

Workplace transport safety

With vehicles an integral part of the motor sector, a robust approach to workplace transport safety is essential. This will safeguard employees, customers and members of the public as well as protect a business from prosecution and reputational damage.

Just how large a risk vehicles present can be seen in figures from the Health and Safety Executive. These show there are more than 5,000 incidents involving workplace transport each year, with around 1% of these resulting in a fatality. Unfortunately the motor trade sector fares worse than many, with an accident rate of 1.8 fatalities compared to an average of 0.6 per year.

But these incidents can be easily avoided by incorporating workplace transport safety into risk management.

Managing risk

The first step is to ensure that workplace transport is part of the health and safety policy and an integral part of your business culture. Employees should be aware of the issues with training, information and advice and managers should be nominated to take responsibility for developing and monitoring workplace transport controls.



It's also important to ensure you have processes in place to record any incident and near misses involving vehicles. These should then be investigated and controls put in place to reduce the risk.

Risk assessment

A workplace transport risk assessment is also essential. This is legally required and needs to cover all work activities that involve moving vehicles, for example, arrival and departure; movement within the workplace; loading and unloading; and vehicle maintenance work. It also needs to take into account the type of hazards that might be present, for instance collisions; who might be at risk; and what controls are already in place.

Each risk assessment also needs to be recorded, reviewed and updated when there are any significant changes.

Additional information is also available on the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents website at www.rosa.com or from the Health and Safety Executive at www.hse.gov.uk

Risk management system

Based on the risk assessment, you can design a workplace transport risk management system. This should concentrate on four key areas - site, vehicles, people and use, with each having different requirements to help reduce workplace transport incidents.

Safe site

A well-designed and maintained site makes transport accidents less likely. Routes should be as wide as possible, avoiding potential hazards such as overhead electric cables, pipes and sharp bends. They should also be well signed, with speed limits and adequate lighting. Other design features that can help to reduce accidents are one way systems to ensure reversing is kept to a minimum and barriers that keep pedestrians and vehicles separate where possible.

Safe vehicle

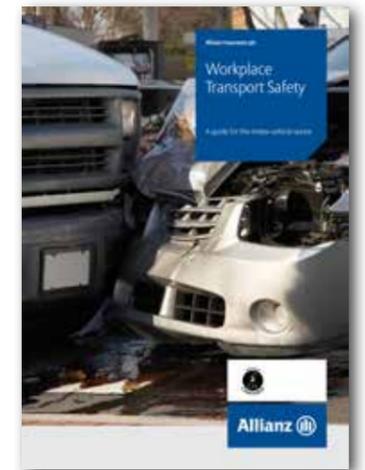
Vehicles must be suitable for the purpose for which they are provided or used, with their construction and serviceability as good as for public roads. Drivers must be able to see clearly around the vehicle, be able to prevent it from moving when necessary and be aware of any defects before they attempt to move it. In addition vehicles must be fitted with lights and a horn.

Safe people

As human error lies behind many accidents, ensuring employees are well trained, fit to drive and aware of policies relating to driving is essential. These policies could include reporting any health problems that may affect driving; disciplinary procedures relating to driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs; and accident, hazard and fault reporting procedures. The approach to safety should also apply to people visiting the site including your customers and contractors. Having procedures in place covering receiving and managing visitors can prevent them becoming a risk.

Safe use

It's also important that you have procedures in place to ensure the safe operation of the vehicle. This should include rules around speed limits; who drives vehicles, especially high-performance and adapted vehicles; and keeping keys secure. Reversing can be a particularly risky area, causing around 25% of all workplace vehicle related fatalities. To reduce this risk you should limit the need for reversing through site. Where this isn't practical



Visit www.riskdirector.co.uk to download our Workplace Transport Guide; helping manage the risks associated with vehicle movement.

they should fit devices such as fixed mirrors in smaller areas, vehicle reversing alarms and warning lights and rear-view CCTV to help drivers see behind the vehicle. Establishing a robust approach to managing workplace transport risk, and implementing arrangements based on a risk assessment, will help to ensure a good level of safety and prevent it contributing to the vehicle-related accident statistics.

For more information, including a risk control note on workplace transport and a motor trade vehicle risk management guide speak to your local Allianz broker.



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