

Driving for work: **Safer speed policy**



Driving is the most dangerous work activity that most people do. Research indicates that about 20 people are killed and 250 seriously injured every week in crashes involving someone who was driving, riding or otherwise using the road for work purposes.

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”**.

Therefore, employers must assess the risks involved in their staff's use of the road for work and put in place all 'reasonably practicable' measures to manage those risks. Such measures will more than pay for themselves by reducing the organisation's accident costs, many of which will be uninsured costs.

Inappropriate Speed

One of the most significant risks is staff 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).

People who drive too fast cause, or contribute to, over 70,000 speed-related road crashes each year on Britain's roads. This kills around 1,100 people and seriously injures over 12,000.

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. Company car 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.

This leaflet 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.

A sample 'Safer Speed Policy' is attached, and can be adopted as written or adapted to suit your organisation's needs. It can be used as a stand-alone policy or incorporated into a wider 'Safer Driving for Work' policy.

*The terms 'drivers' and 'driving' in the leaflet include 'riders' and 'riding'.

What employers should do

Expect Safe Driving

Ensure all staff, including senior managers and line managers, understand that the organisation expects everyone who drives for work to drive safely for their own, and others' benefit.

Consult Staff

Ensure that staff and/or their safety representatives are fully consulted about the organisation's policy on Safe Speeds and that this is reviewed periodically in joint health and safety committee meetings.

Raise Awareness

As part of recruitment, training and staff appraisal, ensure that drivers and line managers are reminded about:

- the increased dangers caused by driving at inappropriate speed
- the need to allow sufficient time to complete journeys within speed limits
- the things that tempt or pressurise drivers to speed
- the legal, financial and bad PR consequences of speeding
- the organisation's policy on work-related road safety, including safe speeds
- the benefits of driving at appropriate speeds
- the need for employees to co-operate in carrying out the policy and to report any speed related problems.

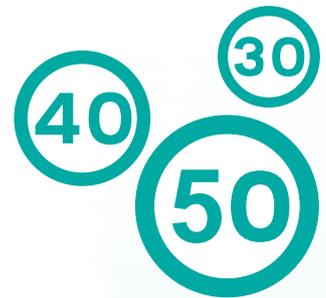
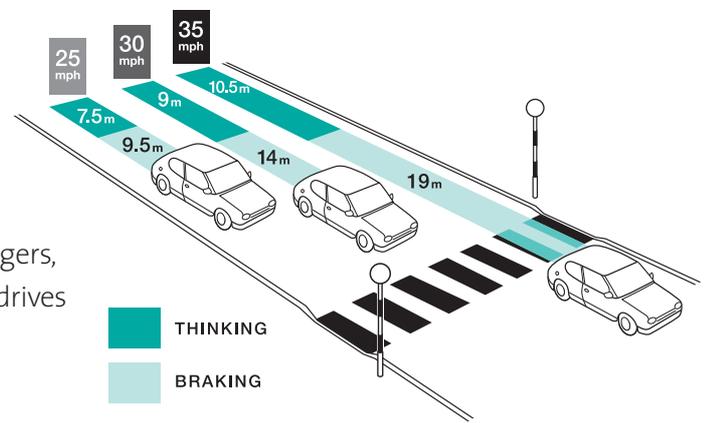
Respect Speed Limits

In particular, 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 road works) and that persistent failure to do so will be treated as a serious matter. Staff must realise that good progress on the road does not depend on the inappropriate use of speed.

Ensure that staff know the speed limits on different types of road for the vehicles they use, that they look for speed limit signs, including repeater signs, and understand how to recognise 30 mph roads which don't have repeater signs – street lights usually mean there is a 30 mph limit unless there are signs showing another limit.

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 (include rest breaks and take account of foreseeable weather and traffic conditions) at safe speeds and without needing to exceed speed limits.

For further advice see 'Driving for Work: Safer Journey Planner' which is available free from www.rosipa.com/roadsafety/info/worksafejourney.pdf



Avoid Incentives to Speed

Review work targets, systems of work and performance related pay (e.g., 'job-and-finish' regimes or payment by customer contact) to ensure you do not pressurise staff to travel at unsafe speeds or to exceed speed limits.

Assess Drivers

Assess the driving attitudes and competence of all staff who drive for work, whether they use a company or personal vehicle, both at recruitment and regularly afterwards. There are many options for doing this from psychometric questionnaires to in-car assessments. Appropriate driver training (and/or any other remedial action) should be undertaken based on the results of the assessment, and recorded.

Allocate Suitable Vehicles

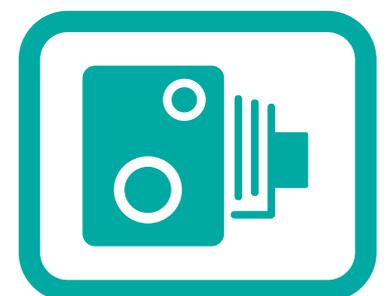
Company cars tend to be larger and more powerful than privately owned ones. Drivers of higher performance cars are more likely to speed and to have speeding convictions. Employers should ensure that the performance characteristics of vehicles are matched to the competence level of their drivers. When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

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, where practicable, 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.

Track Speeding Convictions

Require employees to notify their line managers 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.



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.

Liaise with the Police

Make it clear to staff 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 is allocated or if someone else was driving at the time, their details.

Monitor and Review

Driving licences should be checked at appointment and on an annual basis for endorsements or disqualifications. Fixed penalty tickets issued to company car drivers should be recorded. Other monitoring options include the use of 'roadwatch' reporting schemes, technology such as tachographs, on-board 'black boxes' and GPS (global positioning system) based telematics which can record average and maximum speeds.

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

Trends in speeding penalties should be reviewed to identify driving activities where further action to improve safety may be needed.

Liaise with Other Organisations

It is very useful to liaise with police forces, road safety bodies and other organisations such as trade associations to establish how co-operation can be achieved in pursuit of the policy on safe speed.

Further Advice

- HSE Guide, 'Driving at Work' – www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg382.pdf.
- 'Managing Occupational Road Risk: The RoSPA Guide' (price £25.00) – www.rospa.com/drivertraining
- www.orsa.org.uk
- www.dft.gov.uk (Road safety section)
- www.hse.gov.uk/roadsafety/index.htm
- www.nationalsafetycameras.co.uk
- 'Driving for Work: Safer Journey Planner' www.rospa.com/roadsafety/info/worksafejourney.pdf
- 'Driving for Work: Mobile Phones' www.rospa.com/roadsafety/info/workmobiles.pdf

Company Speed Policy

As part of our overall health and safety policy, _____ is committed to reducing the risks which our staff face and create when driving or riding for work. We ask all our staff to play their part, whether they use a company vehicle, their own one or a hire vehicle.

Staff driving for work must never drive faster than conditions safely allow and must obey posted speed limits at all times. Exceeding the speed limit is against the law. Persistent failure to comply with the law will be regarded as a serious matter, and gross speeding while driving for work will be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter.

Staff who gain penalty points on their licence may be required to take further driver training. Company cars may be withdrawn from staff who attain 9 or more penalty points. They will be withdrawn from staff who are disqualified from driving.

We will co-operate with police enquiries resulting from an alleged speeding offence or incident and supply details of the employee (or the driver, if different) to whom the vehicle is allocated.

Senior Managers must:

- lead by example, both in the way they drive themselves and by not tolerating poor driving practice among colleagues.

Line Managers must ensure:

- they also lead by personal example
- staff understand their responsibilities to drive at safe speeds and obey speed limits
- staff receive driving assessments and appropriate training
- staff plan and undertake journeys at safe speeds and obey speed limits
- work targets, systems of work or performance related methods of pay do not create pressures which lead staff to use speed inappropriately
- work-related road safety is included in team meetings and staff appraisals and periodic checks are conducted to ensure our Safe Speed Policy is being followed
- they follow the monitoring, reporting and investigation procedures to help learn lessons which could help improve our future road safety performance
- they challenge unsafe attitudes and behaviours, encourage staff to drive safely, and lead by personal example in the way they themselves drive.

Staff who drive for work must:

- never drive faster than conditions safely allow and obey posted speed limits at all times
- ensure they know what the maximum speed limit is for the vehicle they are driving.
- plan journeys so they can be completed at safe speeds and without exceeding speed limits
- report road safety problems, including crashes, incidents, fixed penalty notices, summons and convictions for any offence, including speeding, to their line manager
- present their licence, and any other documents required, for inspection on request (normally annually)
- co-operate with monitoring, reporting and investigation procedures.