



Working together to eliminate road death and serious injuries

Bringing you important news for business drivers: November 2008

Have your say about van 'best practice'

There is an opportunity for any readers who operate vans up to 7.5 tonnes on their fleet to share best practice and maybe even feature in guidance materials that the Department for Transport (DfT) is in the process of producing.



The DfT **Van Best Practice Programme Pilot** is a research and development project being run by AEA Technology, the people who DriveTech worked with to create the SAFED for Vans programme.

The research aims to gain an understanding of the factors influencing UK van fleet operations and, as a result, produce a range of relevant 'best practice' style documentation, such as case studies, leaflets, guides etc.

AEA will be carrying out an online survey, undertaking a range of follow up telephone interviews and then running a number of peer review workshops. They would really appreciate your co-operation so, to take part, the first step is to log onto

www.aeavanpilot.co.uk

Any of you who have particularly strong views about what resources would be useful for both you and other professional van users, are also invited to the first focus group sessions at AEA's premises at Harwell in Oxfordshire on **Wed 19th November** or **Mon 1st December** 2008. If you wish to attend, please email Nanasha.A.Oyofa@aeat.co.uk directly.

Illegal licences?

We featured this topic in the April newsletter but make no apologies for mentioning it again because it transpires that, according to the DVLA, 16,136 photocard licences expired over the summer period but only 11,566 drivers have renewed them as required by law. That leaves some 4,570 drivers risking a £1000 fine!



There are 300,000 photocard licences due to expire during the coming year so we would urge all our readers to remind their drivers not to ignore the DVLA reminder when it drops on their mat. If you want to check when your licence is valid to, just look at the date adjacent to **'4b'** on the front of the photocard.

Feel free to download the DVLA's own leaflet on photo licence renewal from our knowledgebank on http://www.drivetech.co.uk/fleetsafe/rr_kb_useful_docs.htm

Mirror regs

The European Union has introduced regulations designed to increase lorry safety by improving the standards of drivers' mirrors. Directive 2007/38/EC requires certain vehicles over 3.5 tonnes to be retrofitted with proper devices in order to improve the driver's field of vision. The deadline for retrofit of mirrors or other devices is 31 March 2009 and the Freight Transport Association has now published a Compliance Guide 'Retrofitting of mirrors to HGVs', outlining the new regulations and the actions which truck operators and drivers should take in order to meet them.



The directive aims to improve the safety of road users, in particular vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists. This group bears a greater risk of being involved in collisions with large goods vehicles, which have a blind spot on the passenger side. There have been many incidents where pedestrians and riders have been struck by goods vehicles after entering the road space on the inside of the vehicle and thus into the driver's blind spot.

Previous legislation making an improved set of mirrors mandatory from 2007 onwards for new large vehicles is already in place. However, existing trucks remain in circulation without any improvement of their field of indirect vision. The new directive extends the requirements for the field of indirect vision to the existing fleet of large goods vehicles.

There is more information available at

Foreign Licence Holders

Fleet managers are being encouraged to ensure that any drivers holding foreign EU licences have completed a DVLA **D9** form, which allows motoring offences issued to that licence to be stored on a central database. This D9 database allows high risk fleet drivers to be identified.

“Accessing driver records enables fleet managers to look at the training a driver requires and take the appropriate action, therefore minimising the associated risk,” said Diarmuid Fahy, head of risk management at ING Car Lease, to whom DriveTech is a partner supplier.



The D9 form can be completed by anyone resident here who has a driving licence issued in any European Community/European Economic Area (EC/EEA) country. Fleet managers who have such licence holders driving their vehicles should already have ensured that these drivers have registered their details with DVLA – they must do this under UK law within one year of becoming resident.

However, they are also being urged to get them to complete the additional D9 form, which is not mandatory but allows EC/EEA licence holders to apply for a licence counterpart. This counterpart allows the British authorities to apply fixed penalties and points. It also allows DVLA to interrogate the issuing country’s database to discover if the licence holder has received endorsements there.

Distraction



Almost half of UK motorists are seriously distracted by in-car technology whilst driving.

Although mobile phones and satellite navigation systems are often touted as the top distractions, the RAC’s latest *Report on Motoring* found the main culprit is more familiar technology:

- Over half of drivers (54%) said 54% they have been seriously distracted by their radio, CD or DVD player, with the 17-24 year old age group again proving the most affected (63%).
- Just over one third (35%) said their cars’ heating and air conditioning controls

force them to take their mind and eyes off the road.

- A similar number also said the same of their satellite navigation system and mobile phone.

The report found that, while ABS and immobilisers are fitted as standard on new cars by law, only 70% of motorists knew that they had ABS, whilst only 68% knew that they had immobilisers.

As cars get more technologically complex, it is imperative that comprehensive hand-over procedures are in place so that business drivers are fully aware, before they drive their new car, what technology is fitted and how it works.

Winter driving advice



Now that winter appears to have arrived, here are some hints and tips to stay safe when the conditions get tough:

Before you set off

- ⇒ Check that the screen washer reservoir is full and contains proper winter additive.
- ⇒ Check that all the lights are working correctly.
- ⇒ Check that the front, rear and side windows are clear, **inside and out**.
- ⇒ Clear accumulated snow off the roof and bonnet – it can obscure your screens as it starts to move and also land on following vehicles.
- ⇒ Ensure you have warm clothes, waterproof boots, a blanket, some drink and a couple of sugary snacks in the vehicle. A high visibility jacket and warning triangle are also useful.
- ⇒ Know your route and ensure your mobile phone, if you have one, is working.
- ⇒ Journey plan by listening to traffic and weather reports.

Once on the move

- ⇒ ...keep listening to the traffic and weather reports, via the radio or mobile phone (the latter only if parked safely).
- ⇒ Remember that braking distances can be 10 times the normal distance in winter

conditions – maintain lots of space around you.

- ⇒ Be prepared for snow and ice to hit your vehicle if fellow motorists have, unlike you, not cleared it from their vehicles before setting off.
- ⇒ Prepare for black ice, caused when rain falls on an already frozen surface, which is hard to spot
- ⇒ If you feel a skid starting, look towards where you want to go, release the brakes or accelerator and turn 'into' the skid.
- ⇒ Think about escape routes all the time – you may have to avoid other vehicles that are out of control.
- ⇒ Avoid harsh steering or braking when in low grip conditions. Be as smooth as possible.
- ⇒ Don't panic if you come across fresh snow. It can often provide more grip than compacted snow, which is effectively ice.....and which will provide no grip whatsoever.
- ⇒ Once a thaw starts, expect fog – if you use fog lights remember to switch them off when it clears or at the end of the journey.
- ⇒ In difficult driving conditions concentration is everything. If you start to feel tired, don't fight it – stop where it's safe, take a high energy drink, walk around for five minutes and only continue if you feel refreshed.

...and news from DriveTech itself:

Real time seminars at your desk

DriveTech delivered its first 'webinar' recently, on 'Eco driving'. 21 customers logged in and experienced a fuel economy seminar online in real time without leaving their desks.

We are hoping to run many more of these in future and would be keen to hear from customers as to what topics they would find useful to cover. Anybody wishing to find out more about DriveTech 'webinars' or online Workshops should contact FleetSafe Account Development Manager, Kelly Robertson, on 01344 467886 or email her at fleetsafe@drivetech.co.uk

Promoting Road Safety in Oxfordshire

The annual **Safe Drive Stay Alive Roadshow**, of which DriveTech is a headline sponsor, starts this week, with 16 events taking place at four different venues across the region:

4th & 5th November - *The King's Centre, Oxford*

6th & 7th November - *The Hexagon, Reading*

10th & 11th November - *The Swan Theatre, High Wycombe*

12th & 13th November - *MK Dons Football Stadium, Milton Keynes*

More information about Safe Drive Stay Alive can be obtained from

www.safedrive.org.uk

Good Lord

Labour Peer Lord Soley went public recently about his experience in attending a DriveTech Speed Awareness Course in London. We obviously cannot normally divulge who attends these courses, for Data Protection reasons, but Lord Soley was sufficiently impressed to tell the world, via the House of Lords Blog.

It was quite a long, positive piece but, from our point of view, the encouraging reference was: "I not only found the course useful but also enjoyable. The woman taking the class had a really nice manner but also very clear and focused. I asked if people could take it without having a speeding offence. You can't but they do offer other courses:

www.drivetech.co.uk/driveraware"

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