be depressed so that the vehicle is brought to a halt by the friction and drag of the cables.
- Put the vehicle into reverse and take the tension off the cables such that they can be unhooked.
- Remove the cables and stow the arms in the vertical position. Only then remove the vehicle from the launch point.
- Once the first cable has been used in a launch, re-position vehicle to the winch to be ready to tow-out the next set of cables.