RoSPA
accidents don't have to happen

Driving for Work
Safer Speeds

THINK!
Road Safety

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Introduction

Driving is the most dangerous work activity that most people do, and it contributes to far more work-related accidental deaths and serious injuries than all other work 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, 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 almost 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, most of those killed on work-related journeys 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*."

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.

Inappropriate Speed

One of the most significant risks your staff face, and create, is driving or riding at inappropriate speeds on work-related journeys. This includes both exceeding the speed limit and driving within the limit but still too fast for the conditions (for example, twisting rural roads, poor weather, poor visibility or high pedestrian activity).

At higher speeds, there is less time to identify and react to what is happening, it takes longer to stop and impacts are more severe, causing more serious injuries to vehicle occupants and others. Higher speeds also magnify other driver errors, such as close-following or driving when tired or distracted, thus multiplying the chances of causing a crash.

Drivers who 'speed' crash more often than those who don't. They are also more likely to commit other driving violations, such as red-light running and driving too close. Company car and van drivers often exceed speed limits in order to get to appointments on time, are less likely to view speeding as risky and more likely to think that being on time is more important. Company car drivers, and people who drive high annual mileages for work, are up to 50% more likely to crash than private motorists.

Every year, over 200 people are killed in crashes involving someone exceeding the speed limit and over 100 people die in crashes involving someone travelling within the speed limit but too fast for the conditions.

This guide gives simple advice on how employers and line managers can help to ensure that their staff are not tempted or pressurised into driving at inappropriate speed.
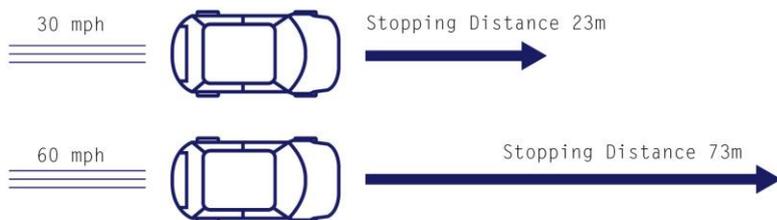
What employers can do

Expect Safe Driving
Make sure that all your staff, including directors, senior managers and line managers, 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.

Speed
Drivers should understand the importance of staying within speed limits, and how to identify the limit on the roads 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.

Emphasise that staff should never drive faster than road conditions safely allow, should obey speed limits at all times (including variable limits and temporary limits at roadworks) and that persistent failure to do so will be treated as a serious matter. Good progress on the road does not depend on driving as fast as you can.

Consult Staff

Consult staff and/or their safety representatives about the organisation's policy on safe speeds.

Raise Awareness

As part of recruitment, training and staff appraisal, remind drivers and line managers about the:

- increased dangers caused by driving at inappropriate speed
- need to allow sufficient time to complete journeys within speed limits
- things that tempt or pressurise drivers to speed
- things they can do to avoid speeding (See the Top Ten Tips below)
- human, legal, financial and reputational consequences of speeding
- organisation's policy on work related road safety, including safe speeds
- benefits of driving at appropriate speeds (saves money, risk and stress)
- need for employees to co-operate in carrying out the policy and to report any speed related problems.

Top Ten Tips To Avoid Speeding

Many drivers unintentionally exceed the speed limit, often without realising it. Modern cars are so powerful and comfortable they give drivers little sensation of their speed. It is too easy to creep above the limit, and in particular, many drivers seem to believe it is difficult to drive a modern car at less than 30 mph. There are simple and practical things drivers who find it difficult to stay with speed limits can do to help themselves.

1. Check your speedometer regularly, especially when leaving high speed roads
2. Know the limits – look for signs, especially at junctions
3. Assume lamp posts mean 30 mph, until signs say otherwise, but remember many local roads now have 20 mph limits
4. Remember, speed limits are a maximum, not a target
5. 20's plenty when kids are about – and may even be too fast
6. Try no higher than 3rd gear in a 30 mph limit
7. Recognise what makes you speed - keeping up with traffic, overtaking or being tailgated
8. Concentrate – distracted drivers speed
9. Slow down when entering villages
10. Give yourself time – there's no need to speed and you won't get there quicker

See www.rospa.com/roadsafety/adviceandinformation/driving/speed/toptentips/default.aspx.

Lead by Example

Senior Managers, from the head of the organisation down, should lead by personal example and follow the guidance in this leaflet, both in the way they drive themselves and in encouraging colleagues to drive safely.

Plan Safer Journeys

Ensure that journey schedules, distances and plans allow sufficient time for drivers to complete their journeys (including delivery stops, rest breaks and foreseeable weather and traffic conditions) at safe speeds and without needing to exceed speed limits. For further advice see "Driving for Work: Safer Journey Planning" which is available free from www.rospa.com/roadsafety/info/worksafejourney.pdf.

Avoid Incentives to Speed

Review work targets and practices (e.g., 'job-and-finish' or payment by customer contact) to ensure they do not inadvertently pressurise or encourage staff to travel at unsafe speeds or to exceed speed limits.

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.

Assess all drivers 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 history of 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.

Train Your Drivers

Provide driver education and practical training for your drivers, based on the needs identified through driver assessment and targeting those at greatest risk first. See "Driving for Work: Driver Assessment and Training", available free at www.rospa.com/roadsafety/info/drivertraining.pdf. Provide remedial driver training, especially for staff involved in a crash as they may be suffering post-traumatic stress or a loss of driving confidence, and for staff accumulating more than six penalty points for speeding offences.

Promote Eco-driving

Driver training will help to reduce risk and improve fuel efficiency. The driving techniques and style that make drivers safer are exactly the same as those that make drivers more fuel efficient, giving both individual drivers and the organisation a double benefit.

Allocate Suitable Vehicles

Company cars tend to be larger and more powerful than privately owned ones. Drivers of higher performance cars are more likely to speed and to have speeding convictions. Employers should ensure that the performance characteristics of vehicles are matched to the competence level of their drivers. When choosing vehicle fleets, try to offer a choice including vehicles with smaller-engines and ensure staff understand that they may pay significantly less tax for choosing one.

Telematics ('black boxes') are increasingly used to monitor how drivers are driving. They can be very useful, especially at identifying training needs, but be sure you have someone who can analyse and understand the reports generated. If used, their purpose should be clearly explained to staff through a consultation process.

See "Driving for Work: Choosing Safer Vehicles" and "Driving for Work: Using Telematics" which can be downloaded free at https://www.rospa.com/road-safety/resources/free/employers/.

Check Driver Licences

Conduct regular driver licence checks, at least once a year, but more often for high mileage drivers or those with a poor driving record.

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.

Track Speeding Convictions

Require employees to notify their line mangers immediately of impending prosecutions and penalties associated with unsafe driving, including speeding, whether these resulted from at-work or personal driving. Again, the organisation's insurers must be informed. An easy way of tracking endorsements is to check driving licences (at appointment and regularly afterwards); the most cost-effective way of doing this is usually via the DVLA's online checking facility (each driver must sign a mandate allowing you to do this). Review trends in speeding penalties to identify driving activities where further action to improve safety may be needed.

Liaise with the Police

Make it clear that the organisation will co-operate with police enquiries or fixed penalty notices resulting from an incident or alleged speeding offence and will supply to the police the name and address of the employee to whom the vehicle was allocated at the time.

Liaise with Other Organisations

It is very useful to liaise with police forces, road safety bodies and other organisations such as trade associations to share knowledge and experience.

Monitor and Review

Managers should discuss at-work driving with their drivers during periodic staff appraisals and team meetings. The circumstances of any speeding offences should form part of an individual employee's performance appraisal, leading, where appropriate, to new personal performance targets.

Encourage drivers to raise concerns with their line manager, and encourage line managers to respond positively. This will help to identify and manage the factors that make drivers more likely to speed.

Be aware that some staff, especially younger employees or those new to the company, may not feel able to raise concerns for fear of jeopardising their relationship with the company or their manager. For more advice about "Young Drivers at Work", see www.rospa.com/roadsafety/youngdriversatwork/default.aspx.

In-vehicle telematics ('black boxes') are increasingly used in fleets to monitor how drivers are driving. They can be very useful, especially, at identifying training needs, but be sure you have someone who can analyse and understand the reports generated by the telematic device. If used, their purpose should be clearly explained to staff through a consultation process. See "Driving for Work: Using Telematics" free from https://www.rospa.com/road-safety/resources/free/employers/.

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.

Record and Investigate Crashes and Incidents

Require staff who are involved in a work related crash or damage-only incident to report this to their line manager so that it can be investigated to determine whether inappropriate speed was a contributory factor, and what (if any) action is necessary to prevent repeat occurrences. It is essential to ensure that the organisation's insurers are kept informed as failure to do so may invalidate the insurance policy. If possible, also record and analyse near misses, as they can provide valuable information.

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.

Provide Remedial Training

Interview staff who have received a speeding conviction, or been involved in a crash, to establish the details and to identify what lessons can be learned. In the first instance, the approach should be positive and helpful, rather than punitive, although it should be made clear that repeat offending may lead to disciplinary procedures.

Remedial driver training should be considered, especially for staff involved in a crash as they may be suffering post-traumatic stress or a loss of driving confidence, and for staff accumulating more than six penalty points for speeding offences.

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

RoSPA Head Office
28 Calthorpe Road
Birmingham
B15 1RP

☏ +44 (0)121 248 2000

RoSPA Scotland
43 Discovery Terrace
Livingstone House
Heriot-Watt University Research Park
Edinburgh
EH14 4AP

☏ +44 (0)131 449 9378/79

RoSPA Wales
2nd Floor
2 Cwrt-y-Parc
Parc Ty Glas
Cardiff Business Park
Llanishen
Cardiff
CF14 5GH

☏ +44 (0)2920 250600

General Enquiries

☏ +44 (0)121 248 2000
☏ +44 (0)121 248 2001
✉ help@rospa.com
🐦 twitter.com/rospa
f facebook.com/rospa
in linkedin.com/rospa

www.rospa.com