



East of England Co-op driver training and risk management

As part of the spirit of trading underpinning the East of England Co-op, DriveTech are similarly pleased with the difference they help make to one of the UK's caring independent retailers.

The organisation is a consumer co-op entirely owned by over 280,000 members – including customers, colleagues and the local community. The business provides stores and services to towns and villages across 2,000 square miles in four counties - Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and Cambridgeshire - and as well as food stores, fuel forecourts, funeral services, travel agencies and even security & stonemasonry businesses, the organisation employs around 5,000 employees and achieves a turnover of around £350 million per annum.

In a similar cultural commitment to their values and local community spirit, the East of England Co-op also places a lot of importance on the welfare of their employees, and this extends significantly to their driving for work and road safety policies and practices.

Neil Renaut, Head of Health and Safety at the East of England Co-op, commented:

“We have over 580 drivers in the business – from HGV drivers, to funeral/hearse fleets, home delivery vans, and company car drivers – both “owned” and grey fleet. We needed to ensure that we provide this diverse range of drivers with a clear demonstration of our duty of care, and to provide them with road skills and driver training to keep them driving both safely and efficiently, as well as ensuring a safe and responsible approach to other road users and pedestrians. We are in a relatively rural area of the country too – so we also have our fair share of ‘rural’ challenges – remote roads, and often animals and farm vehicles to be aware of too. We have a clear Driver Policy and this is presented to all new drivers coming on board to set the standard and expectations.”

The business has been using the driver training services of DriveTech, part of the AA, for a number of years now, and has seen some admirable and notable improvements in its driver safety profile as a result. DriveTech provides services that range from licence checking to online driver assessments and e-learning modules through to more specific on road driver training interventions where deemed valid and important as regards driver risk and circumstances.

With the collaboration and practical working relationship between Neil and his team consisting of Luke Warren and the main day-to-day point of liaison, Rosie Butler, DriveTech have supported the East of England Co-op well.

Tracey Bass, Sector Account Manager at DriveTech observed:

“We enjoy an excellent working relationship with Neil, Rosie, and Luke. We take as much pride in the results of our work as I know they do within the East of England Co-op and we appreciate the opportunity to provide a breadth of services from checking driver licences on a periodic basis to much more specific on road driver training that helps identify high risk situations that drivers may face. We derive a great deal of satisfaction from providing one to one coaching to improve and shape attitudes, behaviours and core driving competencies and are pleased with the results.”

As regards headline performance improvement measures, Neil Renaut provides some impressive figures:

“In 2013, we conducted licence checks only in the main. However, since we introduced a more comprehensive programme with DriveTech, we have seen a reduction in accidents and claims, most notably between 2013 and 2017 which saw a 32% reduction. Driving for work here at East of England Co-op is recognised as a key business task and one that we take very seriously. We're grateful for the professional support provided by DriveTech with the team there always working hard to provide good, effective service.”

If you would like further information on driver training and risk management for your fleet, please get in touch on tellmemore@drivetech.co.uk or 01256 610907