

1 Introduction

Driving is one of the most hazardous activities we undertake as part of our work activities, and driving for work tends to be riskier than driving for personal reasons. For this reason, HSE Guidelines, "Driving at Work", state that "health and safety law applies to on-the-road work activities as to all work activities and the risks should be effectively managed within a health and safety system".

As employers, we have a duty of care under health and safety law to ensure the safety of our staff, passengers and anyone else (e.g. other road users) who may be affected by our activities.

As an employee with driver responsibilities, you must play your part. This policy and guidance are designed to help you work with us to prevent accidents and injuries to yourself, your passengers, and other road users while driving.

This policy and guidance will help you understand our driving practices policies and how they apply to you. You can then refer back to them at any time.

You should also keep a record of any road safety issues that you encounter – including incidents such as near misses and other vehicle-related problems. Keeping a record will help you when reporting any issues to your line managers, enabling them to take the necessary steps and actions.

The company reserves the right to use tracking and telematics to enforce this policy and to mitigate the risks associated with driving.

2 Legal Matters

As an employer, granting authority for you to operate a company vehicle on behalf of the company and in connection with your work, we need to know that you are:

- legally entitled to drive the vehicle you are using (including the towing of any trailer/decontamination unit)
- using a safe vehicle and road legal (including trailer if applicable)
- properly trained and competent to drive it safely
- Using it for suitable work-related purposes

As your employer, we will ensure that it is properly registered, taxed, MOT'd, serviced and insured.

Using Your Own Vehicle

Even if you are using your own vehicle in connection with company business, the company has the same legal duty to ensure it is safe and legal when it is being used to provide a service for them.

Therefore, they may wish to check that your vehicle is taxed, MOT'd and serviced and that you are adequately insured to drive it on company business.

Employees using their own vehicle for business must therefore ensure it is taxed, insured for business use, has a valid MOT, is regularly maintained and is roadworthy at all times. The Company may request evidence.

Motoring offences

Motoring offences, including cautions, summons, or convictions, should be reported to your line manager.

Our policy:

Driving Licences will be checked every six months

All motoring offences are to be reported to your line manager within five working days; where these offences are connected with your work or whilst driving a company vehicle, you will report these offences by the quickest possible means.

3 Journey Planning

It is essential to plan your route before every journey. The more planning in advance you can do, the less likely unforeseen and risky circumstances are to arise, and you will be better prepared to deal with them if they do.

Preventing driver sleepiness is something that your organisation can help you manage. Crashes caused by driver fatigue are most likely to occur:

- On long journeys on monotonous roads
- Between 2 am and 6 am
- Between 2 pm and 4 pm
- After having less sleep than normal
- After drinking alcohol
- After taking medicines which cause drowsiness
- On journeys home after night shifts.

Generally, drivers should take a 15-minute break after driving for 2 hours. You need to examine work schedules in advance to ensure that you will not be pressured by time. Driving at night, especially after a long shift, should also be avoided. Overnight stays can be arranged to help drivers stay within daily and weekly driving limits and prevent crashes due to fatigue.

Our policy

Wherever possible, the best use of Regional resources will be made to avoid the need to travel great distances in connection with our work.

4 Fitness to Drive

As your employer, we need to know that you:

- are fit to drive at all times
- do not drive when affected by alcohol, drugs or medicines
- do not drive when affected by illness
- Do not drive when you are too tired to do so safely.

Please inform your line manager about any health issues or personal circumstances that may affect your driving. You are also legally required to notify the DVLA of any medical condition affecting your ability to drive safely.

Eyesight

The minimum legal eyesight standard for driving is that you can read a new-style number plate (e.g., AB 123 ABC) at a distance of 20 metres (approximately 65 feet) or an older-style number plate (e.g., A 123 ABC) at a distance of 20.5 metres (approximately 67 feet). If you must use glasses or contact lenses to do this, they must be worn when driving.

It is strongly recommended that you have your eyesight checked regularly (at least every two years, or more often if your optician recommends it).

Alcohol

Avoid drinking alcohol in the hours before you will be driving. It can take several hours for alcohol to be removed from your body, and you may still be over the limit or affected by alcohol the morning after you have been drinking.

Alcohol impairs judgement, making drivers over-confident and more likely to take risks. It slows their reactions, increases stopping distances, impairs judgement of speed and distance and affects vision.

Even a small amount, well below the legal limit, can seriously impair one's ability to drive safely.

The legal drink drive limit is 80 mg of alcohol per 100 ml of blood. Drivers with a blood alcohol concentration between 50 and 80 mg per 100ml of blood are 2 to 2.5 times more likely to crash and 6 times more likely to be in a fatal crash. The risk increases massively when over the limit. A driver who is double the legal limit is 50 times more likely to be in a deadly crash.

The advice is always 'have none for the road'.

Drugs

Do not drive if you have taken any illegal drugs. They can affect your decision-making and driving skills, as well as your physical and mental condition and behaviour.

Medicines

Check with your GP or pharmacist to see if any over-the-counter or prescribed medicines you take may affect your driving (for example, by causing drowsiness). If so, ask for an alternative that does not, or avoid driving.

Always check the label of medicines and the Patient Information leaflet to see if there are any warnings. If the label indicates that specific side effects may occur, assume that they will.



Illness

Illness can also affect our ability to drive. We can often be tempted to 'soldier' on when, in fact, it would be safer for everyone concerned not to drive until we are feeling better.

Fatigue

Consider whether you are likely to be drowsy or sleepy while driving. Tired drivers are more likely to be involved in crashes, especially on long, monotonous journeys and during the early morning hours. If you are driving in the evening after a full day's work, you may also be more tired. Discuss any problems with your line manager.



Our policy on Fitness to Drive:

Alcohol – We have zero tolerance towards driving company vehicles or driving on behalf of the company whilst under the influence of alcohol; therefore, our policy is that you are not permitted to operate a company vehicle or drive on behalf of the company with any alcohol in your body, regardless of the national drink driving limits detailed above. To do so would evoke disciplinary action under established company procedures.

Drugs – We have zero tolerance towards driving company vehicles or driving on behalf of the company while under the influence of illegal drugs or substances, which may affect your ability and judgment. Therefore, our policy is that you are not permitted to operate a company vehicle or drive on behalf of the company whilst under the influence of illegal drugs or substances in your body.

Reporting to work under the influence of illegal drugs and substances is a disciplinary offence and may result in formal disciplinary actions against you.

Medicines – Where it is necessary to take prescription or over-the-counter medications that can impair your judgement, cause drowsiness, or affect your ability to drive, you must inform your line manager so that alternative arrangements can be made.

Illness – Should you suffer from a disease that could affect your ability to drive or become ill whilst at work, you should inform your line manager immediately.

Eyesight – If you are required to wear prescription lenses to meet the minimum requirement detailed previously, you must wear those lenses at all times while driving a company vehicle or conducting company business.

Fatigue – Every effort will be made to manage journey times to minimise the potential effects of fatigue on drivers. However, if you feel tired while driving, you are required to stop at the earliest, most convenient, and safest place and take a break. A high-caffeine content drink is not a substitute for taking a break from driving.

5 Safe Speed

Drivers who travel at higher speeds have less time to identify and react to what is happening around them. It takes them longer to stop. And if there is a crash, it is more severe, causing greater injury to the occupants and any pedestrian or rider they hit.

Higher speeds also amplify other driver errors, such as close following or driving while tired or distracted, thereby increasing the likelihood of causing a crash.

Excessive speed contributes to 26% of collisions in which someone is killed, 18% of crashes resulting in a serious injury and 12% of all injury collisions. This means that around 900 people are killed each year on Britain's roads because drivers and riders travel too fast, and over 6,000 are seriously injured.

Speed Limits

Always stay within speed limits (including variable limits and temporary limits at road works). Even if you think the limit is too low, additional consideration must be given to obeying the speed limits imposed on vehicles towing trailers.

Speed limits set the maximum speed allowed on a particular road. However, there are many circumstances when driving at that speed is unsafe (for example, around schools at opening and closing times, on busy and narrow roads, on winding and hilly rural roads, and in areas with restricted visibility).

Ensure you are aware of the speed limit on the roads you are using. Far too many drivers who have been caught speeding complain that they thought the road had a higher speed limit (40 mph instead of 30 mph).

Speed Limits	Built up areas	Single carriage-ways	Dual carriage-ways	Motorway
TYPE OF VEHICLE	MPH	MPH	MPH	MPH
Cars including car derived vans & motorcycles 	30	60	70	70
Cars towing caravans or trailers including car derived vans & motorcycles 	30	50	60	60
Buses & coaches not exceeding 12 metres in overall length 	30	50	60	70
Goods vehicles not exceeding 7.5 tonnes maximum laden weight 	30	50	60	70*
Goods vehicles exceeding 7.5 tonnes maximum laden weight 	30	40	50	60

In many cases, the nature of the road does not indicate the speed limit. In urban areas, for example, dual carriageways can have limits of 30 mph, 40 mph, 50 mph, 60 mph or 70 mph. When driving on street-lit roads, assume the limit is 30 mph until you see a sign saying otherwise. However, remember that the limit could be lower – 20 mph.

Speed limit signs are often placed at junctions because this is typically the point at which the speed limit changes. However, junctions are also where you need to absorb a wide range of different information, and it is easy to miss a speed limit sign when concentrating on one or more other things (e.g., which way am I going, is that driver going to pull out, etc.). Therefore, it is essential to develop the habit of checking for speed limit signs at junctions and looking for repeater signs after the intersection, especially when the road's nature changes. If you are unsure, assume the limit is lower until you see a sign indicating otherwise.

Staying Within the Limit

If you find it challenging to keep your vehicle within 30 mph when driving in a 30 mph zone, try shifting to 3rd gear (or lower, when necessary). If you can comfortably travel at 30 mph in 3rd gear without feeling that the engine is laboured, adopt 'no higher than 3rd in 30 mph' as a principle.

We all have our 'speed triggers' – things that make us more likely to speed up and perhaps exceed the limit unintentionally. This could be a feeling of needing to keep up with other drivers or feeling stressed by a driver too close behind; it could be something as simple as going downhill.

Learn to recognise your own 'speed triggers'. This will make it easier to avoid being 'pushed' into speeding. It will also make driving less stressful and more relaxing.

Give Yourself Time Plan your journey to allow sufficient time to complete it (include rest breaks and take account of foreseeable weather and traffic conditions) at safe speeds and without needing to exceed speed limits.

The time it takes to complete a journey is determined much more by your average speed during the whole journey rather than the maximum speed you achieve for part of it. This is especially true in urban areas, where you must constantly slow down for junctions, traffic lights and other road users. The faster you drive, the sharper you have to brake. This also uses significantly more fuel, making driving more expensive.

Knowing you have plenty of time to complete your journey will help you relax and avoid the temptation to push your speed.

Our policy is:

All drivers of company vehicles shall abide by the stated and displayed speed limits for the roads on which they are travelling, taking into account the vehicle they are driving and whether they are towing mobile decontamination and hygiene units.

The company will not be held responsible for any incidents involving speed limit violations and will not instruct you to do so under any circumstances.

6 Distractions

Driving requires your full concentration at all times. Trying to do something else while driving will distract you, slow your reactions and increase the risk of crashing.

Mobile Phones

A substantial body of research shows that using a hand-held or hands-free mobile phone while driving is a significant distraction and substantially increases the risk of the driver crashing.

Employees must not make or take calls while the vehicle is in motion. Managers must avoid calling employees when they are likely to be driving.

Using a handheld mobile phone while driving is illegal (including any activity that involves holding the phone, such as dialling a number or writing a text message). It can also be unlawful to use a hands-free phone while driving. Depending upon the circumstances, drivers could be charged with 'failing to have proper control of their vehicle' or careless or dangerous driving if they are distracted by a hands-free phone.

Using a hands-free phone while driving does not significantly reduce the risks because the problems are primarily caused by mental distraction and divided attention, which occur when engaging in a phone conversation simultaneously with driving.



It is also an offence to "cause or permit" a driver to use a handheld mobile phone.

Other Equipment

An increasing number of vehicles are being fitted with various devices designed to help the driver, with SatNavs being the most common. While these devices can, if used correctly, reduce the risk of drivers crashing, they can also increase the risk (e.g., by distracting the driver) if not used properly.

If your vehicle is equipped with any technology, such as a satellite navigation system (SatNav), you should not adjust or operate devices while driving. For example, routes in the SatNav should be set before the journey starts. If adjustments or new information are necessary, only make them when stopped in a safe place.

Eating, Drinking, Smoking, Tuning the Radio

Many other things that might seem innocent and straightforward can be distracting when driving. Fatal crashes can and do occur because a driver chooses to unwrap a sweet, take a drink or light a cigarette while driving. Safe driving needs concentration; avoid unnecessary distractions.

Our policy is:

Mobile Phones – You are not permitted to make or receive calls if your vehicle is not equipped with a hands-free phone kit. You are only allowed to receive calls using this kit. If you are required to make a telephone call, please find a safe place to stop.

Other Devices – Items such as SatNavs should be programmed before commencing your journey; where you are required to drive to multiple destinations, you must programme each destination before leaving the previous one.

Eating, drinking – Eating and drinking whilst driving is not permitted, use your rest breaks from driving to eat and drink.

Smoking – It is both against the law and company policy to smoke in company vehicles; doing so may result in disciplinary action. As the driver of the vehicle, you must also ensure that any passengers abide by the same policy and refrain from smoking while in the vehicle, whether it is in motion or not.

Almost all crashes are caused by or involve driver error. This ranges from simple mistakes and misjudgements to careless, reckless or aggressive driving. Our ability to anticipate and cope with the errors and misbehaviour of other people is just as important as our driving skills and attitudes.

We all develop our driving style and habits over time, and often do not realise that we could improve our driving.

It is our policy to learn from driving accidents, based on the principle that companies that learn from accidents have lower accident rates than those that do not. Driver training can help us avoid making mistakes and better anticipate and cope with the unexpected, including the errors of other road users. It can make driving safer, less stressful, and more enjoyable, while also reducing costs, such as fuel consumption and vehicle wear and tear, and often lowering insurance premiums.

Check your organisation's policies on assessment and training – they may be able to assist you in undertaking some refresher or further training. This can take many forms, ranging from classroom sessions to in-vehicle training.

You may be required to attend a driver assessment or driver training session when you start with the company or after an accident or motoring conviction.

Driver training is critical if you are driving a vehicle that you do not usually drive.

Learning from experience, including near misses, is essential to safe driving. If you have been involved in a near miss or were unhappy with something that happened while driving, think about what else you could have done. Try to identify common themes and determine whether they were partially due to how you or the other driver acted, and what you might have done better.

Our policy:

Our commitment is to learn from all near misses and accidents; training needs can be identified based on lessons learned.

Drivers who repeatedly disregard the contents of this policy or are subject to formal action from the police or other regulatory bodies regarding their driving standards shall be considered and assessed to determine whether driver training would be appropriate.

7 Vehicle Occupant Safety

Seat Belts

The most effective way to protect people inside vehicles is to ensure that every occupant always wears a seatbelt on every journey, regardless of its duration. It is just as crucial for passengers in the rear to wear seat belts as those in the front.

In a crash at just 30 mph, an unrestrained person is thrown forward with a force 30 to 60 times their body weight. They are thrown about inside the vehicle, injuring themselves and quite possibly seriously injuring (or killing) other people inside the vehicle. They could also be ejected from the vehicle through one of the windows. Seat belts save lives.

Child Seats

Seatbelts alone are less effective for children because they are primarily designed for adults. In a crash, a child may slip out of their seat belt because it is too big, and an ill-fitting belt could even cause injuries.

It is a legal requirement that children up to their 12th birthday or under 135cm in height (whichever comes first) use the correct child restraint for their weight. In cars, vans, or goods vehicles, the driver must ensure that children under 14 are using the proper restraint or seatbelt.

Seat belts must be worn if fitted.

Head Restraints

Adjust your head restraint correctly and ensure that every passenger has theirs adjusted properly. Properly adjusted head restraints help to protect against whiplash and prevent long-term injuries. The top of the head restraint should be level with the top of your head and as close to the back of your head as possible.

Our policy:

Seat Belts – Seatbelts must be worn at all times when driving company vehicles. The driver must also ensure that all passengers wear their seatbelts.

Child Seats – Where you are authorised to carry passengers and children within company vehicles, you are to ensure that all child seats are correctly fitted and suitable for the age and weight of the child using the seat.

8 Safe Vehicle

Vehicle defects are involved in only a small proportion of crashes. However, the type of vehicle also significantly influences the likelihood and severity of injuries in the event of a collision.

Our organisation has a clear rule that no vehicle, whether it is or is suspected to be in an unsafe or illegal condition, will be used until all necessary repairs have been completed.

As the driver, you are also responsible for ensuring that your vehicle is safe and compliant with all relevant laws and regulations.

Before driving any vehicle, check the following:

- Tyres are undamaged (no cuts or bulges), are at the correct pressure for the number of passengers or equipment being carried, and have enough tread depth. The legal minimum is 1.6mm, but above 3mm gives much shorter braking distances in the wet
- There are no signs of vehicle damage
- oil, coolant and windscreen wash levels are correct (check when cold)
- Do you know the correct type of fuel for the vehicle
- brakes are working
- lights and indicators are working
- windscreen and windows are not damaged
- washers and wipers are working
- mirrors are correctly positioned
- all occupants are using their seat belts, and head restraints are adjusted correctly
- Loads are securely restrained.

If you are unsure how to check any of the above, refer to the vehicle's handbook or ask someone to demonstrate it to you. **If you encounter any issues during the check, please report them to your manager immediately.**

Driving Position

You should be able to see and reach all of the controls comfortably. Good all-around, unobstructed visibility is vital. Check whether the pillars between the front and side windows and the space taken up by the door mirrors still allow you to see forward without moving your head.

Also, check that your view is not unnecessarily obstructed by objects such as stickers or devices, and that SatNavs are not placed where they might be hit and flung forward by an airbag.

When you start the vehicle, look at the dashboard and note which lights are illuminated, then observe which ones turn off. If you are unfamiliar with the vehicle, refer to the handbook to understand the meanings of the different lights.

Finally, consider whether the vehicle is suitable for the task – for example,

- If carrying passengers, is there a seat belt for each occupant
- If carrying children, is there an appropriate child seat for each child that needs one?
- If carrying a heavy load, can you secure it safely?

Our policy is:

Vehicle Condition – The vehicle shall be maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations, and all necessary repairs and defects shall be completed promptly and without undue delay. Where the identified defects have an impact on the safe use of the vehicle, it will be withdrawn from service until the necessary repairs have been completed.

Pre-drive Checks – every week, the driver will conduct an inspection of their vehicle that will incorporate, but not be limited to, the following;

- Tyre condition (tread depth and visual signs of wear)
- All lights are fully functioning and clean from dirt (including trailer if applicable)
- All mirrors and warning devices (if fitted) are functioning and correctly positioned
- All safety devices are fully functioning (including seat belts)
- All number plates are clean and undamaged (including trailer if applicable)
- All doors and loads are properly secured
- All dashboard warning lights are fully functioning
- The oil and water levels are checked and topped up if necessary

Any defects identified in this inspection regime will be communicated to the vehicle operator. In some cases, this may result in the vehicle being taken out of operational service until the deficiencies are rectified.

In the event of a breakdown, accident or other emergencies, you are to ensure that you have;

- Contact details for the person(s) to whom you should report emergencies
- Contact details of the breakdown firm your organisation uses and any reference numbers that you may need to quote.
- Make sure you have a fully charged mobile phone to summon help if necessary (do not use the phone while driving)

Accidents

- Use hazard warning lights and switch off your engine
- do not move injured passengers unless they are in immediate danger of further injury
- from other vehicles, fire, or explosion
- call the emergency services immediately; provide them with information about the situation, any exceptional circumstances (for example, if carrying oxygen bottles), and if any passengers have special needs, also include details of waste if carrying hazardous waste and adopt the procedures detailed in the General Procedures (Asbestos) Document in case of accidental spillage of hazardous waste
- If child passengers are present, ensure an adult remains with them
- If the emergency services are called, stay at the scene until they allow you to leave
- obtain the names and addresses of all independent witnesses (if possible)
- ensure the vehicle is roadworthy before continuing the journey

- If there is any injury or the names of people involved are not exchanged, you must report the accident to the Police as soon as possible or, in any case, within 24 hours.

Following an accident, you should discuss the details with your line manager at the earliest opportunity. **Do not admit any form of liability for any accident.**

Breakdowns

- Move the vehicle off the carriageway (onto the hard shoulder on a motorway) and switch on the hazard warning lights
- If this is not possible, move it as far away from moving traffic as you can
- Move passengers out of the vehicle's nearside and as far away from it and other traffic as possible. No one should stand between the vehicle and oncoming traffic
- On motorways or other busy roads, passengers should be taken onto the embankment or grass margin and as far from the traffic as is practicable
- Keep passengers together and keep children under constant supervision
- Telephone the emergency services or breakdown firm, giving them accurate details of the vehicle's location and whether children or passengers with mobility problems are being carried
- Telephone your nominated contact person to tell them what has happened
- On a motorway, use the roadside emergency telephone to enable the Police to pinpoint your location.

9 Resources

The Highway Code

Ensure you are familiar with the Highway Code, which contains frequently updated advice on traffic law and how to stay safe on the roads.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code>

Guidance on drivers' hours

<https://www.gov.uk/drivers-hours>



Paul Smith
Managing Director
12TH January 2026

9 Occupational Road Risk Assessment

Prepared By:	Robert Wands	Persons Affected (inc. No)	30-50 (Directly employed) & General Public	Date:	12.01.25
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HAZARD		HAZARD EFFECT	SEVERITY *		RISK *	MINIMISE RISK BY	RESIDUAL RISK
			H/E	PROB			
1	The Driver - Lack of experience, improper use of vehicle, unsafe speed, contravention of policy, fitness to operate vehicle	Road traffic accidents (20 fatalities per week and over 250 serious injuries connected with road traffic accidents involving people at / connected with work)	H	M	H	• Drivers to have a minimum of 2 years of driving experience • Operation of vehicles by drivers with the correct categories of licence entitlement • 6-monthly driving licence checks • Occupational health screening (fit to work) • Communication of policy	L
2	The Vehicle – poorly maintained, incorrect use, overloading, and general condition	Road traffic accidents (20 fatalities per week and over 250 serious injuries connected with road traffic accidents involving people at / associated with work)	H	M	H	• Vehicles selected taking into account intended use • Vehicles leased in conjunction with a maintenance lease • Weekly inspection of vehicles, checking tyre condition/pressures, lights, mirrors, windscreen wipers and fluid, overall condition • Vehicles not to be overloaded • All tools and equipment are properly secured inside the van • MOT certificate (where over 3 years old) • Communication of policy	L
3	Routes & Scheduling	Road traffic accidents (20 fatalities per week and over 250 serious injuries connected with road traffic accidents involving people at / connected with work)	H	M	H	• Journey planning to ensure routes are suitable for the type of vehicle • Make use of motorways, as these are the safest type of road • Ensure sufficient periods of rest between shifts / driving vehicles • Avoid driving between 2 am and 6 am and between 2 pm and 4 pm • Regular breaks and encouragement of drivers not to drive if feeling sleepy, even if this will upset delivery schedules	L
4	Time / Distance	Road traffic accidents (20 fatalities per week and over 250 serious injuries connected with road traffic accidents involving people at / connected with work)	H	M	H	• Ensure that schedules are realistic and reasonable • Ensure schedules take into account rest periods and traffic conditions • Where possible, laminate long journeys by using local suppliers	L

HAZARD		HAZARD EFFECT	SEVERITY *		RISK *	MINIMISE RISK BY	RESIDUAL RISK
			H/E	PROB			
5	Weather conditions	Road traffic accidents (20 fatalities per week and over 250 serious injuries connected with road traffic accidents involving people at / associated with work)	H	M	H	- Plan journeys taking fully into account the prevailing weather conditions and carefully consider the necessity of a trip in snow or high winds (particularly if towing a DCU) - Ensure that vehicles are selected that have in-built safety devices such as traction control and anti-lock braking systems - Ensure that DCUs and towing hitches are fitted with sway braces and emergency brake activation devices	L