



accidents don't have to happen

An Introduction to Managing Occupational Road Risk



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Introduction

Driving is the most dangerous work activity that most people do, and it contributes to far more accidental deaths and serious injuries than all other work-related activities.

Very few organisations can operate without using the road. Millions of vehicles - lorries, vans, taxis, buses, emergency service vehicles, company cars, motorcycles, bicycles - are used for work purposes, and many people work on foot on the road (maintenance workers, refuse collectors, postal workers, vehicle breakdown employees, the police and so on).

Unfortunately, this means that all these workers face risks on the road because they are doing their jobs. They can also create risks for everyone else on the road.

The HSE estimate that "more than a quarter of all road traffic incidents may involve somebody who is driving as part of their work at the time."

Police road accident data shows that every year over 500 people are killed (almost one third of all road deaths), 5,000 seriously injured and more than 40,000 slightly injured in collisions involving drivers or riders who are driving for work. This includes other road users, as well as at-work drivers and riders themselves. In fact, 70% of those killed in a work-related journey are passengers, pedestrians and riders rather than the at-work drivers and riders.



HSE'S [Driving at Work](#) Guidelines state that

"health and safety law applies to on-the-road work activities and the risks should be effectively managed within a health and safety system."

Essentially, this means that you need to put in place policies, people and procedures to enable you to understand:

- How your organisation uses the road (the staff who do so, the vehicles they use and the journeys they make)
- The risks this creates to your staff and other people
- The potential consequences of those risks, and
- The measures needed to manage and reduce these risks and consequences.

This will make your organisation more efficient and successful by helping you to:

- Keep your employees and volunteers safe while at work
- Protect other road users
- Save money by reducing crashes and incidents
- Reduce business interruptions
- Avoid adverse publicity associated with crashes
- Promote smoother driving which improves fuel efficiency and reduces environmental impact



The Law

Work related road safety is a shared responsibility between employers and their employees. Two sets of law apply - health and safety law and road safety law.

Health and Safety law applies just as much to on-road work activities as to any other work activity. The HSE state that "Health and safety law applies to on-the-road work activities and the risks should be effectively managed within a health and safety system."¹ Therefore, employers must conduct suitable risk assessments and put in place all 'reasonably practicable' measures to ensure that work related journeys are safe, staff are fit and are competent to drive safely and the vehicles used are fit for purpose and in a safe condition.

Road Traffic law focuses mainly on individual driver behaviour and the vehicle owner. However, various Road Traffic Acts and regulations also require employers to ensure that vehicles used for work purposes are safe and legal to be on the road, and that drivers are properly licensed and insured. Employers can be held liable for various 'cause or permit' road traffic offences; for example, it is an offence to cause or permit someone to:

- Use a hand-held mobile phone while driving
- Use vehicle in dangerous condition
- Drive on the road without a valid driving licence or motor insurance

The legal consequences of failing to manage occupational road risk can be extremely serious. Organisations convicted of corporate manslaughter face very high fines (that are linked to their annual turnover), remedial orders and publicity orders. Managers convicted under the Health and Safety Offences Act can face high fines and prison sentences. Individual drivers and riders can face fines and penalty points, driving disqualifications and in serious cases, imprisonment.

Poor road safety is extremely costly, can damage staff morale and adversely affect corporate image - particularly where liveried vehicles are involved. Good road safety can help to build a positive safety culture, improve productivity and also help employees to stay safe on the road when they are not at work.

This introductory guide provides simple advice, based on the HSE's approach of 'Plan, Do, Check, Act', and signposts you to more detailed guidance. It is designed for organisations that may not have considered this issue previously and are unsure how to start.

Fortunately, a good deal of expertise, help and guidance is available (much of it free) to help for organisations that develop effective ways to Manage their Occupational Road Risk. There are links to such guidance at the end of each section and in Further Information and Support on page 14.



Plan

Collect existing data and Information

Make sure that you know who drives or rides on the road for your organisation, the sort of journeys they make and in what vehicles (including company and grey fleet vehicles). You then need to know that everyone has a valid driving licence for the vehicle(s) they use for work and that the vehicles are road legal, safe and well maintained. You also need to collect information on the types of journeys your staff make (when and where, schedules, routes, length, mileages).



Gather as much information as possible about accidents, incidents, near misses, motoring offences and costs involving your staff who drive or ride for work.

Look at the policies and procedures of similar organisations to yours, and seek information and advice from outside sources, including www.orsa.org.uk and www.fleetbenchmarking.net (see page 14).

Do Risk Assessments

Review the information you have collected to carry out an overall risk assessment to see where you may have road safety problems and if you are taking the right steps to control risk on the road and promote safer driving. You will probably have some driving for work policies and procedures already in place (even if they are called something else), so review these to identify gaps and possible improvements.

You also need to conduct appropriate risk assessments of your organisation's journeys, vehicles and drivers (and for work done by other staff who use the road), avoiding unnecessary bureaucracy but highlighting the main problem areas.

Prioritise areas for action (your journeys, drivers and vehicles with the highest risks and potentially most severe consequences), based on your risk assessments. Your monitoring and reviews should also inform your priorities.

Check and update your risk assessments regularly, and whenever there is a significant change in a relevant activity or there is a serious incident.

Consult your staff, especially your drivers, riders and managers, and their representatives. Listen to their views and experiences. The HSE provide advice on [Consulting and involving your workers](#).



Produce a policy and procedures, with clear aims and objectives, based on your risk assessment and consultation. This should describe the procedures, people and resources you will use, the risks you have identified and the risk reduction control measures that you will implement.

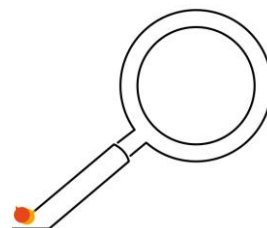
It should cover the journeys, drivers and vehicles your organisation uses (see the Do section on page 6) and be integrated into your day-to-day operations.



Define everyone's roles and responsibilities in the policy and procedures, including the CEO, Directors, Department Heads, Line Managers, Team Leaders and all staff in the organisation, as well as consultants and sub-contractors who use the road when working for your organisation. Ensure that they are all competent. Identify training needed by managers as well as drivers.

If your organisation employs five or more people, you must have a written health and safety policy and record the results of risk assessments. It should include at-work road safety, either as part of the main policy, or as a separate integrated policy.

Include incident reporting and investigation in your policy and procedures (see the Check section on page 12). This is a key component of your at-work road safety policy and should be designed to ensure work-related road accidents, incidents and near misses are reported and recorded, their immediate and underlying causes are identified, lessons are learned and shared, and measures to reduce the likelihood of similar accidents or incidents occurring again are implemented.



Clearly communicate and promote your policy and procedures on a regular basis to all your staff, consultants and sub-contractors, so that they understand how your organisation aims to reduce road risk, your expectations of them, and their individual responsibilities.

Monitor your road safety performance, and that everyone is actually implementing the policy and procedures.

Keep a record of your findings.

Check and update your policy and procedures regularly.

Further Advice

[Driving at Work: Managing Work-related Road Safety](#)

[Consulting and involving your workers](#)



Do

Implement your policy and procedures

Implement your policy and procedures, prioritising key risks and control measures, and provide the necessary resources, information, advice and training. It should include the items listed under “Your Journeys”, “Your Vehicles” and “Your Drivers” below, and any other issues that are relevant to your organisation.

Keep records to show that the procedures are being implemented

It is important to record that procedures (for example, driving licence checks, vehicle inspections, driver training) are carried out so you can demonstrate that they are actually being implemented.

Train Your Line Managers

It is crucial that all managers, supervisors and team leaders in your organisation are trained to manage work related road safety as part of their health and safety responsibilities. They should lead by personal example and follow the organisation’s policy and procedures. They should also monitor that their staff are actually implementing the procedures properly and provide regular opportunities for them to raise issues or concerns.

Communicate

It is crucial to communicate your policy and procedures to all staff on a regular basis, using the full range of your internal communication methods.



Issue a short driver’s handbook to all drivers which sets out clearly your organisation’s expectations, rules and procedures (all the 'musts and must nots').

Monitor implementation to check that your procedures are actually being followed in practice (see the Check section on page 12).



Your Journeys

Introduce a journey planning procedure

The most effective way to reduce at-work road crashes is to reduce the amount of at-work driving, so your journey planning should start with a procedure that requires staff to decide whether a journey by road is necessary, or whether it can be made by rail or air travel, or replaced with remote communications. Encourage staff to share journeys and driving whenever possible to minimise the number of journeys and mileage costs.

It is difficult, if not impossible, for most organisations to avoid driving altogether, therefore, your procedure should aim to reduce the risks related to journeys that must be made on the road:

- Schedule visits and deliveries so that mileage is kept as low as possible
- Plan journeys and routes to minimise driving during risky periods, such as the early hours of the morning
- Plan schedules so drivers are not under time pressures that cause them to speed or to drive for too long
- Avoid systems of work (for example, 'just in time' delivery, payment by calls made, 'job and finish', unrealistic guaranteed call-out or delivery times etc.) which may encourage speeding
- Plan schedules to include time for rest breaks (and if necessary, overnight stops)
- Make sure that routes and SatNavs are regularly updated
- Plan routes to use the highest quality roads, such as motorways and dual carriageways where possible (almost two thirds of fatal crashes happen on rural roads)

Where possible, plan journeys and routes to avoid specific risky situations (such as interactions between large goods and construction vehicles and cyclists at junctions).

Driving in Adverse Weather

Introduce a policy for driving in adverse weather, including procedures for staff to follow if the emergency services and motoring organisations are advising that travel should be avoided unless absolutely necessary.



Provide staff with advice on staying safe in very poor weather, a winter safety kit to keep in the vehicle and emergency contact numbers.

Further Advice

[Driving for Work: Safer Journey Planner](#)



Your Vehicles

Vehicle Selection

Your vehicle selection and management procedures should ensure that every vehicle used by the organisation is road legal, roadworthy and fit for purpose. The criteria should include primary safety features, such as Electronic Stability Control (ESC) and Autonomous Emergency Braking (AEB), as well as secondary features such as crash protection performance.

A minimum 4 or 5 star Euro NCAP rating (see www.euroncap.com) is recommended.

If you operate a salary sacrifice or similar scheme that provides financial assistance for staff to purchase their own vehicle, remember, this does not absolve your organisation from its health and safety obligations when these vehicles are used for work.

Set Minimum Vehicle Standards

Company vehicles and the vehicles of staff who receive financial assistance through a salary sacrifice or similar scheme should meet equivalent safety standards. However, it is not feasible to expect staff who do not receive financial assistance, especially those on lower salaries, to be able to afford a car that meets the same standards as a modern company car. However, all vehicles driven for work must be suitable for the type of work driving undertaken, and meet minimum safety requirements.

Conduct Vehicle Document Checks

Ensure vehicles are taxed, MoT'd where necessary and that drivers have 'business use' insurance when using their own vehicles for work. Check vehicle documents, such as servicing, MOT (when applicable), motor insurance, tax and so on, either on a regular basis or in random spot checks.

Ensure MOTs and Services

Ensure company vehicles are MOT'd when required and serviced according to the manufacturer's recommendations, and require grey fleet drivers to do the same.



Vehicle Safety Checks

Ensure your drivers know how to conduct vehicle safety checks and do so regularly. Provide a checklist to encourage them to conduct weekly safety checks, and pre-drive checks, of their vehicle.



Require drivers to report vehicle defects, and provide a defects form for them to do so. Consider conducting (or contracting an external agency to do so) periodic visual checks of vehicles, including private ones, used for work (e.g. when they are in the company's car park).

Vehicle Familiarisation

Provide vehicle familiarisation sessions for drivers with new vehicles (e.g. hire vehicles) and provide training for staff who will be driving a van for the first time. Ensure drivers understand how to use in-vehicle equipment, such as SatNavs, and technologies such as ESC, Autonomous Emergency Braking and cruise control.

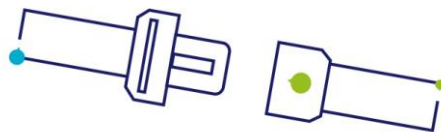


Include Grey Fleet Vehicles

Employers owe the same duty of care under health and safety law to staff who drive their own vehicle for work ('grey fleet') as they do to employees who drive company owned, leased or hired vehicles. Therefore, apply the same policy and procedures to staff who use their own vehicles for work. Many organisations set a maximum distance (e.g., return trip of 50 or 100 miles) for staff who only occasionally use their own car for work, beyond which a company or hire vehicle must be used.

Seat Belts

Make sure your drivers always wear their seat belt, and insist that their passengers wear their seat belts.



Carrying Goods

Make sure your drivers know how to load and secure any goods they carry, and that the vehicle is suitable for carrying those goods, and if necessary, is fitted with appropriate storage equipment.

Tachographs and Speed Limiters

Make sure that you know, and adhere to any rules about tachographs and speed limiters for any vehicles that you operate that need them fitted.

Hands-Free Mobile Phones

If vehicles used by your organisation are fitted with equipment to facilitate the use of hands-free phones, make it clear to drivers that they must not use any mobile phone (hand-held or hands-free) while driving and that they understand why.

Further Advice

[Driving for Work: Vehicle Technology](#)

[Driving for Work: Own Vehicles](#)

www.motability.co.uk

<https://www.gov.uk/check-mot-status>

<https://www.gov.uk/check-vehicle-tax>



Your Drivers

Check Driver Licences

Make sure that every driver or rider has a valid driving licence and motor insurance for the vehicle they are driving. Conduct regular driver licence checks, at least once a year, but more often for high mileage drivers or those with a poor driving record.

Set Expectations

Make sure that all your staff understand that they are expected to drive safely, responsibly and legally. If they have concerns about the organisation's driving policy or procedures, they should raise them with their line manager or staff representative.

Assess Your Drivers

Assess drivers' attitudes and their driving competence on recruitment, during induction and regularly afterwards. Driver assessments can be done through in-vehicle driver training, driver profiler tools, e-learning tools and telematics, as well as by monitoring crash histories and penalty points.

All drivers should be assessed regularly, but prioritise those with the greatest mileages, young drivers, drivers using a new type of vehicle, such as a van, and drivers with a crash history or who have committed motoring offences. Use the results to identify training needs and other risk management measures, such as amending a route or journey schedule. Discuss driving during individual staff appraisals, and in group meetings.

Consider a Permit to Drive

Many organisations operate a 'permit to drive' system in which only staff who have been authorised to do so are allowed to drive on company business; sometimes it is a condition of the company's insurance.

Set Driving Standards, including:

Driver Fitness

Emphasise that staff must be fit to drive and consider issues ranging from long term illness to short term temporary impairments, such as stress, emotional state, fatigue and colds/flu. Make it clear that drivers must meet legal medical fitness rules for driving and that they are not impaired, for example by alcohol or drugs.

Encourage your drivers to have regular eye sight checks.

Alcohol, Drugs and Medicines

Ensure drivers do not drive when they have been drinking alcohol or are affected by drugs or medicines.

Driver Tiredness

Drivers must not drive when they are excessively tired. They must plan their journeys safely and report if they fail to have sufficient good quality sleep before driving or experience problems such as sleep apnoea.

Driver Distractions

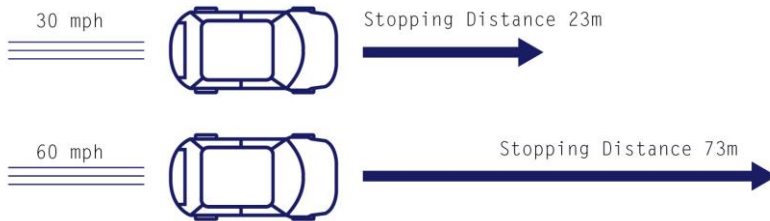
Ensure that drivers do not use mobile phones (hand held or hands free) or other devices while driving. Phones can be set to voicemail and messages retrieved during breaks.

Also make sure that their line managers understand that they must not expect their drivers to pick up calls or messages from them while they are driving.



Speed

Drivers should understand the importance of staying within speed limits, and how to identify the limit on every road they use. Make sure drivers know the speed limit that applies to their vehicle. Drivers who feel pressured to exceed speed limits (due to a tight schedule, for example) should discuss this with their line manager.



Emergency Procedures

Provide drivers with clear emergency procedures for accidents and breakdowns.

Require drivers to report incidents, significant near misses or motoring offences, and to co-operate with any investigation procedures

Further Advice

[Driving for Work: Driver Assessment and Training](#)

[Driving for Work: Drink and Drugs](#)

[Driving for Work: Fitness To Drive](#)

[Medical conditions, disabilities and driving](#)

[Driving for Work: Safer Speeds](#)

[Driving for Work: Mobile Phones](#)

[Safer Driving for Work Handbook](#)

[Check someone's driving licence information](#)

[View Your Driving Licence Information](#)

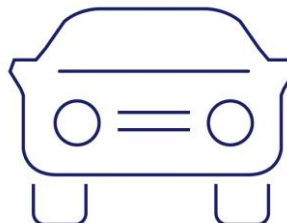


Check

Monitor Implementation

Your policy and procedures will only be effective if they are implemented in practice. So, it is essential to monitor that they are being put into practice by drivers and managers. There are various options for monitoring drivers, including:

- Driver licence checks
- Telematics
- Assessment and Training records
- Accident and motoring offence reporting
- Health surveillance
- Vehicle checks
- Coverage of road safety in staff performance appraisals
- Staff feedback schemes
- Crash, offences and near miss reporting system
- Progress towards any targets that have been set



Require Reporting

Require all staff and managers who drive for work to report collisions (including damage-only ones), significant near misses and motoring offences. Also encourage them to pro-actively raise any concerns they have.

Monitor Incidents

Encourage staff to report all work-related road incidents, near misses and road traffic offences (whether at work or not). Line managers should understand their responsibilities to ensure that reporting procedures are followed and encourage a 'just culture' so staff are reassured that reporting will not lead to unfair action.

Investigate Incidents

Investigate crashes (including damage only ones), offences and near misses to establish both the immediate and root causes of what happened, and to identify the measures that will reduce the risk of repeat occurrences. Share the lessons learned throughout the organisation.

The managers responsible for investigations should be properly trained to conduct investigations, and analyse and interpret the findings. Telematics are a useful way of providing objective and accurate data about what a vehicle was doing immediately before and during a crash or incident.

It is crucial that lessons are learned from the results of monitoring and investigations, and fed back into the organisation's MORR policy and procedures. Key points should also be communicated to managers and staff.

Review claims data with the organisation's insurers and vehicle providers.

Further Advice

[Driving for Work: Incident Reporting and Investigation](#)

[Driving for Work: Telematics](#)

[Investigating accidents and incidents](#)

[Investigating accidents and incidents](#)

[Learning How to Learn From Accidents](#)

[Learning from Safety Failure](#)



Act

Review the organisation's performance

Finally, it is important to review your organisation's work-related road safety performance to assess how well it is working, identify any gaps or improvements, to measure whether targets or performance indicators are being achieved and to enable the organisation to report its progress and achievements. Undertake a periodic road safety performance review via your joint safety committee or a special task group, and consult your insurer and fleet management company (if applicable).

Set performance Indicators or Targets

Setting targets focuses attention and resources on particular issues, motivates staff and managers, and enables progress in improving the organisation's road risk performance to be measured. Targets can be set for many things, including crash rates, vehicle damage rates, mileage reductions, driver assessments and training.

Audit

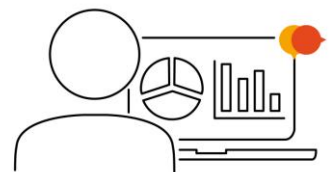
Audit the organisation's performance against targets, auditing health and safety management processes and feeding back information and experience to further develop policies and improve performance.

Evaluate Your Activities

Monitor and evaluate your policies and practices to ensure that they are working effectively. Advice on evaluation is available in "[How to Evaluate Managing Occupational Road Risk: A guide for employers.](#)"

Benchmark Your Performance

The free Fleet Safety Benchmarking Tool at www.fleetsafetybenchmarking.net can be used to compare your organisation against others. Once completed, it automatically provides a personalised report with feedback on the results. Benchmarking is an effective way of improving work-related road safety, identifying good practices and generating cost saving opportunities. It also supports compliance with legal requirements and standards such as ISO39001.



Action Plan

Develop a simple action plan with targets for further improvement and to share any lessons learned to promote safer driving. Keep the topic live by always focusing on road safety in meetings, internal communications, briefings, staff appraisals and so on.

Reward Achievement

Recognise, celebrate and reward safe driving achievements. Publicise them wherever possible.

Develop your Safety Culture

Managing work related road safety is not simply having formal 'systems' in place to achieve continuous improvement. These need to be underpinned by a positive 'health and safety culture – a shared view within all parts of the organisation of the seriousness of health and safety and the need to have effective policies, procedures and control measures to tackle them. This should include a 'corporate road safety culture'. It is important that work related road safety becomes a common talking point and is taken seriously by every employee and business partner.

Further Advice

[A Guide to Measuring Health and Safety Performance](#)

[Safety Culture and Work-Related Road Accidents](#)



Further Information and Support

[RoSPA Driving for Work Resources](#)

[RoSPA Fleet Safety](#)

[RoSPA Advanced Drivers and Riders](#)

[Occupational Road Safety Alliance \(ORSA\)](#)

[Scottish Occupational Road Safety Alliance \(ScORSA\)](#)

[Driving for Better Business \(DfBB\)](#)

[Fleet Safety Benchmarking](#)

[Think Road Safety](#)

[The Highway Code](#)

[Department for Transport](#)

[Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency \(DVLA\)](#)

[Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency](#)

[Health and Safety Executive](#)

[Road Safety GB](#)

[Road Safety Scotland](#)

[Road Safety Wales](#)

[The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974](#)

[The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999](#)

[The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998](#)

[Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007](#)





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