



SUBJECT: Driver Safety

RECIPIENTS: All Council Services (including schools)

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Avoiding accidents when travelling on company business

There are an alarming number of accidents that occur on the road where the people involved are driving for business reasons. I'm not just talking about transport drivers; I'm talking about car drivers. A common, but well-intentioned, mistake is to assume that all you need to do is to train your drivers. Drivers are only part of the problem; you need to address the following 4 topics:

Management - You need to verify that your drivers have current licences and follow up on incidents and convictions, including speeding. Be aware of drivers who may be high risk, as discussed below. It may be that you decide that some key drivers would benefit from a refresher assessment (I enjoyed mine) but do not do this in isolation.

Task - The first question you should ask is whether or not the journey is necessary. Would a conference call work, or could the person travel by train? Could multiple journeys be avoided by grouping visits to the same area and staying overnight if necessary? Tasks must be tailored to minimise fatigue and pressures that encourage risk-taking. Don't expect someone to be at the other end of the country for a 9 am meeting. If car travel is necessary, get them to travel the night before. Encourage people to take breaks; given the options of different routes with the same risk and travel time, I always choose the route with the best coffee break options. Similarly, I avoid making 3 visits on the same day; one always overruns and that means that there is pressure to get to the last visit on time, which encourages risk taking and stress.

Vehicle - The vehicle must be roadworthy of course, For example, tyres must have sufficient tread, be free from damage and correctly inflated. And the vehicle must be suitable for the task. If loads are to be transported, are they within the capacity of the vehicle, is the load too far back, is it secure, etc.? Remember that rear seatbacks are not an effective way of restraining objects in the boot should a crash occur.

Driver - Do you have any drivers in high risk categories? For example, young males or drivers who may be a higher risk of heart or other medical conditions. Have you any people who you could suspect of being prone to road rage? Courtesy is not overly evident on our roads and people on business travel have had a traditionally bad press in this area. Many road rage situations are the product of an initial act of poor discourtesy that escalates into a more serious situation, sometimes with very serious repercussions. Encourage drivers to avoid acting discourteously and avoid arguments with other drivers. Clearly state that mobile phones must not be used whilst driving and the proper place for eating and drinking is during a break, not behind the wheel.

If you address all of the above topics, then you can reduce the risks from road travel. Unfortunately, you cannot eliminate them.- See more at: <http://www.shponline.co.uk/home/blog/full/driver-safety-avoiding-accidents-when-travelling-on-company-business#sthash.rEpN6X4M.dpuf>

LCC – G31 – Managing Road Risk Policy

If you require further assistance or clarification on the subject please contact:

Your Mouchel Health & Safety Adviser (see George section: Corporate > Information for Working > Risk Management > H&S Advisers)