

Gawler & Districts

www.gawler4wd.com.au

4WD Club Newsletter

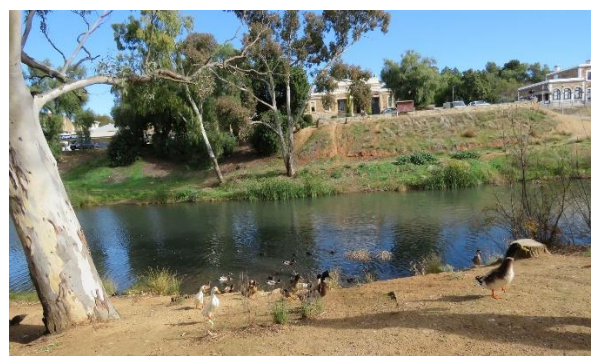
May 2018



Founded in 2002



Gawler and Districts 4WD Club Incorporated
is an active and supporting member of
Four Wheel Drive South Australia



From the archive - Southern Burra 2017

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WELCOME

to the Gawler & Districts 4WD Club

Previously known as "The Light Four Wheel Drive Club of SA Inc." this active 4WD club was founded in 2002. Members voted at the March 2008 meeting to change the club's name and meet at Gawler to give the club a more recognizable name and a more central meeting place.

It has become a very social club and has run many a successful day, weekend, long weekend and extended trips. We are a member of the Four Wheel Drive South Australia that incorporates the Driver Training Unit. Most meetings include a Guest Speaker and a monthly club newsletter.

If you are a visitor to tonight's meeting, we welcome you and your family to our club. Please ask as many questions as you want. You can join us on up to 3 club outings before becoming a member. Trip Leaders run each outing and will be glad to help you with tips on four-wheel driving and how to get the best from your vehicle. If you would like to join us on any trips and enjoy what 4WD can really bring, please fill out your details on our Trip Sheets.

The Club meets every second Friday in the month at 7.30 pm at the Gawler Elderly Centre Hall in Fourteenth Street, Gawler.

The meeting dates are shown on page 3 of this newsletter.

Annual membership fees are \$50 per vehicle/family, plus \$10 joining fee.



Gawler & Districts 4WD Club
Inc.
P.O. Box 486
Freeling SA 5372

Enquiries Contacts: President or Secretary
0407 604 601 (Quenton - President)
0409 091 851 (Jane – Secretary)
EMAIL: info@gawler4wd.com.au
WEB: www.gawler4wd.com.au

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

PRESIDENT/PUBLIC OFFICER Quenton Earl : 8523 2507 / 0407 604 601	VICE PRESIDENT Peter Cusick : 0421 330 104
TREASURER Wayne Heintze : 8523 0407 / 0432 339 213	SECRETARY Jane Jansen : 8523 0657 / 0409 091 851
EDITOR Sandra Harper : 8523 0889	PUBLISHER Peter Harper : 0410 526 317
MINUTES SECRETARY Deb Earl (<i>temporary for 2018</i>) : (General) (Committee - on rotation)	SOCIAL SECRETARIES Joann Wuttke : 0402 353 064 Julie Sieben : 0407 820 480
TRIPS/PROPERTY LIBRARIAN CO-ORDINATOR John Jansen : 0418 840 435	TRAINING CO-ORDINATOR DTU DELEGATE Peter Harper : 0410 526 317
COMMITTEE MEMBER Bob Tonkin : 0421 603 767	ASSOCIATION DELEGATE Quenton Earl : 8523 2507 / 0407 604 601
WELCOMING OFFICERS	Norma Rivett

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

	2018											
<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>Jun</i>	<i>Jul</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
General			2	13	11	1	13	10	14	12	9	14
Committee				4	2		4	1	5	3		5
					23					31		

NOTE: DEADLINE TIME - All newsletter articles to the Editor before Committee Meeting date

Dates for 2018

Adelaide Cup 12 March: Easter 30 March to 2 April: Queen's Birthday 11 June: Labour Day 1 October

Club committee meetings commence at 7:30pm on the scheduled Wednesday, on a rotating basis, held at various committee members' homes. All club members welcome.

Last General Meeting

April 2018
See the attached Minutes (members only)

NOTES FROM YOUR COMMITTEE

Presidents Report:

At this **May meeting**, Jan from the RAA will be talking to us about road rules. It will be a fun interactive talk that we can learn from, so it sounds very interesting.

We are still looking for a trip and **Trip Leader for the October Long Weekend**. One suggestion has been staying at Upalinna Station in the Flinders Ranges. (See their website www.upalinnastation.com.au).

Our Car Fridge RFDS Autumn **Raffle tickets** are now on sale at \$2.00 per ticket. If you haven't already taken a book to sell, please see Wayne to grab a book or two to sell. Half the proceeds are going to the Gawler branch of the Royal Flying Doctor Service, so it is a great cause. We need all our tickets sold to have maximum benefit to the RFDS. The winners will be drawn at our June meeting (ED: Reminder - That's only 4 weeks away!)

Stubby Holders are now in stock complete with Club Logo, www address and a space for your name. Only \$5.00 each - see me at the meeting if you would like a couple.

[Quenton]

Editors Report:

Hello and welcome to the May edition of the Newsletter.

I hope you enjoyed my article "Are you Overweight?" regarding caravan towing loads in last month's newsletter. John Halford from the [Australian Caravan & Towing](#) has already updated his spreadsheets following some suggestions I discovered whilst using his spreadsheets. These have now been uploaded onto our website.

This month I added a follow up article called "Airbags or Hitches". Understanding how best to set-up your 4WD tow vehicle especially when coupled to a large caravan or camper trailer is very important for the safety and wellbeing of everyone involved.

Also included is an interesting article regarding SNATCH straps and a timely reminder that using these recovery items can be very dangerous if used incorrectly.

Next month Peter and Sandra will have returned from their oversea jolly so the newsletter will return into their capable hands! (Unless someone else would like to do it ☺)

[Chris]




COMING EVENTS

HELP NEEDED	
Vacating 4WDSA Headquarters	
Working Events:	#1: Clean Up – Saturday 14th April #2: Setup for Garage Sale – Saturday 23rd June #3: Garage Sale – Saturday 7th July
Where:	4WDSA Headquarters Unit 2, 9 Cardiff Court, Cavan
When:	Times – Still to be determined
More Info	secretary@4wdsa.asn.au

Waterloo Day Trip Sunday 10th June 2018	
Trip Details:	Visiting the birthplace of Tom Kruse at Waterloo for morning tea in "Tom Kruse Park". Driving the back roads past the source of the "Light" river, through picturesque ranges, World's End and to Burra for lunch. Visiting Wolta Wolta Homestead in Clare before finishing for afternoon tea of coffee and cake at "Olive Bus Clare".
Where:	Waterloo, Burra , Clare districts.
Cost:	\$5.00 Adult \$1.00 Child Coffee and cake at your cost at Olive Bus Clare.
Meet:	"Map the Miner" at Kapunda
When:	9.30am
Trip Leader:	Quenton & Deb Earl 0407 604 601
More Info	Pack morning tea to share, Picnic lunch or Waters Bakery in Burra will be open, afternoon tea at "Olive Bus Clare". UHF radio a must (club has 2 to loan), chairs, table, camera.

Googs Track / Gawler Ranges Saturday 4th August to Tuesday 14th August 2018	
Trip Details:	TBA
Where:	Googs Track / Gawler Ranges
Cost:	TBA
Meet:	TBA
When:	TBA
Trip Leader:	Roy Schwarz, 0412 679 973
More Info	Tents Only

GUEST SPEAKERS

	<p><i>These guest speakers have kindly agreed to talk with us at the following general meetings:</i></p>	
	<p>11 May 2018</p>	<p>Jan from RAA – "Road Rules Quiz"</p>
	<p>01 June 2018</p>	<p>Kristin Weidenbach (See below)</p>
	<p>13 July 2018</p>	<p>"The Defibrillator" – How does it all work? Deb Earl to show us all about our new club purchase!</p>
	<p>14 September 2018</p>	<p>Lisa Brock from Arthur J. Gallagher & Co will speak about 4WD and camping insurance. (Bring along any questions and Lisa will try and address them)</p>

Information about our June Guest Speaker - Kristin Weidenbach

Kristin Weidenbach writes popular non-fiction focused on Australian history.

Her picture books for children include KING OF THE OUTBACK: THE STORY OF SIDNEY KIDMAN, MEET BANJO PATERSON and TOM THE OUTBACK MAILMAN, which won the Children’s Book Council of Australia’s Eve Pownall award in 2013.

Her adult titles include GROWING UP MOONTA, ROCK STAR: THE STORY OF REG SPRIGG, and the Australian bestseller MAILMAN OF THE BIRDSVILLE TRACK: THE STORY OF TOM KRUSE.

She occasionally writes for OUTBACK magazine and has written the official histories of the CRUISING YACHT CLUB OF SA and the energy company SANTOS.

RAFFLE ROSTER

*We ask if all members could kindly donate an item for a raffle prize each month to approx value of \$15. **Please check below to see if your name is on the roster.** Without these regular contributions, the raffle would be unable to go ahead each month. *To make it fair and equitable to everyone participating in the raffle, please use the \$15 as a guide.**

Donations can be given to the Social Committee (Joann Wuttke or Julie Sieben) any time.

May	June	July
Max and Lyn Leske	Norma and Bronte Rivett	Chris and Julie Sieben
Lyn Lillecrapp	Roy and Bronwyn Schwarz	Rob and Pauline Tonkin

GAWLER & DISTRICTS 4WD CLUB



Stickers For Sale – Only \$2.00 each
New design stickers complete with Web address – \$3.50 each
Magnetic Name Badges – \$10 each

See Quenton at the General Meeting

BIRTHDAY WISHES

Gawler and Districts 4WD Club wishes to extend a Happy Birthday greeting to the following members and family:

◆◆ May ◆◆

Martin Kisbee
Roy Schwarz
Bronwyn Schwarz



FOR SALE

FREE MEMBER'S "FOR SALE" ADVERTISING



Members can submit requests for a "FOR SALE" ad, free of charge, but there are some guidelines:

- (a) Maximum of 6 lines per ad (similar to a typical local newspaper ad)
- (b) Adverts can only appear for a maximum of 3 consecutive months
- (c) Must supply contact details (either a phone or email)
- (d) Editor reserves rights to reject and/or tailor any submitted adverts.

Please send full details to our editor editor@gawler4wd.com.au for inclusion in our next newsletter providing it arrives BEFORE the newsletter deadline! (See page 3)

Want to advertise in our Newsletter?



Advertising Rates (12 months)	
Quarter Page	\$50
Half Page	\$100
Full Page	\$200
One off Advert : \$10	

Contact our editor editor@gawler4wd.com.au for details
[Fees apply and payment has to be made prior to printing]

DTU TRAINING EVENTS

The DTU Training Calendar has been confirmed and repeated below.

Dates:	Event Name	Venue	Description
Sat 07 Apr - Sun 08 Apr	Basic Theory (DTU)	Cavan HQ	Course Cost: \$20, Access Charge: NIL
No Nominations – Course cancelled			
Sat 16 Jun - Sun 17 Jun	DTU Training - Mud and Water	Ashbourne	Course Fee: \$40, Property Access Cost: \$50
Sun 28 Oct	Trip Planning (DTU)	Cavan HQ	Course Fee: \$10, Access Cost: NIL
Sat 03 Nov - Sun 04 Nov	DTU Professional Development	Peake	Open to Club Training: Training Fee: \$45, Property Access Cost \$40
Sat 10 Nov	GPS and Ozi Explorer	Cavan HQ	Please note that a FULL version of Ozi Explorer running on a PC is required

No update on the Hema or First Aid courses other than "later this year"

If you want to get on any of these courses, please let me know.

[Pete 04 1052 6317]

CLUB HISTORY AND ARCHIVE PROJECT



Our club is almost 16 years old and many of the older records and club information is probably only held in paper form. That's great, for those that have the paper, but not a lot of use to other members of the club. The best record of the club is probably the monthly newsletters. For the Tenth anniversary Chris (former publisher) did make a collection of some old electronic newsletters, but this only goes back to August 2009. We also have a scan of the first newsletter that was published in June 2002.

So, if you, or any former member you know, has a hard copy of any newsletters prior to August 2009, I would be very grateful if I could borrow them for scanning.

[Pete]



**Don't forget to
CHECK OUT OUR SPONSORS and ADVERTS**
Maybe you have something at home you would like to sell.

Contact us for details

AUTUMN RAFFLE

As many of you will recall, our August 2017 meeting was held at Gawler Mechanical. This meeting coincided with the launch of Gawler Mechanical opening an Ironman 4.x 4 franchise.

At that meeting, Amy and Brett, donated an Ironman 4 x 4 30l Fridge Freezer to the club. The committee has decided that the best use of the fridge would be to be used as a raffle prize in a raffle to be run by the club with 50% of the proceeds to be donated to the RFDS.



First Prize - Valued at \$750 from Gawler Mechanical

<https://www.facebook.com/Gawler-Mechanical-171513072869777/>

We have also received generous donations to 3 minor prizes:

Second Prize: \$50 Meat tray from Wintulichs, <http://wintulichs.com/>

Third Prize: \$50 Voucher from the Golden Fleece Hotel, <http://goldenfleecegawler.com.au/>

Fourth Prize \$50 Voucher from Beauty on Calton, <https://www.facebook.com/beautyon.calton/>

WHY NOT GET A BOOK AND SELL THEM AT WORK OR TO FRIENDS?

The tickets are on sale and cost \$2 per ticket. **Only 500 tickets will be issued.**

The raffle will be drawn at 8pm, 1 June 2018 at Club Meeting, Elderly Centre, GAWLER.

GAWLER AND DISTRICTS 4WD CLUB INC.
Autumn 2018 Raffle
Part Proceeds To RFDS

Royal Flying Doctor Service
The furthest corner. The finest care.

First Prize: Ironman 4 x 4 IceCube Fridge 30L V
\$750
Donated by Amy and Brett from Gawler Mechanical

Second Prize: \$50 Meat Tray from Wintulichs
Third Prize: \$50 Voucher from Golden Fleece Hotel
Fourth Prize: \$50 Voucher from Beauty on Calton

Tickets \$2 Each
Drawn at 8pm, 1 June 2018 at Club Meeting, Elderly Centre, GAWLER
Raffle Number: xxxxxxxxxx
500 Tickets. On sale from 2 March 2018

RAFFLE CLOSES AT JUNE MEETING - HURRY AND BUY YOURS TODAY!

SPONSOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



GAWLER

FOR ALL YOUR 4WD AND SUV TYRES
OR
PASSENGER TYRES AND WHEEL ALIGNMENTS

**CONTACT MICHAEL OR JASON
on 08 85223000**

WE WILL BEAT ANY COMPETITORS PRICE

COOPER, BFG, BRIDGESTONE, KUMHO, TOYO,
MAXXIS, GENERAL

Gawler Fishing & Outdoors

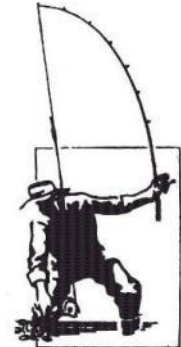
48 Murray St Gawler SA 5118

Phone 08 8522 6200

fishnout@bigpond.net.au

Club Discount with **club card
applies to all non-special items**

- *Fishing Tackle*
- *Fridge / Freezers*
- *Guns & ammo*
- *Binoculars*
- *Knives*
- *Camping gear*
- *GPS systems*
- *Swags*
- *Marine*
- *Repairs*



- General Automotive maintenance
- Logbook Servicing
- Suspension & Brakes
- Performance
- Starter motors
- Alternators
- C.V Joints & Shafts
- Radiators
- Batteries
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Gawler South SA 5118

Work Shop: 08 85 224655

Sales Rep: 0497 924 666

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- Underbody Protection
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- Snorkels, Steps, Bars & Rails
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- Camping Accessories
- Fridges

gawlermechanical@gmail.com



and much more.

MEMBERS NOTICE BOARD



PHOTO COMPETITION

Yes, it's on again. You know the rules but just in case, here they are:

The PHOTO COMPETITION RULES:

- (a) No specific categories apply
- (b) Each member may enter up to four (4) photos
- (c) Photos should be copy (not originals) - Size 15cm x 10cm (6"x4")
- (d) Photos should have been taken on a club trip during the last 12 months
- (e) All photos must be labelled on the back with your name and where the photo was taken
- (f) Entries to be handed to John by close of November General meeting
- (g) Late entries will not be accepted

Entries to be handed to John by close of
NOVEMBER GENERAL MEETING

Late entries will not be accepted.

So get your photos in !!!

DOUBLE CHANCE OF a PRIZE!!



TRIP REPORT COMPETITION

It's on again....

The committee has once again, decided to continue with the Trip Report competition this year to reward those who submit a Trip Report throughout the year!

It does not matter whether the report is long or short, serious or funny, whether you have written one or more, your name will go in the "hat" for each report that is written.

Winner will be drawn out of the collection of names at the end of the year either at the Christmas Show BBQ or at the AGM.

**So the more reports you write
the better your chances of winning!**

**There will be another
Amazing Prize
so please keep-on writing!!!**

GAWLER AND DISTRICTS 4WD WEB SITE

Have you checked out our web site lately? www.gawler4wd.com.au

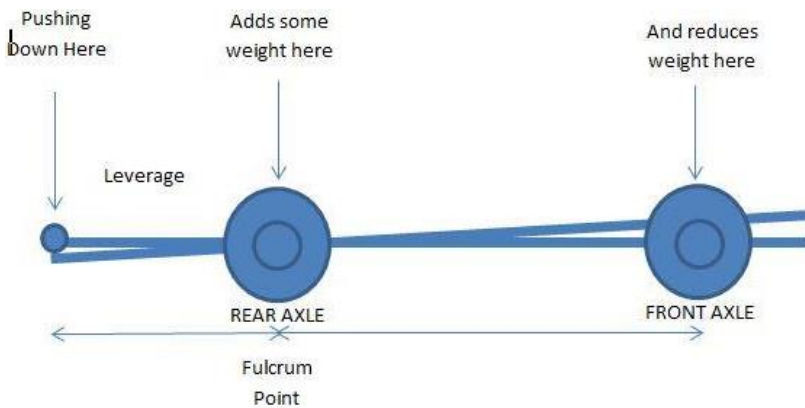
Details of when meetings are to be held, what trips and events are coming up along with useful links to lots of 4WD resources are included. Read about the latest trip report or view our photo library. Of course, you can download one of our newsletters (back to Aug 2009) including our special 10th year anniversary versions.



Check our FACEBOOK link as well. www.facebook.com/GawlerandDistricts4WDClub

TOWING VEHICLES – AIRBAGS OR HITCHES?

This simple diagram (as provided by Michael Carter from the [Australian Caravan & Towing](#) Facebook group) depicts how adding weight onto the vehicle tow ball changes the weight distribution across the axles of the vehicle. Therefore, the impact of BALL WEIGHT resulting from the trailer (caravan, boat or camper) and its contents can greatly affect the towing vehicle overall performance.



As the BALL WEIGHT increases - Vehicle ride may not be level, excessive weight (down-force) may appear on rear axle and reduced weight (up-force) on the front axle. This can result in un-stable vehicle handling, poor steering and braking, and potential physical damage to vehicle suspension. The blinding of the oncoming traffic with your headlights might also not be appreciated by everyone!

So what options do you have to correct this situation? Two popular approaches involve fitting additional equipment to your vehicle and/or coupling, each resulting in different solutions to this problem, with some "good" and "bad" consequences. Presented here is my logical and practical view (and, believe me, there are plenty out there regrading this topic), so you will need to do your own research before an ideal solution for you can be determined.

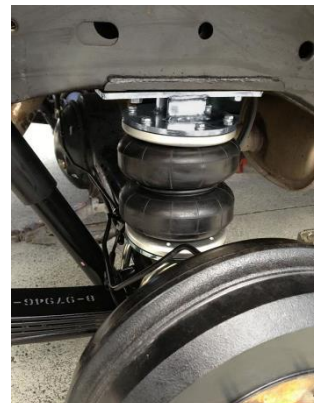


One approach is to fit a **Weight Distribution Hitch** (WDH) between your vehicle's towbar and the trailer. This picture shows a typical setup that involves using tension bars connected to the tow bar coupling to transfer weight (down-force) of the trailer as an up-force to the rear vehicle chassis resulting in a load transfer off the rear axle and onto the front axle. The resulting up-

force will cause the rear of the vehicle to rise (in relationship to the rear axle), allowing the towing vehicle to return to a level position.

The other approach is **Air Suspension Kits** (ASK) or **AirBags** that are fitted onto the rear axle to help stiffen the rear suspension to support this new down-force loading and to effectively push the body up (in relationship to the rear axle) so again resulting in the vehicle returning to a more level position. These airbags can be inflated/deflated to provide the required lifting support depending on the loads applied.

Whilst both approaches will return the vehicle to a level position, under the hood there are significant differences in the potential effect on your towing vehicle and its consequential handling when on the road. It may also result in physically damaging your vehicle and/or make your vehicle unstable or overloaded causing potential dangers to your vehicle and its contents, namely YOU!

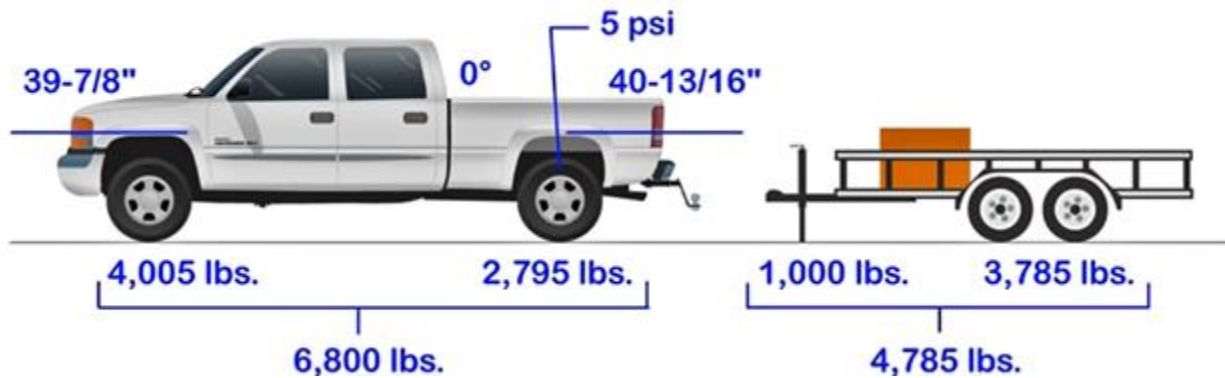


Most of what I present in this article is the summary result of the findings presenting in the following video. **[HIGHLY RECOMMEND YOU WATCH IT FIRST](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XBZu39pQ8Gg)**

The Difference between using Weight Distribution and Air Bags to Level Your Ride

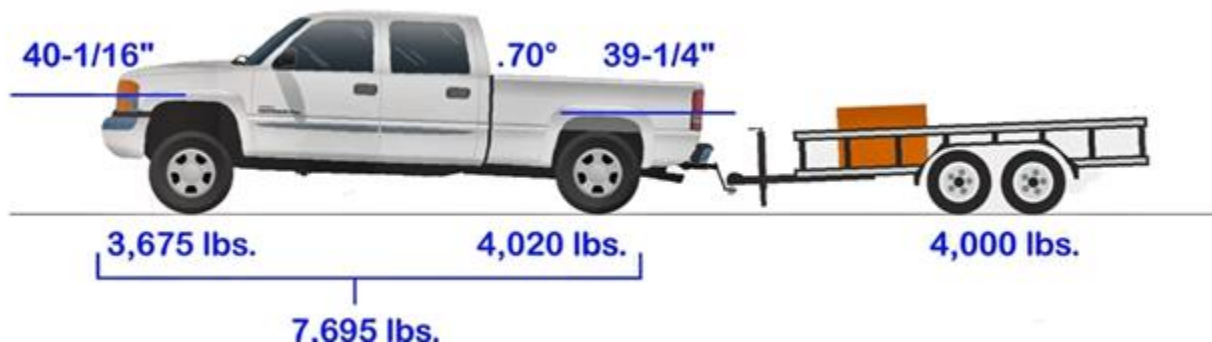
YOUTUBE VIDEO <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XBZu39pQ8Gg>

Unfortunately for us, as this video is produced in the USA (by Fastway Trailer Products) it uses inches and pounds but the results are indicative of the effects in using these two approaches. In the video, they take a towing vehicle and a heavily loaded trailer and measure the effect on the vehicle (levels and axle weight) as the loaded trailer is hitched on. They then measure what happens when AirBags are enabled or when a Weight Distribution Hitch is used.



BASELINE MEASUREMENTS

Shows the vehicle baseline measurements, height of the wheel arches and the axle weights. At this point the fitted AirBags are set to 5 psi (i.e. not effective) and the trailer has a 1000 lbs load added to it.



TRAILER LOAD ADDED

With the trailer now coupled to the vehicle without a WDH or the use of the AirBags we can see the impact of the added ball weight (from the trailer) and can observe the measured results on the vehicle axles and the resultant wheel arch heights.

How a Weight Distribution Hitch works: (as researched on the Internet!)

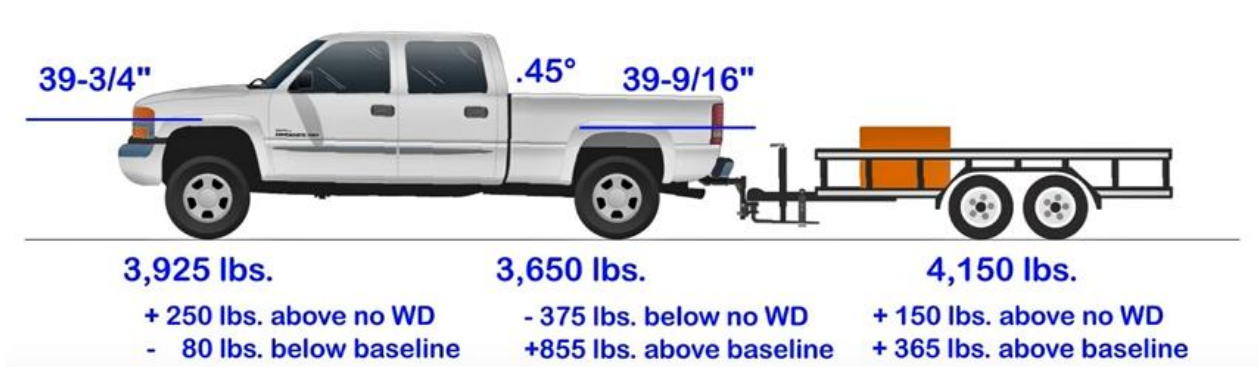
With a trailer load imposed on a tow vehicle, consider firstly a gooseneck style trailer (or 5th wheel) with the load being imposed in front of the rear axle, most of the weight will be imposed on the rear axle with some imposed on the front axle.

Now, if we move the load point just behind the rear axle, the rear axle load will be increased and the front axle will be decreased. This is the common situation with conventional trailers when they are coupled up to the tow vehicle.

Coupling in a WDH acts like a "rotation" device, using the tension bars to provide a rotational load at the rear of the vehicle, resulting in:

- **The rear vehicle suspension will extend (load decreased)**
- **The front vehicle suspension will compress (load increased)**
- **The trailer suspension will compress (load increased)**

The degree to which each of the above occurs depends on many factors and sometimes these are not obvious and may lead one to misinterpret what is really happening. In the video, the following was observed and measured:



WITH WEIGHT DISTRIBUTION HITCH ENGAGED

*Using a WDH does help level the vehicle but a **small 0.45-degree offset remains**. The rear axle loading is reduced by 375lbs, transferring some load back to the trailer (+150 lbs) and the some onto the front axle (+250 lbs).*

How an AirBag suspension works: (as researched on the Internet!)

Using the same conventional trailer loading, the AirBags do not change the load at the rear of the vehicle; they only raise the suspension height, so the effect is simple:

- **The rear vehicle suspension will extend (load unchanged)**

On some vehicles (e.g. with two live axles) there may be a small residual change at the front of the tow vehicle however this is minimal. In the video, the following was observed and measured:



WITH AIRBAGS INFLATED

*With the AirBags inflated to 55.5 psi, we see the vehicle return to a near level position. However, we have **increased the rear axle loadings** by 135lbs (from when the AirBags were deflated) and the front axle loads have **further decreased**.*

So which Device should you use?

Selecting the device to use comes down to identifying the problem, the issues and concerns wanting to be addressed within your specific rig configuration.

If you are concerned about rear axle loadings, a WDH will help. If you are concerned about imbalance on steering the vehicle, then WDH will provide the best solution. If you are concerned about removing any sag between vehicle and trailer, a combination of both may be required. If you are concerned about stabilisation, a specific combination might best resolve it. If you are just concerned about rear axle stability then maybe AirBags are good enough.

One reason people may fit a WDH is to reduce sway - this is a more complex issue and a WDH can provide some sway reduction through friction whilst other WDH's are fitted with specific sway reduction devices. However, addressing the cause of the sway should be considered first and that is the subject of yet another important topic (and not covered here!)

Some rigs find that a WDH helps with "settling down" of a rig by reducing bounce at the back of the tow vehicle, but this can also be addressed in a similar vein to sway and by fitting AirBags onto the tow vehicle, or other suspension product as required.

If you need to add stiffness to the rear suspension, then it is likely that you are overloading it beyond the vehicle design limits! Some consider that if you are adding stiffness to the rear suspension without doing the same to the front suspension will change the handling geometry of the vehicle, sometimes with dangerous effects.

AirBags do help correct the height at the rear, but they also maintain or increase the stiffness of the rear springs hopefully to retain or improve vehicle stability but this may become a conflict issue as manufacturers of vehicles tune them more towards un-laden ride comfort. (SUV vs 4WD).

Why WDH?

- Generally where significant ball weights (> 160Kgs) then use of a WDH is recommended;

Why NOT WDH?

- Can be difficult and hard to fit every time you need to couple up the trailer;
- May require manual adjustments to the coupling whenever the trailer loads vary;
- Typically quite heavy and need to be included in any Gross Mass weight calculations;
- Can cause stiffening of the rear suspension that may lead to ride handling issues.

Why AirBags?

- Can be varied to suit various loads, typically from within the drivers reach;
- Provide rear support stiffness to help stabilise "soft" vehicle suspension;

Why NOT AirBags?

- Can burst, especially when under pressure, causing vehicle stability issues;
- Making suspension too "hard" may make the ride uncomfortable and difficult to manage especially over uneven surfaces;
- Un-balanced suspension geometry may cause un-expected and dangerous effects especially during heavy vehicle actions (swerving or braking hard);
- Easy to "overdo" using the airbag to try and resolve issues of poor loadings and inappropriate mass loads (exceed vehicles capabilities);
- Can result in excessive loads being placed on the rear axle exceeding manufacturer ratings and work against vehicle manufactures wanting to tune for un-laden ride comfort.

Conclusion!

WDH's do a good job at what they are designed to do and are very often used in conjunction with rear AirBags to simply to get the best overall performance from your rig.

If you add AirBags to the rear suspension of a WDH tow vehicle, you can often decrease the load on the WDH ("drop-a-link") whilst maintaining the height of the rig and still introduce the desired stiffness back into the rear springs as they are no longer being "tricked" into being un-laden. This combination is widely used for enabling the best overall comfort, stability and safety for the whole rig and allows a flexible tuning option to handle different configurations in different environments.

For my Mitsubishi Pajero with its independent rear coil springs, having both a WDH and AirBags fitted is my best option providing I monitor their usage with any varying loads, road conditions and/or vehicle/rig stability and ride comfortability. I am now sold on this as my solution. ☺

[Chris Sieben]

MAN KILLED BY SNAPPED RECOVERY STRAP IN QLD



REPRINTED FROM 4X4 ADVENTURES

<http://mr4x4.com.au>

WES WHITWORTH MARCH 19, 2018 NEWS

A 51-year-old man has been killed by a snapped recovery strap whilst he was assisting in recovering a bogged vehicle north of Mackay in Queensland, yesterday. At this time not a great deal is known, however the strap being used has broken, or the point it was attached to on the front of the bogged vehicle has snapped causing it to fly through the rear windscreen and hit the driver in the head.

Emergency services attempted to revive the man near the Gregory River, 150 kilometres north of Mackay, however he was declared deceased at the scene. Our sympathies and condolences are with his family and those involved with the incident.



The incident serves as a timely warning, both to ensure you're using the appropriate equipment, and as safely as possible.

Factory fitted points to the vast majority of 4X4's are only to be used as tie down points whilst it is being towed on a trailer or tow truck, or to be flat towed with minimal resistance on the vehicle. Not while they have 40 tonnes of mud in front of them, and require eight tonnes of pulling power to get them out!

They are neither rated to be used as recovery points, nor are they built to take the strain of being "snatched" out with a snatch strap.



WARNING
INCORRECT USE MAY RESULT IN INJURY OR DEATH!



Vehicle **OCCUPANTS** and **BYSTANDERS** have been **KILLED** by flying projectiles (such as tow balls) when recovery straps have been attached incorrectly.

NEVER attach recovery straps to vehicle fittings such as tow balls, tow bars, tie-down points or tow hooks.

ONLY attach recovery straps to an **APPROVED** recovery point/device that is suitably rated for use with the strap.

BEFORE attempting a vehicle recovery all passengers must exit the vehicles and stand as far away as possible.

Tow-balls – DO NOT USE AS A RECOVER POINT. EVER!

Recovering a vehicle is an inherently risky and dangerous task, and regardless of what you do, you will never be able to fully remove all danger and risk from performing a recovery. The best that we can do is do it as safely as possible, and using rated recovery points (and rated high tensile bolts) attached directly to the chassis of the vehicle goes a long way to mitigating the risk involved.

“Winch Dampers” are another tool which we should all have access to (which aren’t even accurately named – “recovery damper” may have made more sense) – they too can and should be used on snatch and tow straps to minimise the kinetic energy of a broken strap (or winch rope), and anything steel attached to the end of it.



Be safe! Get a mate to help out and make sure you’re using all the right gear!

It seems that every year we hear in our community of 4x4er’s, someone suffers a serious injury or death whilst a recovery is being performed. Anyone who says “If they were using the right gear properly it would never have happened” is just wrong – you can never completely remove the risk and danger from a recovery. You can however, go a bloody long way to minimising it.

Do the right thing, be safe, and use all the tools you can to ensure you, your mates, and your family get home safe every time. And always be the first to offer a bit of advice to the younger generation out on the tracks that you see doing it the wrong way. Chances are they don’t know any better, and 5 minutes of your time, lending them your damper, and giving them some pointers on how to do it safely, might just save someone’s life.

Friday Funnies

(Thanks from Westprint Friday Five)

A young man named John received a parrot as a gift. The parrot had a bad attitude and an even worse vocabulary. Every word out of the bird's mouth was rude, obnoxious and laced with profanity. John tried and tried to change the bird's attitude by consistently saying only polite words, playing soft music and anything else he could think of to 'clean up' the bird's vocabulary.

Finally, John was fed up and he yelled at the parrot. The parrot yelled back. John shook the parrot and the parrot got angrier and even more rude. John, in desperation, threw up his hands, grabbed the bird and put him in the freezer. For a few minutes the parrot squawked and kicked and screamed. Then suddenly there was total quiet. Not a peep was heard.

Fearing that he'd hurt the parrot, John quickly opened the door to the freezer. The parrot calmly stepped out onto John's outstretched arms and said "I believe I may have offended you with my rude language and actions. I'm sincerely remorseful for my inappropriate transgressions and I fully intend to do everything I can to correct my rude and unforgivable behavior."

John was stunned at the change in the bird's attitude.

As he was about to ask the parrot what had made such a dramatic change in his behavior, the bird spoke-up, very softly,

"May I ask what the turkey did?"

-
- Today a man knocked on my door and asked for a small donation towards the local swimming pool. I gave him a glass of water.
 - I read that 4,153,237 people got married last year. Not to cause any trouble, but shouldn't that be an even number?
 - I find it ironic that the colours red, white and blue stand for freedom until they are flashing behind you.
 - When wearing a bikini, women reveal 90% of their body... men are so polite they only look at the covered parts.
 - A recent study has found that women who carry a little extra weight live longer than the men who mention it.
 - Relationships are a lot like algebra. Have you ever looked at your X and wondered Y?
 - You know that tingly little feeling you get when you like someone? That's your common sense leaving your body.
 - Did you know that dolphins are so smart that within a few weeks of captivity, they can train people to stand on the very edge of the pool and throw them fish?
 - My therapist says I have a preoccupation with vengeance. We'll see about that!
 - I think my neighbour is stalking me as she's been googling my name on her computer. I saw it through my telescope last night.
 - Money talks ...but all mine ever says is good-bye.
 - You're not fat, you're just easier to see.
 - If you think nobody cares whether you're alive, try missing a car payment.
 - My therapist said that my narcissism causes me to misread social situations. I'm pretty sure she was hitting on me.
 - My 60-year kindergarten reunion is coming up soon and I'm worried about the 70 kilos I've gained since then.
 - Maccas has a slogan, "If it's your birthday, the meal is on us." If you're in Maccas and it's your birthday, your life sucks!
 - The pharmacist asked me my birth date again today. I'm pretty sure she's going to get me something.
 - The location of your mailbox shows you how far away from your house you can be in a dressing gown before you start looking like a mental patient
 - Money can't buy happiness, but it keeps the kids in touch!

WYPERFIELD NP PATCHEWOLLOCK TRIP REPORT

EASTER Weekend, March 30th – 2nd April 2018

Woke up to a beautiful autumn morning. Blue skies with 15 degrees at 0910h. With Bob and Pauline as our trip leaders, we left Patchi Sunset Retreat and headed of toward the Patchwallock Silos.

The Silos were painted by Fintan Magee in October 2016. The farmer featured is Noodle Hulland chosen because he was slim enough to fit on the silo.

After a group photo, we headed towards Wyperfield National Park in the Big Victorian Desert. Through our travels, we saw camels, Wedge-Tail eagle chasing a flock of galahs. There were a few kangaroos jumping about one decided to take a quick hop in front of Max and Lyn's car.

We stopped for morning tea about 11:00am. After a quick feed and water, we were off to our next destination, O'Sullivan's Lookout. It was a short 1.1km walk to the top of the sand dune for a spectacular view.



Silo at Patchewollock

All made it three quarters of the way up and a few more went for the top view.



O'Sullivan's Lookout over Werrengan Plains

And a view it was, looking out over Werrengan Plains. Low level shrub with green and gold foliage, sand dunes and dusty tracks were visible as fa as the eye could see.

Time to head back along Gunners Track towards the historical marker of a timbered water well. Early settlers had to obtain and store water as best as they could.

The wells were in use from the 1870's to the 1930's.

Lunch was eaten at the Rabbit Hut.

The original Rabbit Hut was a tent in 1873 and was replaced in 1988 with a tin hut by the Ferguson family who were rabbiters in the area.

Rabbits were a big problem in the Mallee area and even now are still under rabbit control.

So many tracks to go down.



Rabbit Hut (1988)

Our last stop for the day was Snowdrift. It was a large sand dune that was being used like a snow hill. With make shift sleighs with old tyres, plastic bags and Frisbee, anything the kids could get hold of to have some fun to slide down the sand dune.



Our driving had come to an end. After a day that was enjoyed by all it was time to head back to Patchi Sunset Retreat for happy hour followed by tea at the Patchiwallock Pub.

Thank you to our trip leader Bob and Pauline and to the members that were there for their great company.



[Jo Wuttke]

Couple of the locals spotted hanging around the caravan park!