



Working together to eliminate road death and serious injuries

Bringing you important news for business drivers

July 2009

Fines up

Under the provisions of the 2006 Road Safety Act and the 2008 Health and Safety Offences Act, fines for certain motoring offences are doubling this week.

On the spot fines of £60 will now be issued for vehicle occupants not wearing seat belts and those driving cars fitted with illegal number plates. Although the former is obviously a road safety-related issue – seat belts reduce the risk of dying in a 30 mph crash by 60 per cent – the latter is purely to aid criminal investigations where ANPR evidence is crucial for conviction.

Phone phobia



According to another, non academic, survey it appears that only 12% of drivers have stopped making mobile phone calls whilst on the move and 40% admit to not even owning a hands free kit.

If this is to be believed it does seem incredible, with all the proven academic research about the dangers of using a mobile whilst driving, that many drivers are still failing to grasp the significance of the risks involved. No risk is worth a life.

If you have no mechanism in place to ensure that drivers are not using mobiles on the move you must at least ensure that you have a robust mobile non usage policy in place and that drivers have signed up to it.

Training shortfall

There has been another instance where the HSE has cited lack of training as contributory factor in a work and vehicle-related fatality. Although not a conventional on-road incident as such, it nonetheless demonstrates the HSE's increasing appetite for following up on such circumstances.

An employee of a farm in southern Scotland was killed when he lost control of a quad bike and hit a tree. Although the employer was charged with offences under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, he got away with a fine of only £6,650. There has however been extensive negative local publicity.

HSE Inspector Gillian McLean commented after the case: "Mr Shannon's death could easily have been prevented. Prior to using the vehicle the user must have received adequate, formal training and must ensure that the vehicle is in good mechanical condition."

Licence to kill

We've referred to the desirability of employee driving licence checks many times in the past but make no apologies for raising the issue yet again.



Company director David Lunn has been jailed for 22 months having been convicted of causing the death of a young boy and perverting the course of justice. Lunn was not insured and did not possess a valid licence.

In this particular case the employer was not involved but there are increasing calls from pressure groups for employers to be routinely investigated as to whether they know the licence status of their employees and have systems in place to obtain such information.

If you would like to know more about DriveTech's licence checking services (we're one of only a handful of DVLA-approved suppliers with access to the new e-DECS system, producing 'next day' results) please email drivinglicences@drivetech.co.uk or contact FleetSafe Account Development Manager, Kelly Robertson, on 01344 467886 or email her at fleetsafe@drivetech.co.uk

Attention span

According to a survey by Continental Tyres, drivers only concentrate for 67% of the time they are at wheel. Sorry guys, good publicity stunt but there is academically-verified research going back to the early eighties which demonstrates completely the opposite I'm afraid.

In fact we only concentrate on average for between 25 and 33% of the time we are driving. For the rest of the time we are on auto-pilot and completely oblivious to our surroundings. No wonder there are so many so-called 'lapses' of judgement, many of which involve injury to some unfortunate road user.

There's no way round it. Being responsible for a potential killing machine requires 100% concentration and commitment.

Premium rate



According to one of the UK's largest insurers, Aviva, premiums are set to rise by 5% at least simply as a result of fraudulent insurance claims.

We covered this worrying trend in the March 09 issue of the newsletter and gave some guidance on how to avoid getting caught up in such incidents. You can download this guidance from the newsletter archive on our website at

http://www.drivetech.co.uk/fleetsafe/rr_kb_useful_docs.htm

...and news from DriveTech itself:

As we said in the special newsletter issue a couple of weeks ago, it's business as usual at DriveTech despite the recent acquisition of the company by the AA Group.

Everybody is very excited about the opportunities ahead, given the synergy of the two organisations and it can only bring long term benefits for you, the customer.

Smile!



You don't want to mess with THAT feline!

Issued by the DriveTech Communications Department.

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