**Care and Maintenance of your RV**

Care and maintenance of your RV is an important step in Maintaining the safety, reliability, and appearance, both interior and exterior of the vehicle. Where you use and how often you use your RV will determine the level of maintenance required and how often it is needed. Preventative maintenance is important to ensure a long life for your RV and its appliances. It also minimises the possibility that something stops working when you are a long way from an RV workshop. Most RV’s water ingress warranties have a requirement for an annual inspection to ensure there are no water leaks and if there are, they are eliminated before any damage occurs.

The following are some tips that will assist you maintaining your RV in pristine condition.

**External care**

The exterior comprises a range of materials including GRP (fibreglass), ABS (plastic mouldings), Aluminium, Steel, Glass, Perspex, rubber seals and gaskets, and decals. There offer differing levels of resistance to the effects of harsh and abrasive cleaners.

Wash the exterior with mild cleaning detergents. Do not use harsh cleaners containing ammonia or caustic cleaners. These can damage surfaces and decals.

Do not use a commercial automatic type of Car Wash. Water can enter the refrigerator vents, gas vents or around other ventilation openings.

Using a high-pressure cleaner (water blaster) requires a high level of care. The nozzle must be kept a minimum of 750mm away from the vehicle to protect surfaces, especially decals. Care must be taken to avoid any ventilation openings and rubber seals.

Do not wash the vehicle in full sunshine. Use plenty of warm soapy water and a soft cloth, sponge or soft brush designed for cleaning vehicles. Take extra care washing “double glazed” windows. They are made from a soft plastic and are easily scratched. Nylon brushes will leave fine scratches which over time becomes very unsightly from the interior and should not be used on these windows. Glass windows (always single glazed) and more robust and can be cleaned with a brush.

Applying an automotive or marine wax once or twice a year will keep the surfaces looking new for longer and make cleaning easier. This should be done out of sunlight. Be careful around graphics, work with the graphic, not against it.

If you are having trouble removing dead insects a pre-soak comprising 50% detergent and 50% water applied with a garden sprayer to the problem areas and allowed to soak will make removing them much easier.

**Perspex (Acrylic) Windows**

Perspex windows are delicate and require special treatment. NEVER rub Perspex windows when dry. Dust particles will scratch them. Only use plenty of warm water with a mild detergent and soft cloth. Never use glass cleaning chemicals, abrasive or alcohol/solvent containing cleaners. This can lead to premature brittleness and stress cracking. There are specific cleaners and scratch removers available for Perspex windows if required. Treating the rubber seals with silicone or glycerine will prevent them from sticking to the Perspex surface.

**Roof**

Inspect the roof for cleanliness and any possible damage. If the RV is manufactured in NZ or Australia carefully check any exposed areas of sealant for shrinkage, cracking or general deterioration. If any repair is required, we recommend you have this done at a reputable RV workshop.

If cleaning is required care must be taken to prevent slips and falls when working at height. Rinse the roof and surrounding walls. Use a mild detergent and soft brush and clean. Rinse well taking care not to force water at the ventilation outlets on the roof. Check with the RV manufacturer to see if it is allowable to stand on your RV roof.

**Underbody**

Check the underbody for corrosion and damage after each trip. Remove any build up of dirt and grime to prevent corrosion.

**Waste water tank**

Rinse the waste water tank after a trip with clean water if possible. Take care doing this to prevent excessive water pressure causing water in the smell traps being forced into the interior of the RV. The waste water tank can be treated with specific waste water tank treatments to prevent bacterial growth. A smell of Hydrogen Sulphide or similar is an indication that the waste water tank needs to be cleaned.

**Interior**

If possible, treat any stains immediately.

Vacuum carpets and cushions regularly

Regularly sweep or vacuum the vinyl flooring. When washing the vinyl flooring do not use a wax based cleaner and ensure the floor is dry before carpets are refitted.

Hard surfaces (walls, ceiling, joinery, bench tops, etc) can be cleaned with a mild detergent and soft cloth. If this does not work and a more aggressive cleaner is required, please test in an inconspicuous location first to ensure there is no damage from the cleaner.

Toilets and handbasins etc are typically constructed from plastics so are very susceptible to scratching and cracking caused by aggressive cleaners and very hot water. Never use water that is hotter than 60ᵒ at any time. Cracking and micro cracking in plastics is almost always the result of chemical or thermal stress caused by heat or chemicals.

Do not pour boiling water down any drain. This can cause damage to the drainage system.

Never clean stainless steel surfaces with a scourer. Avoid anything that can cause scratches in the surface.

Clean up any spills around the gas hobs immediately. A large spill can adversely effect the operation of the gas jet causing poor or faulty combustion. If this occurs the gas flame will look “wrong” and should not be used until such time a suitably qualified person has cleaned the burner assembly and confirmed the assembly is safe to operate.

Brush insect screens on doors, windows, and skylights with a soft brush of vacuum with a brush attachment. Grease or stubborn dirt and be removed with a mild soap

**One final tip.**

Silicone spray is your friend. If you have a sticky hinge, blind or similar careful application of silicone can in most instances provide instant improvement. You can find small cans at most hardware stores that can be kept in the motorhome. Note, it is NOT CRC or WD40 or similar and they are not substitutes.

Spraying onto a soft cloth and applying to the surface prevents the silicone going where it isn’t wanted.